

# Adventure Lantern

## Featured Games:

Agon – The Mysterious Codex Review & Walkthrough  
Hope Springs Eternal Review & Walkthrough

## Reviews:

Bone  
Clink  
The Moment of Silence  
Last Half of Darkness: Shadow of the Serpents  
Delaware St. John Volume 1: The Curse of Midnight Manor  
Ultimate Spider-Man

## Previews:

Scavenger Hunter  
Darkstar  
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Last Half of Darkness: Beyond the Spirit's Eye  
Star Heritage 1: The Black Cobra

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# Editorial

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Looking outside the window, I can see the snow in the backyard. The skies are completely covered with clouds. It looks like the snow is about to start again any second. The streets are devoid of cars and peacefully quiet. The cold is piercing, but from the confines of my office, I can appreciate its serenity.

Only six months ago, just a few hundred miles to the south, it would have been hard for me to believe I would be living in this kind of climate. Only six months ago, Adventure Lantern was nothing more than a vague idea in the back of my head. Most of our staff members did not even know each other.

With our third issue, Adventure Lantern is stronger than ever. This month we were able to bring you significantly more reviews than our previous two issues. Our staff has also continued to grow over the past few weeks. It is my pleasure to welcome Paul among our ranks. Starting with this issue, Paul is inviting us all on a quest to find adventure in the most unlikely places. We are also posting the first articles from Donna and Sweetpea, who joined the team towards the end of last month. Sweetpea is taking us back a few years with her Jack Orlando review and teaming up with me for a Sherlock Holmes double take. Donna is launching our Shards of a Broken Sword series to celebrate the recent announcement of Broken Sword's fourth chapter.

We have also received incredible support from a number of other adventure-gaming sites. Just Adventure's editor Randy Sluganski has graciously announced our magazine in his latest State of Adventure gaming article. Fallen Angel from the Greek adventure site Adventure Advocate is continuing to support us by providing English translations of her articles. Adventure Zone is planning to translate some of our articles to Polish.

Looking outside the window, I can't help but wonder where the journey will take us. It seems we already came a long way from our hastily prepared first issue. As the site and the magazine gain momentum, it is hard to say where Adventure Lantern will go in another six months.

But the uncertain feels welcome. And the journey promises to be interesting.

-Ugur Sener

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# Scavenger Hunter - Preview

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Written by Ugur Sener

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Did you ever replay an adventure game after completing it and wish you didn't know the answers to all the puzzles? Perhaps you enjoyed going through the story again, but longed for new areas to explore. You looked for the hidden locations or the alternate ending that simply did not exist in the game. Scavenger Hunter from Sagewood Software offers a very promising alternative.



Scavenger Hunter proposes an explanation the inexplicable disappearance of all those things you could have sworn you left in plain sight. It seems there is a great reason why things will occasionally vanish when you look the other way even for a split second... While we were merrily decorating our homes, constructing monuments, and building our civilization, a mysterious alien race has been pillaging our planet for centuries. With each stolen invaluable artifact, these notorious aliens have taken a piece of our history. It is time to put a stop to their intergalactic heist!

You are member of an elite task force assembled to stop the thieves from outer space. You will be thrust into distant alien worlds to recover stolen items. You are also charged with discovering the secrets of the Scavenger race. Hidden within the mysterious Scavenger lands is the key to destroy the alien worlds. With careful observation and a lot of cunning, you just might be able to figure out how to prevent the thieves from attacking our planet. In the process, you might also discover your pair of socks or favorite pen that simply disappeared just a few days ago.



The entire concept of Scavenger Hunter is built around replayability. Instead of a static architecture with pre-designed levels, the game features randomly generated environments. Every time you start a new adventure, the game world will be reconstructed in a different way. You will get to explore new locations and encounter different puzzles. There is a large number of available

combinations, making the experience significantly different each time you play the game.

The random generation of environments in Scavenger Hunter also ties into the story of the game. When they are not ruthlessly stealing our precious belongings, the Scavengers are envisioned as a race of creatures who are continually building new worlds. When you destroy one of their existing worlds, the Scavengers immediately engage in rebuilding efforts. But with each reconstruction, the aliens change things around and spice-up the place. Thus, each time you embark on a new mission, you will be essentially exploring new territory, even though certain elements might be familiar.



Scavenger Hunter will be an adventure game played from a first-person perspective. The game will have an emphasis on puzzles and exploration rather than character interaction. Players will have an unlimited inventory and save game slots. The official Scavenger Hunter Web site also notes that the game will feature no violence or explicit language. Younger players and mature adventure gamers alike should be able to enjoy Scavenger Hunter.

The idea of randomly generated environments is not necessarily a new one. Among the games that most successfully implemented this feature, Diablo was released almost ten years ago in late 1996. However, the implementation in Scavenger Hunter is still extremely novel and could easily make for a very unique adventure game. The idea of being able to find new locations and new challenges each time you play the game is very promising. The game also promises an interesting story and challenging puzzles. Dubbed "The Replayable Adventure Game", Scavenger Hunter could deliver an excellent gaming experience. The official site is available at:

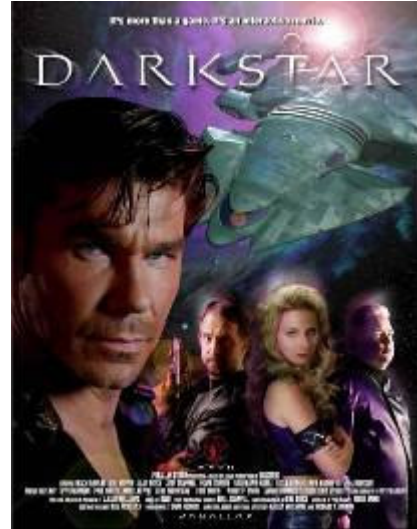
<http://members.aol.com/albiaprime/sagewoodsoftware.html>



# Darkstar - Preview

Written by Ugur Sener

Darkstar is a testament to the fact that some days it is just better to stay in bed, or in this case a cryogenic sleep chamber. Captain John O'Neil certainly did not expect to be awakened from suspended animation having lost all of his memories. The equipment was not designed to support life for three hundred years. O'Neil was on an important mission that absolutely had to be completed. But something went terribly wrong and the Captain's spaceship was left floating in space. Dark secrets lurk in the far corners of the massive spaceship. As John O'Neil, it will be up to you to unlock the mystery.



As you fully recover from the suspended animation, you explore the remaining cryogenic sleep chambers. The First Officer Ross Perryman is missing. You find the ship's navigator lying dead. The only other crew member that seems to be alive is the pilot Paige Palmer. But she lies asleep in one of the chambers. You cannot turn to anyone for an explanation. Critical files have been deleted from the spaceship's computer. The service robot Simon is barely functional due to lack of maintenance. Nobody is around to give you the answer you seek. You will have to discover your identity and your mission on your own.

In the endless sea of space, the ship Westwick has kept you alive for three hundred years. It is finally time to uncover the secrets and complete the mission. Along the way you will meet other characters, enjoy beautiful cinematics, and eventually find the truth. With no memories of the past, with your former life irrevocably lost, when you feel completely helpless and alone, your true destiny beckons.



Darkstar is a highly promising and ambitious adventure game that is currently being developed by Parallax. Designed as an FMV adventure, Darkstar will be played from a first-person perspective. In typical first-person adventure game fashion, Darkstar will feature a nodular navigation system. Players will travel from one node to the next and explore

a complete panorama at each stop. Players will be able to look in any direction and zoom in to take a closer look at objects. However, instead of presenting the transitioning between each node in a slideshow fashion, Darkstar will feature walking animations. The camera will smoothly move from one stop to the next, allowing players to experience the movement in a realistic manner.

In the role of John O'Neil, you will be exploring the spaceship Westwick. As the story progresses, your adventure will take you to a number of different locations including the planet Theta Alpha III. Darkstar has a very strong story focus and promises hours of cinematics. Delivered by an impressive cast of over forty actors, the story sequences will drive the game forward.



The game will certainly feature a number of puzzles. Players will have to look for hotspots and find important objects to solve the game's challenges. However, project leader J. Allen Williams points out on the official Darkstar Web site that the puzzles have been specifically designed not to be extremely difficult. The developers want to make sure players will be challenged, but still be able to proceed through the game and enjoy the story.

Darkstar is currently scheduled to be released during the summer of 2006. The game certainly offers a very interesting and engaging premise. The strong emphasis on story elements and the hours of cinematics can add up to a greatly entertaining gaming experience. Based on the information available, Darkstar definitely seems to be a game to keep on your radar.

For more information, visit the official Darkstar Web site at: [www.darkstar.gs](http://www.darkstar.gs)



## Last Half of Darkness: Beyond the Spirit's Eye - Preview

Written by Wendy Nellius



From WRF Studios, creator of Last Half of Darkness: Shadows of the Servants comes word of a new chapter of horror aptly named Last Half of Darkness: Beyond the Spirit's Eye. For those of you who haven't had a chance to play Shadows of the Servants yet, this point and click horror adventure received high marks for its immersive and dark storyline that had the ability to scare you right out of your chair. [Editor's note: You can find Wendy's in-depth Last Half of Darkness: Shadow of the Servants review on the reviews section of this issue]

Here is the story teaser as written by William R. Fisher himself on the LHOD website:

**A new story is born from the shadows of darkness, revealing a twisted tale of terror where the souls of an entire town are governed by an ancient black jewel known only as the "Eye."**

**You find your curiosity unleashing an overpowering interest in the rare gem and eventually taking you to a deserted village shrouded in mystery and horror. Locked away by secrets and time, you will soon uncover an evil that protects the jewel with its dark past and strange riddles of black magic. The village holds not only a home to the rare relic, but also a family of nocturnal hierarchy, breeding with each bite and inflicting their curse upon the remaining mortal townsfolk.**

**As dusk approaches, the vampiric society begin to rise from the crypt and a new dawn must wait patiently for the last half of darkness to pass *beyond the spirit's eye*.**



In a previous email to Bill about his first game "Shadows of the Servants, we had asked if there was anything in the works we can look forward to. At the time, concrete information was not available about Beyond the Spirit's Eye. But Bill had disclosed the following information:

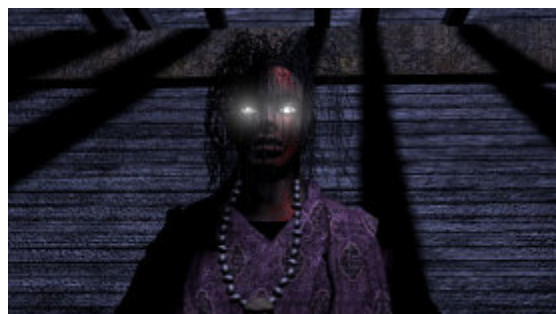


**Bill Fisher:** I am playing around with a few ideas and technology on another game... but nothing worth mentioning yet since I want my next game to be scarier than "LHoD: Shadows of the Servants".



Flash forward to the present... Black magic and vampires? Beyond the Spirit's Eye has been announced and the game looks very promising. Reading the storyline and viewing the screenshots is enough to determine that we're in for another horrific ride.

Gameplay is noted on the website to be similar to Shadows of the Servants. It's probably safe to assume that we can expect the same type of innovative puzzles as featured in Shadows of the Servants. No release date has been posted as of yet, but stay tuned for more information or visit the official site at [www.lasthalfdarkness.com/beyond](http://www.lasthalfdarkness.com/beyond). In the meantime, check out the new screenshots.



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# Lunar Deep - Preview

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Written by Ugur Sener

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Once they had a beautiful civilization on the surface. Once they were proud and they were free. They looked to the heavens and worshipped the moon. It was fear that drove them into the caverns. They fled from the persecution and the destruction that seemed so imminent. It was not in their nature to make war upon the people that threatened their lands. Leaving everything behind, they found a new home in a most unlikely place.



They sought refuge deep beneath the surface. A massive network of underground caverns was built to house an entire race. They united to construct a new home. Maybe they could no longer look upon the skies to see their beloved moon. But at least the peaceful race was once again safe. Nobody would be able to easily reach them within the caverns.

Utilizing incredibly advanced technologies, they created a machine that breathed life into the caves. The intricate machine gave them air and light. It was powerful enough to control the weather within the caverns. Hidden from the rest of the world, the ancient people lived on. The underground sanctuary supported them for centuries. The technology did not falter. But everything is about to change. The entire race is once again in grave danger.



With each generation the ancient people forgot something about the machine. In its beautiful intricacy, the machine continued to work. It was always reliable. Perhaps the people simply began to take it for granted. As the years went by, the fewer people remained that truly understood how the machine worked. Unfortunately, this negligence may have a terrible cost.

The machine is deteriorating. Soon it will be completely unable to function. Life cannot continue within the caverns if the device does not operate correctly. As

their life support is on the verge of complete failure, nobody can remember how the machine works or how it can be repaired. The people can do nothing but watch their home turn into a terrifying death trap. Escaping their land seems to be out of question. Perhaps returning to the surface is too daunting. Perhaps they simply cannot bear to leave the caverns that have offered them solace for so long.

As a last resort, they send messages to the surface. They hope that someone capable of repairing the machine will see the messages. The ancient people solemnly wait. If nobody arrives to offer them help, the entire race could be decimated. But maybe, just maybe, all hope is not lost. Perhaps a savior will find the path to the caverns. Fear of persecution from outlanders had caused the race to migrate to the caverns. Perhaps this time, a stranger will bring not fear, but salvation.

Lunar Deep is a first-person adventure game from AncientRein Gaming. An independent development effort, Lunar Deep promises a large number of locations to explore and plenty of puzzles to keep players busy. The game is expected to feature a good number of inventory-based challenges as well as various other kinds of puzzles.

The project is already nearing its completion. The game is scheduled to be released within the first quarter of 2006. Upon the release of the game's full version, a demo version will also be made available on the official site. The full version will be downloadable from the Internet and only require a small donation before it can be unlocked.

With its pleasant 24 bit graphics, intriguing concept, and promising setting, Lunar Deep could easily deliver a greatly entertaining adventure game. Discovering the secret home of an ancient people could certainly be interesting. Start sharpening your pickaxe! The caverns are waiting...

For additional information, you can visit the Lunar Deep Web site at:

<http://members.aol.com/lunardeep>



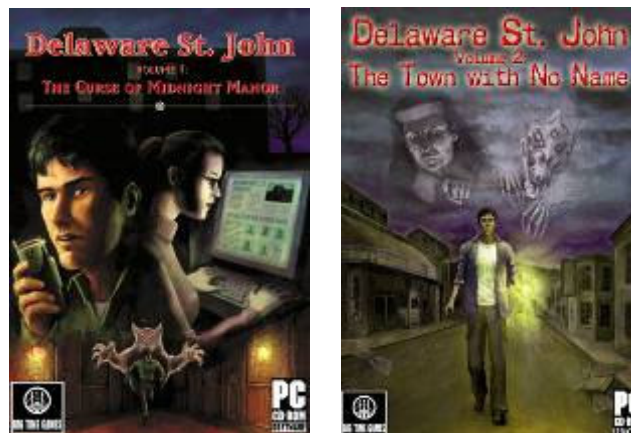
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## Interview with Bryan Wiegele, President of Big Time Games

Conducted by Ugur Sener

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*Big Time Games is the company behind the increasingly popular Delaware St. John series. The first two episodes of Delaware St. John, The Curse of Midnight Manor and The Town with No Name were received with great enthusiasm from the adventure gaming community. As Big Time Games is hard at work on the next chapter in the series, we conducted an interview with the company president Bryan Wiegele. Bryan told us about his early experiences with adventure games and his work on the Delaware St. John project along with a couple of hints about the future of Big Time Games...*



**Adventure Lantern:** *What got you interested in developing adventure games?*

**Bryan Wiegele:** My first game, Inherent Evil, was an adventure game that taught me a lot about game creation and design and I always felt that experience would be wasted unless I applied it to a new game. When we began Big Time Games I knew I wanted to create a new adventure series to build on my previous experience. I love adventure games and I love the people who play them, they have such an interest in story and setting, which I share.

**AL:** *Can you tell us a little about your first experiences with adventure games?*

**Bryan:** I always think about those "choose your adventure" books as the first time I played "interactive adventure." I had such a great time reading the adventure, choosing a path (flipping the book back to see if I died before committing) and reading the result.

My first experience with adventure games was in the early 90's. Before then I'd never used a PC before and hadn't been exposed to any PC games. The 7th

Guest, The Beast Within, Myst, Obsidian were the first few and from there I followed the games into the late 90's.

What I loved about adventure games was the refreshing change of pace from console games. Instead of relying on quick reflexes and weapons the games were about characters, environment and story. I think with adventure games you get more involved like you would with a movie, you get more attached.

**AL: *What was the inspiration behind Delaware St. John?***

**Bryan:** Delaware was a character I'd been thinking about a few years before we began on the first game. I had been watching a television show about psychics and I began to imagine that the gift these people claimed to have was for a reason, a reason they weren't yet aware of, but it ultimately had a purpose. From there it grew into the Delaware fiction of The Protector, The Destroyer and those nasty Hunters.

**AL: *When did you first start working on the series?***

**Bryan:** We began work on Delaware 1 in November 2004 and it released in June of 2005.

**AL: *What is it like to work on a project like Delaware St. John?***

**Bryan:** The first Delaware game was my return to working for myself after years of working for other companies. It was wonderful to be so free and do things how I wanted but it was a big project and took a lot of time and hard work to put it together.

Overall the experience for both Delaware 1 and 2 were great, I really feel we did what we set out to do.

**AL: *Can you tell us a little Big Time Games?***

**Bryan:** Big Time Games was formed in November of 2004 by myself and James Schaub, who I had previously partnered with in 1995 to form Eclipse Software. We are an independent company and depending on the project we have anywhere from four to fourteen people working with us.

**AL: *Delaware St. John has so far been a very successful series. Can you give us any information about the next volume?***

**Bryan:** We anticipate Volume 3 will release in July of this year but that's not set in stone just yet. In The Seacliff Tragedy, Delaware finds himself exploring an old amusement park but this time he's not alone. Kelly, who's been his reluctant research partner has tagged along for the adventure.

**AL: *Where do you see the series going in future volumes?***

**Bryan:** The storyline for all of the games in the series was outlined before we began working on the first game. As we work on each volume we flesh out the details but the big story arc to the series is already planned.

From Volume 1 to Volume 2 we've made improvements and we plan to continue making improvements and aim to gain more support from the adventure gamer community.

**AL: *What about life after Delaware? Does Big Time Games have any other projects at the moment?***

**Bryan:** We're actually working on a puzzle game for PC and cell phones in addition to Delaware 3. We also have a project that we've pitched and are hoping to do. I can't say anything about it now but if we get it, you won't be able to shut me up ;)

**AL: *In the unlikely event that you have some free time in your schedule, what are some of the games you are currently playing?***

**Bryan:** I've been playing Dark Fall and Midnight Nowhere for a year. I really need to just sit down and go through them. I'll probably end up getting a walk through like I do with all games that I've been playing for too long. Recently I finished Resident Evil 4 (after a year!) on Gamecube, which was incredible, too good to be called a Resident Evil game for sure! Currently I'm trying to validate the cost of my Xbox 360 by playing Kameo and Condemned, two fantastic games.

**AL: *Anything else you would like to share with our readers?***

**Bryan:** I would like to thank everyone who's purchased our games. It's a real compliment to get so much support from a group who knows what they like. I'm very grateful for the support and look forward to creating more games people can enjoy.

*Adventure Lantern thanks Bryan Wiegele for taking the time to participate in our interview and give us some insight into the mind of Delaware St. John's creator. We are looking forward to hearing about future volumes in the series as well as other projects from Big Time Games. Based on the company's track record, they may have plenty of adventure gaming goodness in store for us.*

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# Agon – The Mysterious Codex

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PC Review by Ugur Sener

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It all starts as a quiet evening in London. The streets are slowly becoming devoid of people. Darkness is covering the city. At the British Museum, Professor Samuel Hunt is preparing to once again work into the late hours of the night. But carefully tucked away into a corner of the museum, the first piece of a grand puzzle is waiting to be found. A great adventure beckons and Samuel has been chosen to answer the call.



Agon is an episodic adventure game series from Private Moon Studios. The first episode of the game, London Scene, was released back in September 2003. The developers have since released two additional episodes, completing the three of the fourteen planned chapters of Agon. As the release of the fourth chapter, Lost Sword of Toledo, draws ever closer, the first three episodes of Agon are being released as a compilation called The Mysterious Codex.

## London Scene

The first episode of Agon begins as Professor Samuel Hunt enters his office at the British Museum. Glancing over his desk, the Professor finds a mysterious letter. The letter speaks of secret hidden within the museum and twelve destinations. The enigmatic W.K., the author of the letter, is entrusting the Professor with a great secret.



Attached to the letter Samuel finds a page from what appears to be an ancient codex. The document tells of ancient board games and a demonic Black King that threatens all of mankind. Twelve families around the globe have been given custody of the board games. A stranger is destined to find these families and recover the relics. The lost knowledge of the games must be returned to humanity. But this is only the beginning of the mystery. Samuel will travel to the farthest reaches of the

world before he can unlock the secret behind the board games and the Black King. The path will not be easy. Samuel will have to leave his loved ones behind for months. But some journeys simply have to be completed.



The first episode, London Scene, takes place inside the British Museum. Upon discovering the letter and a page of the codex, the Professor sets off to find exactly what is hidden within the museum. As Samuel struggles to get past an all too vigilant security guard and tries to find useful information among inventory logs, the stage is set for the entire series. Players get to find out more about Professor Hunt and his ever faithful colleague Dr. Smythe.

On its own, London Scene makes for a brief, but very enjoyable adventure within the confines of the museum. Players have to overcome a number of obstacles before they can get to the artifact and figure out where Samuel needs to start his journey around the globe.

## Adventures of Lapland

The second chapter begins with Samuel's arrival at an all but completely forgotten train station in the farthest reaches of Lapland. Preparations that were supposed to be made long before the Professor's arrival are incomplete. Nobody is even around to welcome Samuel as he gets off the train. The good Professor is on his own to find the keeper of the first board game.



The second episode of Agon is significantly longer than London Scene. Adventures in Lapland offers a good variety of challenges and a much larger area to explore. The Professor needs to figure out the inner workings of contraptions built by an alcoholic stationmaster who apparently moonlights as an engineer. Samuel will have to make his way across snow covered fields and uncover a few carefully hidden secrets before he can claim the first board game.

## Pirates of Madagascar

After the icy landscapes of Lapland, the Professor embarks on a journey to the sunny shores of Madagascar. But he hardly has time to enjoy the pleasant



climate or the beautiful scenery. To the natives Samuel is no different than a blood-thirsty pirate. Gaining their trust and recovering the second board game will not be an easy task.

Pirates of Madagascar is once again noticeably longer than the previous episode. In the third chapter of his grand adventure, Samuel has to decipher the cryptic clues of an apparent madman. The forest holds many secrets. It will take a keen eye to unravel the mystery.

## The Mysterious Codex

As a whole, The Mysterious Codex compilation offers an entertaining and relaxing gaming experience. Professor Samuel Hunt is a very enjoyable character to control. The well-mannered gentleman is a sharp contrast from the tough action heroes or wisecracking witty adventurers. Samuel's pleasant demeanor and apparent scientific enthusiasm are very endearing and fitting for the tone of the game.

The adventure in Agon creates an immersive yet soothing atmosphere. The three episodes carry hints of a much bigger plot than what is initially revealed. The key documents you find throughout the game definitely hint at something sinister brewing. Yet despite the greater events taking place around you, Agon plays at a calm pace, allowing you to enjoy the places you are exploring. And this is definitely a good thing, especially given the game's beautiful graphics. Players will definitely enjoy traveling through the great looking environments in The Mysterious Codex. The shore and the forest area in Madagascar especially are visual delights.



Agon utilizes a very simple and intuitive interface. The game is played from a first-person perspective. You simply pan the camera to view the environment. You can look in all directions. Just like in many other adventure games, there are specific points in any given area where the Professor can stop and take a look at his surroundings. Familiar cursors are used to indicate the actions you can perform. The inventory, the files Samuel will pick up throughout his journey, and the main game menu are easily accessible by three icons on the upper right corner.

However a couple of minor technical issues were noticed. The first problem is with the save-game functionality. The main in-game menu does not offer a way to quit the game without saving. You also cannot choose which saved game to

load when you start Agon. The main menu only has an option to load the most recent saved game. If you want to load a different save, you will have to select it from the in-game menu after resuming the latest save.



The second issue was that the subtitles and the character animations seemed to occasionally lag behind the voice-acted dialog. However, it is highly possible that the problem was specific to the configuration of the machine used for this review. In any case, neither the save-game issues nor the lagging subtitles significantly detract from an otherwise highly pleasant gaming experience.

The first three episodes Agon feature a considerable number of puzzles. Samuel will encounter a fair amount of inventory-based challenges. However, The Mysterious Codex is not the sort of game where your inventory will be filled with dozens of items. At any given time Samuel should have a relatively small amount of items. The combinations and the use of the items should also be fairly clear. When you drag the correct item over a hotspot, a glowing aura will surround the item.

The game will also often require you to use your observation skills to find small but significant pieces of information scattered around each location. You will then have to pull these clues together to find the solution to a puzzle. All three episodes of Agon have at least one puzzle where you will be deciphering a message written in an old alphabet or some kind of encoding. Players will often have to make connections between various documents and interactive items. Careful observation and a good dose of deductive reasoning will be required. Be prepared to take notes about important clues on a piece of paper.

The Mysterious Codex does not have any puzzles where time is limited. However, it is worth noting that Agon does feature a handful of sections in the game where you will have to temporarily leave an area to force time to pass. For instance, if you give a guard a drink, it is only logical that a certain amount of time has to pass before the alcohol will have an effect on him. However, if you have already completed all the other portions of the episode, being forced to leave the



room and walk back inside can be a bit tedious.

While Agon is not an exceptionally difficult game, finishing the three episodes will certainly put your adventure gaming skills to test. Some of the clues are hidden in locations you might initially miss. Some of the connections between the available clues and the actual puzzles may also seem obscure. However, carefully surveying each location and reading all the available documents should give you the hints needed.

The Mysterious Codex compilation does include two board games as well. The board games can be unlocked by completing the first and the second episodes. Once the games are unlocked, you can freely play them from the main game menu without having to go through the episodes. Both board games can be entertaining and players might appreciate the ability to freely access them.

Overall, The Mysterious Codex compilation makes for a very enjoyable gaming experience. If you did not have a chance to play the first three episodes as they were released, The Mysterious Codex presents an excellent opportunity to discover the world of Agon. Having the ability to play the episodes back to back is definitely a plus. Professor Samuel Hunt's adventure is certainly off to a good start. There are noticeable improvements between the first and the third episodes. As you delve deeper into The Mysterious Codex, you will discover richer environments, more puzzles, and a more engaging storyline with each episode. When you reach the end of the lengthy adventure, Agon will leave you wanting more. It will be difficult waiting for the fourth episode, Lost Sword of Toledo.



**Developer:** Private Moon Studios  
**Publisher:** Viva Media  
**Platform:** PC  
**Genre:** Adventure  
**Release Date:** March 2006  
**Grade:** 89/100

**Minimum System Requirements (PC):**  
 Windows® 98/Me/2000/XP  
 Pentium® III 800 MHz  
 128 MB RAM (256 MB for XP)  
 850 MB Hard Disk Space  
 32 MB DirectX 8.0 Compatible Video Card  
 DirectX® Compatible Sound Card  
 Stereo Speakers or Headphones

# Bone: Out from Boneville

PC Review by Gnome

It is probably best to mention this first. It is about an almost trivial and quite annoying issue. *Bone: Out from Boneville* is an incredibly short game. Here, I said it. The game is almost amateur-adventure length, and everything you have heard about the duration of the game is true. The developers promise a meager sounding 4 to 6 gameplay hours, but it is actually shorter than that, and even they seem to have acknowledged the problem. To be frank (despite my fondness of Telltale) you will be hard pressed to squeeze more than 3 hours out of *Bone: Out from Boneville*, and that is, only if you explore everything and exhaust every dialog option. You could evidently rush through the whole game in just a little over an hour, but such course of action does sound rather silly. Admittedly, the Telltale team, the publishers of *Bone* and ex-LucasArts maestros, has shown that they value gamer feedback by constantly releasing updated versions and demos. They are also the people who will bring us the new Sam and Max game. So, yes, paying \$20 for a two hour game you have to download from a Web site is quite steep. More of a rip-off than your average video game actually, but one must admit that keeping Telltale alive can be an almost noble cause. Besides, the second *Bone* game entitled *The Great Cow Race* is just around the corner, and will supposedly be a much longer and more polished effort.



But enough with the length issues! You wouldn't judge a book by the number of its pages, would you? Before you answer, please, do think about Edgar Allen Poe's writings. It is time for a more or less proper review of *Bone: Out from*



*Boneville* (henceforth just *Bone*). *Bone* follows the story of three strange bone-colored, vaguely bone-shaped and apparently Bone-named creatures that get lost in a strange and quite fantastical valley, aptly named the Valley. It does sound quite bland, but the world of *Bone* – envisioned by the charismatic Jeff Smith, who was also involved with the creation of this game – is charming, amazing, funny and deserving many more adjectives of the kind. Out from

Boneville, the comic book, has sold over 100,000 copies, and with good reason. The story might indeed start off slowly in the first episode, but it quickly picks up the pace and reaches epic proportions, without ever losing its goodhearted sense of humor. At certain points Bone can almost feel like a Disney tale, but it is much better than that. Believe me, even if Smith's work does come with a warm and fuzzy feeling, it is more like Asterix than Mickey Mouse. Mind you, the entire Bone epic spans more than 1000 pages.

The game closely follows the comic in terms of story, even though some inconsistencies can be found. One of them, a certain meeting of certain people with a certain fantastical beast, is quite a major divergence. On the other hand, I believe Jeff Smith must have been aware of the changes, and perhaps authorized them, taking into consideration the new interactive medium.



The plot, in both game and comic, starts innocently enough. Three cousins named Fone, Phoney and Smiley, the three aforementioned Bone-creatures, get kicked out of Boneville, their appropriately name hometown. They proceed to get hopelessly lost and entangled in humorous Tolkienesque events. This being the first Bone episode –I did mention Bone games are episodic didn't I? (well, I should have) – is more of an introduction. You will get to acquire a lot of back-story information and key characters will be established. You won't actually experience a major portion of the excellent saga, but you will be able to value its worth. You will also meet Grandma Ben, Thorn, the almost-evil Rat creatures, and my favorite character the great Red Dragon himself.

Bone, apart from sporting an excellent story, is also a mildly innovative game, something I consider a wise move. It is an evolution of 3<sup>rd</sup> person point and click adventures, but not in the sense that the (awesome, beautiful, grand, etc) Grim



Fandango was. It's more of a Maniac Mansion to Day of the Tentacle evolution. The 3D engine and the simplified point and click interface (the icon changes over each hotspot accordingly and automatically) are a step forward and create the possibility of actual cinematic direction and storytelling while still maintaining a look and feel similar to Monkey Island – which definitely is a good thing. The built-in hint system is a great idea, sleekly implemented, and to be

rather frank a generally needed addition. Having initially subtle and progressively more explicit hints provided for you saves the trouble of exiting the game and surfing the net for a walkthrough, which in our conformist times is readily available. A tutorial for people who have never played an adventure game is also included. Another interesting innovation is the new dialog system that gives you the possibility to fluidly and intuitively engage in (surreal) conversations with more than one character at a time. And speaking of surrealism, you'll meet quiche-eating monsters and engage a giant leaf-like bug in a captivating chat.



Instead of trying to revolutionize the adventure genre, Telltale has tried to create a really good adventure game by sticking to the roots. You will progress through the linear plot through puzzles, mini games, a little inventory manipulation, and dialogs. Everything is an organic part of the ongoing story and even though puzzles are on the easy side, they are quite rewarding and well implemented. The only problem seems to appear in some arcade sequences,

like the Rat creature chase, where – despite the newer versions and patches – serious game play problems and bugs are encountered. In a short game like Bone, the fact that the two almost identical chase sequences exist does not bode well either. Thankfully, in version 1.5 of Bone, you can bypass the scene (and every other arcade section).

Puzzles and mini-games do tend to change in tone and logic, according to whom you control. Fone Bone will sweet-talk his way out, while Phoney Bone might just insult the wrong person (or bug). Smiley, the third Bone cousin, isn't a playable character. Unfortunately, Phoney's reversed hide and seek puzzle is tedious, illogical, and boring, despite originally sounding like an interesting idea.

Reviewing Bone, as you may have already gathered, is more of an exercise in dialectics than an ordinary game review. At one point you love it, at another you find it disappointing, and you always believe it will evolve by overcoming its contradictions. The 3D engine is nice and allows for cinematic panning, cuts, and close-ups, but the scenery is mostly empty and not so interactive. The dialogue quality is excellent, even though sometimes directly lifted from the comic. The dialog system itself is has a simple and elegant idea concept, but the dialog



trees are a bit clumsy, repetitive, and not as fluid as they should have been. The soundtrack is one of the best ever released and the voice acting is above average, but the whole cinematic feeling is marred by a few horrible 3D models. Thorn in particular, instead of a beautiful young girl, tends to look more like a blocky unshaded poser-created zombie, wearing a metal blondish wig. To be fair, the Bone cousins' models with their expressive eyebrows, as well as the extra-cute Possum kids, and the Great Red Dragon (despite missing his cigarette) are lovely. However, for every little thing that shows a loving attention to detail, there is another that reveals the game was rushed. You have a very nice save system, and then you can't have Fone Bone run. You have well-designed character close-ups, but mediocre lip-synching. And there is no Winter coming to the Valley, which might be irrelevant to most (?), but fans of the graphic novels will definitely miss it.

To be fair, as well as frank, really good looking, well educated, with a huge car, and with olympic level athletic skills, I must admit that Bone is an overall great game. The game is being published by its original creators, and not through a huge multinational corporation. This accounts for many of Bone's limitations, which Telltale seems to be slowly overcoming. Who knows? We could be witnessing the birth of the first truly important independent game developer. The future will tell. Buy Bone. Bye.

Score: 80/100



**Developer:** Telltale Games  
**Publisher:** Telltale Games  
**Platform:** PC  
**Genre:** Adventure  
**Release Date:** September 2005  
**Grade:** 80/100

**Minimum System Requirements (PC):**  
 Windows® 2000/XP  
 Pentium® III 800 MHz  
 32 MB Video Card  
 DirectX® 8.1

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# Hope Springs Eternal

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PC Review by Suz

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Hope Springs Eternal is second installment in the Carol Reed Mysteries. It is a very nice sequel to Remedy. The game was developed by the husband and wife team of Mikael and Eleen Nyqvist and published by their company MDNA games. The game is very stable. There were no glitches or crashes while playing the game.

Hope Springs Eternal continues the story of Carol trying to build her newly acquired detective agency. After several cases involving finding lost dogs and cats, Carol receives a call from Katarina, the sister of the man from whom she acquired the detective Agency. A teacher at Katarina's school has been missing for several days and Katarina asks you to look into her disappearance. As you speak to people, find clues, and solve puzzles, the story behind Anna's disappearance gradually emerges.

The story leads you through different sites in a Swedish town. The graphics are lovely, with an impressionist or watercolor feel to the landscapes. There are many rooms and areas to explore that are not necessary for completion of the game, but they add nicely to the atmosphere. The characters you meet along the way are real people with good voice acting. The only minor complaint is that often you will see still images of the person speaking as you hear their voice. It is a little disconcerting to look at someone and hear them talk while their lips are not moving.



Most of the puzzles in the game use a simple inventory system. It's pretty obvious what you need and how it goes together. However there are six puzzles in the game that do not involve inventory items. They all come with a bypass button. If you cannot or simply do not want to solve them, click on the bypass on the lower right of the screen and the puzzle will be solved for you. The puzzles



aren't difficult if you know what you are trying to do, but the lack of instructions can make them a little frustrating.

Game play is basic point and click, a gear shows up if you need something in your inventory to solve a puzzle, the hand appears to pick up or manipulate items. The speech bubble appears if there is something to say to someone. It is recommended that you always follow all the dialog options. You can't make a fatal mistake. The game can be saved whenever or wherever you want to save.

## Conclusions

Hope Springs Eternal is a well made adventure. It is a nice, not terribly difficult game to try, especially if you are new to gaming. There is a good plot and short dialog. It won't take an experienced gamer very long to play through Hope Springs Eternal. However if you are looking for a pleasant afternoon game then you will enjoy this one.



In general, if you like the Nancy Drew series you should try both chapters of the Carol Reed Mysteries.

The final grade is 85/100.



**Developer:** Mikael and Eleen Nyqvist  
**Publisher:** MDNA Games  
**Platform:** PC  
**Genre:** Adventure  
**Release Date:** October 2005  
**Grade:** 85/100

**Minimum System Requirements (PC):**  
 Windows® 98/2000/XP  
 Pentium® 800 MHz  
 64 MB RAM  
 8 MB Video Card  
 CD-ROM Drive  
 Keyboard, mouse, speakers

# Clink

PC Review by Ugur Sener

Quietly standing on the porch in front of your house, perhaps you expect this to be no more than an ordinary day. You know that many options lay ahead of you on this pleasant autumn morning. The ever-busy downtown area, the beautiful Waterfront, and the soothing park across the street are all beckoning you. But there is something different in the air. As you step off the porch and start exploring, you get the feeling that you are about to embark on an exciting journey. Through many twists and turns you will discover carefully hidden secrets and see the town from a whole new perspective. Whichever direction you choose to take, today will be anything but ordinary.



Clink is a text adventure from the one-man-army Mike Tolar. The entire game is built on a series interconnected Web pages. Each page of Clink has one or more hyperlinks embedded within the text. You will travel through the game by clicking on these links. The links might take you to detailed descriptions of objects or advance the story as you make decisions. Your journey through Clink will have many interesting twists and turns. While there is only one ending and a definite direct path to get to it, Clink has a remarkable amount of content waiting to be discovered. Given the fact that the game spans over more than 2800 pages with a vast multitude available paths, each person playing Clink will have a somewhat different experience



The story in Clink humbly begins just outside your house. You will not be playing as an invincible warrior or an almighty wizard. You will not be traveling across time or saving the world from an alien invasion. Instead, Clink has an engrossing tale about discovering the secrets hidden in your own backyard. As you set off to explore the city, you will make many curious discoveries eventually leading to the unraveling of a great conspiracy. You will have to match wits

with the Badster Gang, the police, your strange neighbors, and a very aggressive and highly offensive sewer entrance. You will come to realize that people and places are not always who or what they appear to be.

Playing through Clink and finding your way to the end of the adventure will certainly test your observation skills. Clink may not have the conventional inventory-based puzzles you might expect from a graphic adventure game. However, the game does feature a number of sections where you will need to piece together clues and carefully examine the page you are viewing in order to make progress. Amidst the myriad of links available in Clink, the path will not always be clear. You might even get stuck at certain points in the game as you try to figure out how to make use of a specific clue. You may end up clicking through several sections more than once before you determine the correct path. However, a little patience and perseverance will get you a long way. Carefully examining each of the available locations should give you all the clues needed to reach the end of the game.



The simplicity of Clink's technology makes the game extremely accessible. The game does not feature any scripting languages or dynamically generated Web pages. Once you download the game and unzip the files, you do not even have to stay online to enjoy Clink. To ensure the game will display correctly under most screen resolutions, Mike Tolar has designed two versions of Clink. Once you open the first page of the game in your Web browser, you have the option to switch to the version designed for lower screen resolutions. Since the game utilizes nothing besides standard Web page styling elements, it should display and run smoothly on just about any Web browser.

While Clink is not an exceptionally lengthy adventure, journeying through the game should still keep you occupied for several hours. Especially given the multitude of optional content and the different paths you can explore, Clink can easily keep you in front of the monitor into the late hours of the night. Even if you happen to stumble upon the correct path through the game and get to the ending easily, it is highly recommended that you go back and explore all the different options. Carefully going through each section of the game does reveal factoids that should make the ending of the story more fulfilling.

Unfortunately, the brilliant simplicity of Clink's technology might create a small problem when it is coupled with the fact that you may not necessarily get all the way through Clink in a single session. The game does not internally have a save-game mechanism that allows you to record your progress. Fortunately, you can

easily circumvent this issue in a couple of ways. The first solution is to simply add the page you are viewing to your favorites list. Bookmarking the current page in this fashion should give you an easy way to get back to it when you are ready to resume the game. Alternatively, you can try a more manual approach and make a note of the specific page you are viewing. Your browser's address bar should tell you the exact address. You can directly return to the designated page later to resume the game.

It is worth mentioning that Clink has a good amount of humor. As your character occasionally puts up with a remarkable amount of misfortune due to a small lapse of judgment or you make an important discovery through sheer dumb luck, Clink might get more than a few chuckles out of you. The lighthearted tone of the game and Mike Tolar's skillful writing make for an enjoyable read. In fact, as recognition of the quality of writing featured in the game, Clink was recently added to the Electronic Literature Directory ([directory.eliterature.org](http://directory.eliterature.org)).



Clink is without a doubt a commendable effort. If nothing else, Mike Tolar deserves congratulations for the sheer amount of effort it must have taken to create Clink. The massive amount of Web pages and links is truly impressive. The game also succeeds in delivering an entertaining story. Once you get into the game and start navigating through its pages, you should feel its inherent charm that quite simply cannot be captured by the best-looking 3D graphics engine. Clink is easily recommended to fans of text-based adventure games or anyone who has ever read and enjoyed a Choose Your Own Adventure novel. Even if you have never tried interactive fiction before, you should at least consider playing the demo version of Clink to get a feel for how the game works. When you finish the game, you will likely be left with that bittersweet feeling of having completed a good novel. Here's hoping that Mike is already working on a sequel.

To purchase the game or play the free demo, visit the official Clink Web site is at: [www.ClinkAdventure.com](http://www.ClinkAdventure.com)

The final grade is 87/100.

**Developer:** Mike Tolar  
**Publisher:** Mike Tolar  
**Platform:** PC  
**Genre:** Text Adventure  
**Release Date:** 2006  
**Grade:** 87/100

## Last Half of Darkness: Shadows of the Servants

PC Review by Wendy Nellius

**Child's voice:** Hey Mister, is it true a witch used to live in this town?

**Deep whispering voice:** Have you ever heard the story of the last half of darkness?

**Child's voice:** No Mister, tell me.

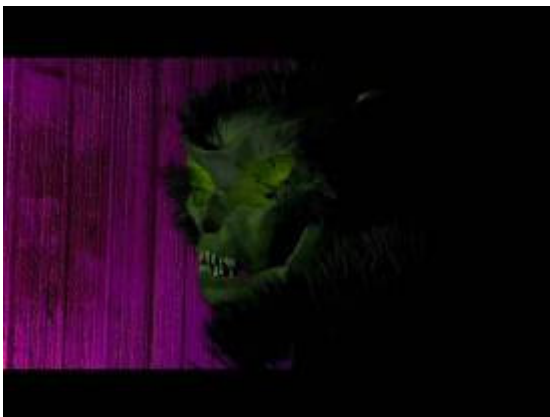
Remember the last time you saw a scary movie that had you jumping in your seat? Sometimes that movie would stay in your subconscious, causing you to drive home with your car's interior light on the whole time. You know --- just in case.



Could a PC game possibly replicate those same kinds of feelings? It can if it's Last Half of Darkness: Shadows of the Servants. What may be surprising is that Last Half of Darkness: Shadows of the Servants was created by an independent developer: WRF Studios (WRF standing for creator William R. Fisher). When asked via email by this reviewer about the inspiration for the game, Bill Fisher supplied this response:

*"As far as background.... I created the original version back in 1989. It contained only 16 colors and very little animation. It was well received by the public so my interest grew and continued programming. In recent years I thought perhaps it's time to create another chapter using newer technology to provide a little scarier experience."*

While not having had a chance to play the original version, one can only guess at the changes that were made. Whatever the changes, this latest version is sure to get your blood pumping and the hair on the back of your neck standing up.



Our story begins years ago when Dr. Muretta, a young scientist with extensive knowledge of witchcraft returns from the Brazilian rain forest where she was researching the dark arts. With her, she brings her dear pet Jaja, a spider monkey she found in the rain forest. Unfortunately, Jaja was attacked and bitten by unknown mutated monkeys on the last trip. Slowly, Jaja's temperament changes from that of a loving pet to

aggressive and evil; so evil that Muretta has to put him to sleep. Is this a seemingly sad end for Jaja? If only that was the case... Jaja returns from the dead weeks later and attacks Muretta. Thinking that the existence of his remains has something to do with the reappearance, Muretta burns Jaja's remains. However, this turns out to be a mistake of monumental proportions. This error causes Jaja's spirit to be trapped in limbo, allowing him to infiltrate the minds of the estate's inhabitants for years; inhabitants including Muretta's daughters (Mira in particular).

Hoping against hope to rid the estate of this evil, Dr. Muretta attempts to clone Jaja using DNA in an effort to reverse the damage she originally created, but this only results in the unleashing of even more evil servants. Before she dies, Muretta asks Mira to destroy all her notes. Mira is hesitant to do so, but she is wary of the servants reading her mother's notes. To prevent this, Mira only destroys portions of her mother's work in hopes that someone would come along to continue the work and release her from this prison of darkness.



You begin your journey in a hotel room. A strange book sitting on the table calls to you. You're not sure why you're here. What you don't know is that the dark arts have been used to summon you here to help. You are not the first to be called but the biggest question is "Will you be the last"? You decide to check out the town where you will find dark alleys and creepy people. Not a good sign.

On the horizon, you get your first sight of the dark mansion estate. Now, if this were real life, you would likely get in your rental car and get the heck out of there.

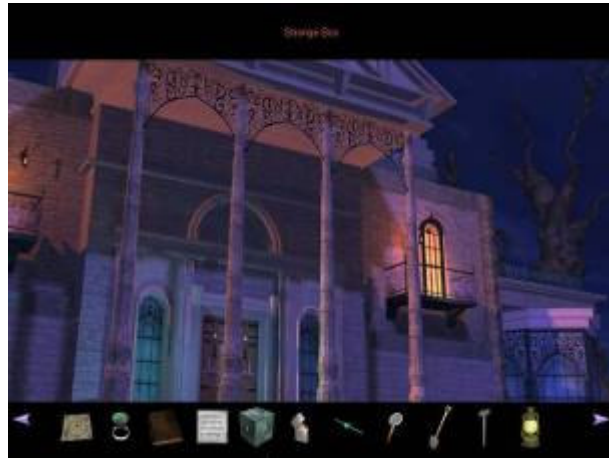


But, you must understand that just like those scary movies, you will of course do the stupid thing and head right for the mansion. Well, if you didn't, it wouldn't be much of a game. The mansion is where the story comes alive. The mansion is the root of the evil. The mansion is where you get the "you know what" scared out of you. So, be prepared.

Last Half of Darkness: Shadows of the Servants comes in a DVD case

with one CD, a printed game manual, a mystic chart (for use during the game) and a single sheet marked “Designer’s notes”. It was quite a surprise to see a printed game manual as most independent developers do not include one. The “Designer’s Notes” page gives some tips on how to play the game. The first tip notes the best way to play the game is preferably at night with all the lights turned off and the volume turned up. This will allow for maximum immersion into the dark story. Right! I read that and proceeded to play with all the lights on and only when my husband was home. Call me crazy, but I personally like to sleep nightmare free. Trust me, this game would be immersive with the lights on and 50 people in the room. But, for those of you who like to live on the edge, go ahead and play as suggested.

Last Half of Darkness: Shadows of the Servants is a first person point and click horror game. You will need to use your keyboard a few times to type in some words pertaining to puzzles. Moving around is quite easy. Locations already uncovered are clearly marked by cursor and text description. When an item can be examined the cursor will turn purple. When an item can be interacted with, the cursor will turn red. Inventory is easily accessed by moving your mouse over the bottom black section of the screen. The main menu is accessed at the top of the screen the same way. There are 10 save slots available, but they can be overwritten as you progress in the game. Game play is linear, allowing you to progress through the story in multiple ways and at your own pace.



There isn't a whole lot of voice acting in Shadows of the Servants, but the voices that are highlighted in the game are all equally creepy. Some voices invoke the scratchy sounds of death while others whisper to you from the shadowy halls. Music, while also adding to the mood of the game is in short supply. This actually emphasizes the ambient sounds that send a shiver up your spine as you investigate your environment.

As you stand in silence in the hotel room wondering what you're supposed to be doing ---- BAM ---- a loud (and I mean really loud) crash of thunder will jolt you

out of your seat. As you wander through the mansion, desolate moans, whispers, and what sounds like energy forces follow you. Some rooms are completely and utterly silent. The balance between the two will have you looking over your shoulder.

Considering this is an independent game, it was surprising to see such wonderful 3D environments. It is obvious that a lot of work was done here. The use of shadows and candlelight really make the difference between just a room and a spooky room that you're hesitant to enter. Add in secret rooms, a graveyard, a swamp, not to mention that beastly town leading up to the mansion.



Now, the real clincher in creating the fear factor is the spirits that jump out at you. Yes, you read this correctly. You will be walking around minding your own business (ok, not really minding your own business) and something will fly right



at you. There is no warning. All you're left with is a dent in your ceiling from where your head hit and maybe some extra money in the good old curse jar. After playing the game twice, this reviewer has enough money in the curse jar to buy another copy of the game. Even knowing where it's going to happen doesn't help much. It just makes you a little more paranoid as you try in vain to remember what the trigger was so you can avoid it or look away in time.

While the puzzles are not overwhelmingly difficult, they do require a lot of actual thought. Most of the puzzles involve cryptic little poems/verses that you find throughout the game. Make sure you have a pen and paper nearby as not all the clues can be taken with you. One clue is glued to the bottom of a drawer so you will want to write it down. Solving one puzzle may give you a clue to another. For example, in the beginning of the game you get to play a cup game. This is where a ball is placed under one of three cups. Then they're shifted around and you have to guess where the ball is. Guessing correctly 3 times in a row will get you a verbal clue.





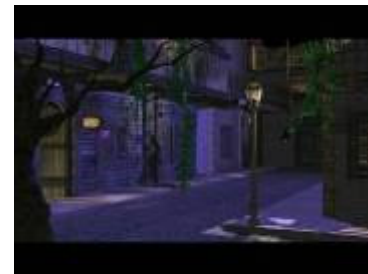
Another puzzle involves a game similar to Bejeweled. Completing this game gets you another clue that won't be used for quite a while. Other puzzles require you to press items in a certain order according to poems/verses you received elsewhere. And yes, there is the dreaded maze. Although there are only 2 places you really need to get to in this 3D maze, it is quite disorienting despite the fact that Bill has provided a small onscreen map to track your location. White smoke/energy constantly floats in front of you which tends to throw you off course, but I suppose that is the point. You may need to consult Bill's walkthrough to determine exactly what you're looking for. Overall, puzzles make sense and fit in with the environment. The fact that they're a little different makes adds to the fun factor.



We don't really get a lot of horror games these days – especially ones that don't involve blood and gore. Last Half of Darkness: Shadows of the Servants is a wonderfully scary game that is entertaining, imaginative and immersive all at the same time. Visit [www.lasthalfofdarkness.com](http://www.lasthalfofdarkness.com) and check it out. It is worth the purchase. Make sure you buy some paint too so you can fix that ceiling when you're done with the game. Be sure to check out the bunch of bonus games Bill includes on the game CD. They're quite a lot of fun.

The walkthrough can be found at [www.lasthalfofdarkness.com/walkthrough.htm](http://www.lasthalfofdarkness.com/walkthrough.htm)

Final Grade: 94/100



**Developer:** WRF Studios  
**Publisher:** WRF Studios  
**Platform:** PC  
**Genre:** Adventure  
**Release Date:** 2005  
**Grade:** 94/100

**Minimum System Requirements (PC):**  
 Windows® 98/ME/2000/XP  
 Pentium® III 500 MHz  
 64 MB RAM  
 32 MB Video Card  
 DirectX® 8.1 Compatible Soundcard  
 CD-ROM Drive

## Jack Orlando - A Cinematic Adventure - Director's Cut

PC Review by Sweetpea

This adventure, detective game was created and illustrated by world famous Hollywood animators and background artists like Aleksandra Bylica. The talent behind the nice sleazy jazzy soundtrack is Harold Faltermeyer, renowned for sounds on some well-known movies including Beverly Hills Cop, Running Man, and Tango & Cash.



Jack Orlando is a Toontraxx and JoWood Productions number of the point-and-click style, using keyboard only for inventory and options screen. It comes conveniently all on one disk so there's no swapping mid-game, which, if too frequent, can put a damper on a game.

The game is set in 1933, somewhere in America at the time of the end of prohibition. Everywhere is stocking up on quality whiskey and excitement brews at the lifting of the drinking ban.

Jack Orlando is a "hat n Mac" private investigator who, after a quiet period in his career, gets involuntarily embroiled in a murder case. He has a knack for being in the wrong place at the wrong time. Luckily, being on a first name basis with the chief of police, Jack is granted 48 hours to get himself off the hook and nail the real suspect. On his journey to clear his name, Jack will travel throughout many different locations and discover a much bigger plot!

The inventory is stored nicely on the inside of Jack's Mac, which holds an unrealistic amount of items - the majority of which you will not be needing at any point throughout the game. It can be difficult enough to figure out what you need to do to make progress at some points, let alone which item to use!



The sheer quantity of useless gumph you will find to fill your Mac is definitely the worst part of the game. Some of the puzzles were interesting ideas, but nothing

astoundingly innovative. The true highlight of Jack Orlando is the smooth animation/graphics.

In summary, I enjoyed playing this game, traversing the many scenes and talking to the many and varied characters. There are over 20 different interactive characters. The basis of the story was also great, however, in my opinion the game could have had a better flow. It is entertaining to go through the game for the first time, but few players will probably be tempted to hit these mean streets more than once.



Mainly due to its pleasant graphics, Jack Orlando is a notch above being bargain bin material, but it is nothing breathtaking.

The final grade is 65/100



**Developer:** Toontraxx  
**Publisher:** JoWood Productions  
**Platform:** PC  
**Genre:** Adventure  
**Release Date:** 2001  
**Grade:** 65/100

**Minimum System Requirements (PC):**  
 Windows® 95/98/ME/2000/Me  
 Pentium® 200 MHz  
 64 MB RAM  
 DirectX® 8.0 Compatible Video Card  
 Windows Compatible Sound Card  
 8x CD-ROM Drive  
 Mouse and Keyboard

# The Moment of Silence

PC Review by Fallen Angel

## Story:

This is a game about mystery, conspiracies and corruption. '1984' comes to life right in front of your eyes. Your thoughts imprinted in a journal, your strictly confidential conversations, and all the things that you may regard as personal data are no longer considered as such. Manuscripts are forbidden. All information should be available in the Global Network

(today's internet) in order for anyone to have access to it. You will be playing The Moment of Silence as Peter Wright. You will be helping your neighbor to find her husband, who has been kidnapped by the NYPD. As you proceed through the story, you will hear theories talking about aliens, talk to some obviously mad characters, and seek evidence on government conspiracies. Little by little, Big Brother's conspiracy will be uncovered... Or is it all just a myth that captured your fantasy due to the circumstances? Whatever the truth is, one thing is for sure: MoS is not just another game in which your character is trying to save the world. It has gist and substance.



MoS's unreal story is characterized by a combination of today's conditions with myths and possible futuristic scenarios. The developers managed to combine all



these elements in a unique and exceptionally solid story that will strike you as incredibly realistic. The strong taste of realism is mostly due to the fact that everything has been based on today's technology and actual events. The game might bring a smile to your face every time you recognize the source of inspiration behind a particular portion of the game. However, even those who will not connect the story elements to actual events will be fascinated by the game's story.

There are many things I'd like to add regarding this game's story. That way you would be able to understand how many of its elements and ideas are based on real facts. Not to mention the fact that I could prove why this game surpasses by

far many others with its mature and exceptional story. Unfortunately though, I'd prefer to let you be excited while weaving possible scenarios as the story unfolds and be surprised with the unexpected vindication that awaits you at the end of the game. Words were never capable of describing the feelings you have while playing (or even watching) a story based on mystery and conspiracies. So I'm not going to ruin it for you by revealing anything else. Half the fun with this kind of story is trying to figure out what's happening, why it's happening and who's behind everything...

### **Puzzles:**

MoS's puzzles don't lack imagination even though they're classical. They're all logical and indissolubly connected to the story. For the most part, you have to solve the one puzzle before proceeding to the next. You also have to carefully examine screens for possible hot spots. The dialogues must be heard thoroughly, and Peter's messenger and PC must be used in several occasions since they are useful tools in solving the puzzles. These tools also help develop the story.

Mostly, MoS's puzzles consist of a combination of dialogue-based and inventory-based ones. Dialogue-based puzzles are quite interesting since the actual dialogues are very well-written. In these types of puzzles, you need to cover all possible dialogues with other characters in order to find out the information you need to proceed. Inventory-based puzzles are rather standard. You need to find items during your adventure and use them on the proper hotspot or give them to another character. The inventory-based puzzles will also occasionally require you to combine items. None of the puzzles are irrational, but you will have to be quite imaginative for some of them. During the majority of the game, the difficulty level is between easy and fair. However, two puzzles in particular demand a lot of thinking before you can solve them.



Players who despise action elements in adventure games will be pleased to hear that MoS features no action sequences. You cannot make any mistakes during the game that will cause your character to die either.

### **Graphics:**

One of the game's most appealing features is its graphics. The introduction video of MoS might make you think you are watching the beginning of a movie. The intriguing opening cinematics do an excellent job of pulling you effectively into the

game's world. MoS presents an astonishing world through its unreal and yet realistic sceneries. Realistic yes, but with futuristic elements since the story takes place in 2044. The apartments, the park, the office, the airport, SETI, Lunar 5 and all the other locations you are going to visit are proof of the hard work that has been put in this game. Detailed and colourful sceneries will make you feel as though you are really travelling to a strange yet familiar world.

All the 3D characters are rather convincing through their movement and expressions. Details like lip-synching or facial expressions are also remarkable for each interactive character. Unfortunately, the same level of detail wasn't given



to the non-active characters. On one hand they always appear at the same spot (a day later and she's still sitting in the airport's departure lounge?!) and on the other hand some of them aren't in realistic positions (they appear as though they are climbing down stairs, but they never move). This of course is a tiny detail compared to the overall graphic presentation of the game that's unique in every other aspect.

The movie scenes are top notch. All the action sequences of the game take place during the cinematics: police Special Forces swoops, flying objects that scan Peter's face in the middle of the night, destructions, dental removals, and many more. The direction and image succession is really outstanding. The cinematics kick in at the most fitting moment to push your excitement to the next level, to make you laugh, and to climax your feelings in a masterful way that many famous movies would envy.

### **Music - Dialogues:**

Excellent work has been done in this department as well. Unlike many games, in MoS you will never be tempted to lower the volume of the sound, to press the mute button, or to shut down your speakers. The acoustic pleasure that MoS offers sets a standard that other developers should strive to achieve. The atmospheric music changes depending on the place you're visiting and generates strong feelings on its own. MoS's voice acting is also of great quality.

The dialogues are indeed one of the main highlights of this game. The lengthy dialogue sequences are reminiscent of The Longest Journey. Through the various conversations, you will come to hear the background stories of important characters, discover information that you need in solving several puzzles, learn to cope with the reality of 2044, and get to know your character Peter. The dialogues combine true events with myths and hypothetical future scenarios

(Echelon project, SETI, Orwell's '1984', worldwide alien conspiracy, political corruption, matrix theory, etc) in order to create a seductive and addictive story. Finally, to my delight, the subtitles are also excellent.



The dialogue trees are rather practical and user-friendly. There's no right or wrong sequence of asking the questions you're given within your dialogue tree. When you ask a given question and receive all the possible answers on it, the text changes color to indicate that the person you are talking to can offer no new information on the indicated topic. However, the question still remains available on your dialogue tree. This makes for a crystal clear dialogue tree, where you know which things are yet to

be asked. You are also given the opportunity to listen to any of the conversation threads again. Another great detail is the possibility of escaping the dialogues in case you don't actually want to hear them again and chose the question by mistake. But please don't think that a game with so many dialogues will be boring. MoS's quantity of dialogues is one of its pros. They are so good that it would be a pity if there were fewer of them.

### Technical Problems - Bugs:

I must admit that MoS is not a perfect game. And I'm really sorry that I have to say this because I think it could have been much better if some technical problems had been solved before the game's release. First of all, Peter's movement is rather awkward. Regardless of the spot he is standing on the screen, when you press on a hot spot he will always follow the same path to get there. So, you often watch Peter go back to the spot where the animation starts and then go where you wanted him to in the first place. You will end up watching Peter go back and forth across rooms many times. Furthermore, he sometimes walks through trees, on walls, or even completely disappears off your screen while walking on a side wall! Another frustrating surprise that is in store for you is the fact that some exit points aren't always obvious and demand of you to move Peter to a specific spot in order to become apparent. I should, however,



mention that House of Tales made sure that this wouldn't be a serious problem by adding a button that marks all possible exit points of a screen.

Some have encountered more severe problems, like disappearance of the cursor and system crashes. Even though you can have an immediate solution to those problems on the official Web site of the game, they are still problems that should have been avoided in an otherwise great game. Finally, I feel the need to point out that you must install the patch of the game in order to be able to complete it. There's a puzzle that cannot be solved without the patch, since the information you are given on that puzzle is mistaken.

### Conclusion:

With its cinematographic flow, MoS takes you to a possible future reality in a realistic and above all imposing way. Having played this game you will think twice before mentioning Bin Laden's name on your cell or in an e-mail. Don't forget that the future has already begun...

It's an impressive game that will nail you down for approximately 25 hours (a lot more than most recent adventure games will do). It may suffer from some technical problems, but I honestly think that the game's great features far outweigh the technical problems. MoS brings intrigue, conspiracies, challenges, worries, and above all entertainment through a feast of colors and sounds. I truly believe it's one of the best adventure games that was released during the past few years and should be a role model to future projects.



The final grade is 93/100.

**Developer:** House of Tales  
**Publisher:** Digital Jesters  
**Platform:** PC  
**Genre:** Adventure  
**Release Date:** 2004  
**Grade:** 93/100

**Minimum System Requirements (PC):**  
 Windows® 98/ME/2000/XP  
 Pentium® II 450 or equivalent  
 64MB RAM  
 32MB 3D graphics card  
 DirectX® 9  
 DirectX® 9 compatible sound card  
 2x speed DVD ROM drive



## Delaware St. John Volume 1: The Curse of Midnight Manor

PC Review by Ugur Sener

How long ago did you start having the dreams? They were infrequent at first. Distant cries and pleas for help. Echoes resonating in the darkness. As you grew older, the dreams became more and more frequent. You could hear the voices from beyond the grave. These troubled spirits were asking for your help.



You knew you had to answer the call. The dead beckoned you to help and sought release from their eternal torture. You knew the journey would not be easy. You would be faced with incredible danger. You would uncover terrible truths and see horrible images that would haunt you for the rest of your life. But you have a unique gift and you know you have to use it. Your nightmares, your psychic visions, and your ability to see ghosts makes you one of the few people that can help bring peace to the spirits of the dead. You are Delaware St. John, adventurer, explorer, and detective of the paranormal. But to the lost spirits wondering the halls of Midnight Manor, you could be salvation.

The Curse of Midnight Manor is the first chapter of a very promising series of adventure games from Big Time Games. Delaware St. John, the hero of the series, works with his partner Kelly Bradford to investigate supernatural events. The detectives use all means necessary to bring rest to trouble spirits. Yet recurring visions cause Delaware to leave his partner behind and drive out to Midnight Manor alone. The abandoned hotel resonates with negative energy. Ghosts roam the corridors and threaten anyone who dares to enter. Delaware



will have to rely on his wit and his infallible instincts uncover what happened at Midnight Manor.

Thankfully, Delaware will not be completely alone. Even though she is not actively on the field, Kelly will help the detective through a highly advanced device known as VIC (Voice Imagery Communicator). Using VIC, Delaware can take pictures and record sounds. He can then send

these over to Kelly for analysis. Her findings will be invaluable in helping Delaware solve the mystery and help the spirits haunting the manor.



The Curse of Midnight manor is played from a first-person perspective. The game features a very simple interface. The mouse icon turns into an arrow if Delaware can move in an indicated direction. The hand icon denotes objects Delaware can pick up, and the eye icon identifies objects Delaware can inspect closer. Adventure gamers will feel right at home with the game's familiar, simple, and intuitive interface.

Your investigation at Midnight Manor is divided into two stories. The first story begins as Delaware arrives at the old building. He quickly finds out that a group of teenagers recently came to the abandoned manor to spend the night. But something terrible happened and the teenagers inexplicably disappeared. It will be up to the detective to figure out what really happened and bring piece to the lingering spirits. As he continues to explore the manor, Delaware will realize that the disappearance of the teenagers is hardly the worst thing that happened here. The second story takes the investigation deeper as Delaware unravels the dreadful history of the building.

The first volume of Delaware St. John offers a number of inventory-based challenges and logic puzzles that would be expected from any adventure game. The game also makes great use of Delaware's unique abilities nicely integrates them into the puzzles as well as the storyline. Going through the hotel, Delaware will frequently have visions of ghosts. These visions will often show Delaware events that already took place at the hotel. But sometimes the specters will interact with Delaware directly. They will help Delaware discover important clues and guide him to safety when the detective is in danger. On a few occasions, Delaware will also have a vision about the location of an item he has to find. Coupled with the



ability to analyze images and sound recordings through Kelly, the ghost sightings make for rather distinct game play mechanics in The Curse of Midnight Manor. When conventional adventuring tools are just not enough, the unique gifts and technology at Delaware's disposal come to the rescue and add a welcome feeling of freshness and depth to the game.

It is worth noting that The Curse of Midnight Manor does have a couple of light action sequences. There are a few moments in the game where Delaware has to outrun a powerful evil creature called the Hunter. There is another sequence where Delaware will have to quickly use a charm to ward off evil spirits charging at him. These sequences are not very difficult and even pure adventure gamers who will never approach an action game should be able to get past them easily. The game also lets you try any action sequence again immediately if you happen to fail it the first time around. You do not need to go back to a saved game. While the inclusion of any kind of action is typically a reason to complain about an adventure game, in The Curse of Midnight Manor, these sequences actually help make the game scarier by adding a sense of urgency.

The Curse of Midnight Manor certainly succeeds delivering a scary environment. Between the ghost sightings, haunting noises, and the delightfully creepy music, players will definitely feel the suspenseful mood. This is not the Resident Evil kind of scare where you never know what is about to jump at you from around the corner. There is a different feeling of suspense in the game that comes from knowing that you are in a haunted place where unspeakable things happened. Delaware St. John may not have you clinging to the edge of your seat or constantly looking behind you just to make sure angry spirits are not about to attack. However, you should still feel the scary mood especially if you play the game alone.



However, the game is not a constant barrage of scary moments. The Curse of Midnight Manor has plenty of good humor to lighten the mood. The continued interaction between Kelly and Delaware serves to make the game more colorful. Hearing them argue about Delaware taking a picture of the creature chasing him is especially funny. Voice actors Phil Quinn and Sonnet Carpenter do a great job of delivering Delaware and Kelly's lines. In fact the entire game features very good voice acting. The echo effects for the ghosts are also nicely handled.

An even greater part of the humor comes from the fact that the game does not take itself too seriously. For instance, the manor does have quite a large number of locked doors, which can be a bit frustrating. But when Delaware himself complains about the sheer number of locked doors to Kelly or mutters an angry remark upon being unable to open a door, the frustration is greatly alleviated. Delaware also cracks jokes about the names given to the legendary creatures he hears about during the course of his investigation. Good natured humor from Delaware and Kelly makes their characters feel more three dimensional. You will feel that despite their unusual lives, you can relate to the two detectives.

The Curse of Midnight Manor is a great experience from start to finish. The game can easily be recommended to anyone who enjoys adventure games. If you especially enjoy games with a scary theme, you will be in for a real treat. The first chapter in the series is a clear success. It's a good thing that the second volume is already available. When you are done with The Curse of Midnight Manor, all you'll want to do is play the next chapter.

The final grade is a well-deserved 91/100.



**Developer:** Big Time Games  
**Publisher:** Big Time Games  
**Platform:** PC  
**Genre:** Adventure  
**Release Date:** June 2005  
**Grade:** 91/100

**Minimum System Requirements (PC):**  
 Windows® 98/ME/2000/XP  
 Pentium® 600  
 256MB RAM  
 SVGA Graphics Card  
 Sound Card  
 DirectX® 9  
 16x CD ROM Drive

## *Shards of a Broken Sword*



The year is 1996. Revolution releases Broken Sword: The Shadow of the Templars. An adventure gaming legend is born as players meet the witty and quirky George Stobbart and Nico Collard for the first time.

It all starts as an innocent vacation in Europe. George is pleasantly sitting at a café in Paris. But his vacation quickly turns into an investigation when the café is bombed and a man is killed. He soon meets the journalist Nico Collard who is also researching the case. In a beautifully told and richly entertaining adventure, George travels to many locations around the world and uncovers a big conspiracy involving the Knights Templar.

One year after the release of the original game, the second chapter brings George and Nico back together. This time Nico is also a playable character. In Broken Sword II: The Smoking Mirror, the duo start off investigating a drug trade. But they once again discover a much bigger plot. Except this time they are dealing with a Mayan cult instead of the legendary knights.

Several years pass without a new installment in the series. Finally, in 2003, Revolution delivers Broken Sword 3: The Sleeping Dragon. The third chapter marks the migration of the series into the world of 3D adventure gaming. But while The Sleeping Dragon looks and plays significantly differently than the previous two installments, Revolution stays true to the spirit of Broken Sword and delivers another excellent adventure gaming experience. George and Nico travel together in a more direct sequel to The Shadow of the Templars.

Recently, Revolution announced the fourth chapter in the series. Hearing about Broken Sword 4: The Angel of Death has inspired us to go back and take a look at the previous chapters of Broken Sword. Starting with Donna's review of Broken Sword: The Shadow of the Templars on this issue, we will review all three chapters in the next few months. We will conclude the Shards of a Broken Sword series with a preview of The Angel of Death. We hope that those of you who have played through the Broken Sword games will join us as we revisit the series. And those of you who are yet to discover the world of Broken Sword can find out why you need to play these games as soon as possible!

## Broken Sword: The Shadow of the Templars

PC Review by Donna

Do you like animated movies? If you are answer is yes, then you are going to love the graphics of Broken Sword: The Shadow of the Templars (released as The Circle of Blood in the U.S.A.). Although the screen resolution is fixed at 640x480, the graphics look stunning. Tiny details, that a casual onlooker may not even notice are what breathes life into this game. You will not encounter a single completely *static* screen, oh no. There is always something moving – people in the background, a cat sleeping in the sun, foliage moving in the wind... The developers clearly paid a lot of attention to details and the overall mood set by the graphics. And what a great mood there is! Graphics, being cartoony as they are, disguise a complex and dark story.



The music in Broken Sword is also very nice, even though it is subtle. The soundtrack mainly consists of orchestra work. Sometimes you won't even notice the music, but it adds so much to the atmosphere. One particularly nice touch is that certain music plays when you discover an important clue.

Now, let's get into the main reason you will want to play this game: the story. You will find yourself in the shoes of George Stobbart, a law student from California, who is having a vacation in Paris. The vacation is, however, ruined by a clown, who bombs the café you're sitting in. So, the place goes SPLODEY, but George manages to survive the explosion. What the hell is going on and why are you putting that clown nose into your pocket? Lovely reporter/photographer Nicola "Nico" Collard will help you in answering those questions (and more).



Without giving anything away, I am just going to tell you that the story revolves around Templars, the Holy Knights (Warrior Monks, if you like) and it's toying with the idea that they still might exist, under the name of Neo-Templars.

Remember to save your progress often. While Broken Sword features a captivating story, you can die at a few points of the game if you make a mistake.

The game is pure point-and-click. The cursor changes depending on the actions you can perform. Different cursors indicate whether you can use/operate an object, examine a room, pick something up, or simply scroll to the other side of the screen. The little helping hand will turn you into a kleptomaniac extraordinaire by the end of the game! Sometimes I wonder if George's pockets have a bottom...



*Most* puzzles are inventory-based. They require a lot of talking, searching, and a brain that can think logically, but in a creative way. One of more noteworthy creative brainstorming products is the Stobbart Stick-Towel. A neat little invention, I have to add.

Throughout the game, you will encounter a variety of characters. From sunny Spain to eerie Templar catacombs, Broken Sword has a lot to offer. There are inspectors, clowns, Templars, pretty girls, and some guys who want to kill you. I guess a game cannot go without that little detail. Every single character has a strong personality and it's really hard to hate any one of them.

One thing that will make you never forget the game is humor. Broken Sword is packed with heavy sarcasm and funny scenes that will make you want to replay the game over and over again. Pure Stobbart humor is a trademark of the Broken Sword games, something that makes the series unique and incredibly pleasant to play.

In the end of it all, Broken Sword: The Shadow of the Templars is a one-of-a-kind game that will provide you hours and hours of sheer fun, and also make you learn a few things. Travel the world, start an urban myth or two, discover a dark secret... The trailer doesn't lie. This game rocks.



Grade: 95/100

**Developer:** Revolution  
**Publisher:** Virgin Interactive  
**Platform:** PC; PS1  
**Genre:** Adventure  
**Release Date:** September 2006  
**Grade:** 95/100

**Minimum System Requirements (PC):**  
 Windows® 98/ME/XP  
 (Not Windows Me compatible)  
 Pentium® 486.66 Mhz  
 8MB RAM  
 VESA 2.0 compatible SVGA Graphics Card  
 SoudbBlaster compatible Sound Card  
 2x CD ROM Drive

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## The Mystery of the Mummy

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PC Review by Ugur Sener

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Sherlock Holmes is perhaps one of the most fitting main characters for an adventure game. Originally created by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Holmes is nothing short of a detective novel legend. With his incredibly keen eye for details and brilliant deductive reasoning skills, he can crack the toughest case and uncover the best hidden truths. Long after Doyle wrote the first Sherlock Holmes novel, *A Study in Scarlet*, the detective still continues to inspire mysteries.



Take this famous detective and put him in a manor laden with puzzles, secret passages, hidden treasures, and traps. Add a mystery to put Holmes's deductive reasoning to test. Throw in an Egyptian theme for good measure. Surely you will have the makings of an excellent adventure game... Then again, it takes more than a good detective and a promising setting to create a great adventure game. The *Mystery of the Mummy* ultimately falls short of the mark.

The story begins as Sherlock Holmes arrives at Lord Montcalfe's manor. Shortly after returning from an expedition to Egypt, Lord Montcalfe becomes increasingly unstable. According to the police report, the old man eventually goes insane and kills himself. Yet the scientist's young daughter Elizabeth is unwilling to believe this story. She calls upon Holmes to discover what really happened at the manor. The old building is full of mysteries and Elizabeth can offer no guidance. Sherlock will be alone as he goes through this strange place to uncover the truth.



Although it is delivered through a somewhat bland opening video, *The Mystery of the Mummy* has an interesting premise. All the strange contraptions scattered around the mansion are clearly hiding something. Letters and notes you will find speak of supernatural influences. Gaining access into different areas of the manor and piecing together the evidence to discover what really happened to Lord Montcalfe will not be easy.





However, *The Mystery of the Mummy* is not a game directly focused on plot development. The game certainly does have some plot twists that will challenge your perception of the case. Your initial ideas as to what might be going on at the manor will change by the time you get to the end of the game. But you will also discover that there is really not too much to the mystery. Players who pay close attention to the clues that

can be found as you get throughout the game may solve most of the mystery long before reaching the end of the game. The considerable number of puzzles, not the plot, takes the center stage in *The Mystery of the Mummy*.

The entire game takes place inside the manor. *The Mystery of the Mummy* is divided into a five different levels. At any given point of time, players will be confined to a specific portion of the manor and certain areas will be inaccessible. However, this does not make *The Mystery of the Mummy* an easy game. While the manor does not provide a huge area for you to explore, the place is tightly packed with a large number of challenges. Players will quite literally have to explore every inch of the building to find all the important items and hints.

*The Mystery of the Mummy* features a variety of puzzles. There is a healthy amount of inventory-based challenges. Since a number of adventure gamers abhor slider puzzles, it is worth noting that *The Mystery of the Mummy* does have two of them. Along with some straightforward logic puzzles, the game also has a number of puzzles that will require you to enter a specific combination. You might need to put objects in a specific order, select a numeric answer, or click on hotspots in the right order. Once you find the hints required to solve these puzzles, the answers should become obvious. The game does require you to decipher some hints in order to solve certain puzzles, but the connections are often very clear. You will not have to spend hours trying to understand how obscure clues have to be pieced together to find the answer to a puzzle. The real challenge in *The Mystery of the Mummy* is actually finding all the required items and hints.



*The Mystery of the Mummy* features some hotspots that are all too easy to miss the first time you are going

through a place. Instead of challenging your reasoning skills, the game can occasionally end up trying your patience as you try to make sure you have looked at every little corner to find all the items and interactive objects. Any given room can have numerous important items and more than one puzzle. It can be argued that some of the obscure item placement in a way demonstrates the kind of attention to detail a detective like Sherlock Holmes would have. However, when you are stuck and looking through a room for the fifth time, no kind of justification might be enough to keep you from getting frustrated.

In addition to the unfair placement of some items, the puzzles can also feel rather out of place in *The Mystery of the Mummy*. The various contraptions blocking your access to certain areas seem especially odd and almost randomly placed. Puzzles better blended with the environment and fitting for the storyline would have made for a better gaming experience.



Unfortunately, the inclusion of slider puzzles and a few unfair hotspots are not the only problems in the game. *The Mystery of the Mummy* has two major sections where you will have a limited amount of time to uncover all the clues and solve all the puzzles to advance to the next area. The time limit is fairly generous, the developers definitely wanted to make sure most players would be able to get through the area without having to restart from the beginning. But if you do happen to take too long to find an item or solve a puzzle, you can lose the game. As it is often the case, the time limits bring no true value to the game and winds up being an unnecessary burden.

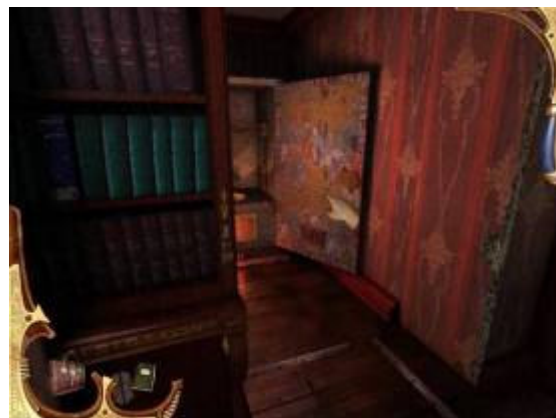
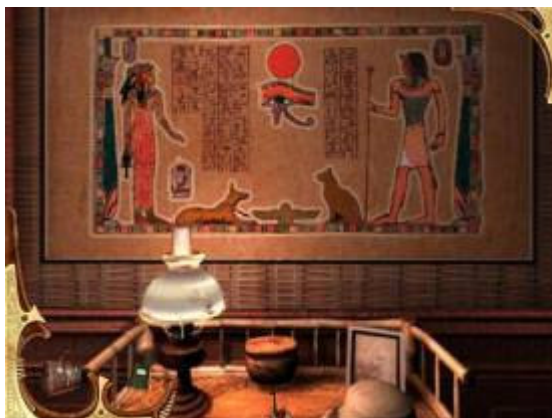
*The Mystery of the Mummy* also has a small number of sections where Sherlock can die if you make a mistake. There is one challenge that you will have to complete in just a few seconds. If you attempt to move in the wrong direction before solving the puzzle, Sherlock dies. It is quite possible that you will lose the game at this spot at least once without even understanding what kills you. The game does not feature an animation showing exactly what it is that kills Holmes. He simply drops to the floor and you are taken back to the main menu. To make things worse, the game does not allow players to immediately try again if you fail to get past the obstacle the first time around. You are required to restart from your latest save. Thus, it is highly recommended that you save the game as soon as you see the time limit bar appear on the screen.

Arguably, *The Mystery of the Mummy* also does not make the best use of its main character. One of the most entertaining aspects of Sherlock Holmes stories are the portions where the detective discusses his findings and observations.

Citing certain small but significant details that most people may not even notice, Holmes explains how he arrived at conclusions regarding other characters or the entire investigation. The Mystery of the Mummy only has one such moment. Fans of Sherlock Holmes stories would have probably appreciated more demonstrations of the detective's observation and deduction skills. Sherlock's partner Watson does not play a prominent role in the game either. Watson actually does not even appear until the end of the game.

Overall, The Mystery of the Mummy delivers an average adventure game. There are plenty of puzzles to keep adventure gamers occupied. The manor is definitely tightly packed with a good variety of puzzles. It is fun to explore the building and solve the mystery in the role of a famous detective. However, The Mystery of the Mummy suffers from clumsily placed items and time limits. The experience often fails to be immersive. You might be all too aware of the fact that you are playing a game and just solving one puzzle after another. With some fine tuning, The Mystery of the Mummy could have been an excellent game. As it stands, it will not be the most prized game in your collection. However, if you do happen to spot a copy in the bargain bin and if you are looking for an adventure game to keep you busy for a quite a few hours, The Mystery of the Mummy might still be worth a try.

The final grade is 71/100.



**Developer:** Frogwares  
**Publisher:** The Adventure Company  
**Platform:** PC  
**Genre:** Adventure  
**Release Date:** December 2002  
**Grade:** 71/100

**Minimum System Requirements (PC):**  
 Windows® 98/2000/ME/XP  
 Pentium® II 300 MHz  
 64MB RAM  
 130 MB Hard Drive Space  
 8MB Video Card  
 DirectX® Compatible Sound Card  
 12x CD ROM Drive

## Secret of the Silver Earring

PC Review by Sweetpea

Secret of the Silver Earring had me in two minds from start to finish. While some elements are handled nicely, others are lacking in quality. There is nothing fundamentally wrong with the theme, game play, or any one thing in particular. The puzzles and the storyline are enjoyable, but I felt the little something extra that really makes an adventure game great was missing.



Whilst the graphics were fantastic, the story was not as intriguing as it could have been. The game requires minimal pixel hunting, just one particular item that proved difficult to find. The dialogue was very drawn out and you have to click on every sentence that has to be verbalized. Although this may be a minor issue, it did slow the flow down a bit too much for my liking.

Secret of the Silver Earring is set in 1897. The main part of this game takes place in the "fabulous Sherringford hall", in which resides the construction tycoon Sir Melvyn Bromsby. Sherlock Holmes goes to the Sherringford hall as a guest at Sir Bromsby's party. The detective knows that Bromsby is planning to make an important announcement on the night of the party. But alas, the tycoon is shot in the heart in front of his guests. It is up to you to find the killer and uncover the truth.

You mix and analyze your clues in the lab at Baker Street, talk to as many people as you come across, utilize the tape measure and magnifying glass that you start with in your inventory and wander the scenes in your quest to find the truth. The



puzzles are nothing new for the adventure point and click genre. For example, you have to find several pieces for one puzzle and put them all together, and use the correct tool/item for the job etc. There is nothing too taxing on the old grey cells.

There are a few cut scenes that run mid-game. While they provide an odd hint now and then, these cut scenes do not assist in pepping up the game

at all. You do get the opportunity to play as both Sherlock Holmes and as Dr Watson, which makes an interesting twist. There are also plenty of locations to see and discover.

The Secret of the Silver Earring is as fast or as slow paced as you want to make it. The game can easily be played in short bursts. The inventory and the notes will quickly remind of important items and who has said what thus far. You could also sit and play the game in a single session until you are done. Obviously this is down to the individual, but some games make it very difficult to just hop on and off as you please.



At the end of each section of the game, you have to correctly answer a multiple choice quiz regarding the case, which I found to help clarify a few things for me. The quiz gives you a tally of the info you have gathered throughout that day.

The game is developed by Frogwares and includes original orchestral music from Paganini and Tchaikovsky. For those who enjoy a good murder mystery, Secret of the Silver Earring is

a good game to pass the time, but not one that engrosses you. So whilst not quite bargain bin material, it is not at the top of my list for memorable game play either. Much thought has gone into the game by a "true Sherlock fan", yet still I feel there is something missing. So in summary, Secret of the Silver Earring is a good game, with great graphics, good ideas and puzzles, but it just lacks that special spark! Borrow it from a friend, trade it online, but don't spend your last pennies on it.

**Developer:** Frogwares  
**Publisher:** Ubisoft  
**Platform:** PC  
**Genre:** Adventure  
**Release Date:** September 2004  
**Grade:** 75/100

**Minimum System Requirements (PC):**  
 Windows® 98/2000/ME/XP  
 Pentium® II 600 MHz  
 256MB RAM  
 1.5 GB Hard Drive Space  
 DirectX® 8.1 Compatible 32MB Video Card  
 DirectX® 8.1 Compatible Sound Card

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# Syberia

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PC Review by Wendy Nellius

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Originally released in 2002 by Microids, Syberia quickly became a shining star in the gaming world. Fans around the world fell in love with the timeless story effortlessly woven by Benoit Sokal. Gamers were transported into an almost magical world that captured the imagination and evoked emotions not expected to be experienced in a game. The realization that a game could be so infinitely beautiful gave gamers hope for the future.

The game comes with 2 CD's. Even though there is a full install, the CD is still required to play the game. The game did crash once in the Valadilene train station when going from the ladder directly into the train. Not sure if this was experienced by anyone else. However, there is an alternate route that can be taken to avoid this. Other than the one crash, no other problems were encountered. This is a classic 3<sup>rd</sup> person point and click adventure complete with the standard cursors for examining, picking up and using items. A yellow highlighted cursor denotes another area to explore. Inventory is accessed at any time with a right click on the mouse.

You play as Kate Walker, a smart and sassy lawyer from New York sent to a small town in France to seal the deal on a toy factory takeover. Valadilene's proud history is intertwined with the Voralberg Toy Company whom since the 17<sup>th</sup> century has been mastering the creation of Automatons. Automatons utilize complicated clockwork mechanisms to function and while they look amazingly like robots, one dares not refer to them as such. Such a statement would be considered sacrilege in Valadilene. Currently, the factory is being run by Anna Voralberg, the last remaining Voralberg family member.





It is a dreary, rainy day when Kate first arrives in Valadilene. A sad scene awaits her. It seems she has arrived just in time to see an odd sight. Trudging over the hill with an automaton drummer boy leading the way, she watches what seems to be a funeral procession. Kate discovers that the town is in mourning. Their beloved Anna has passed away. Although provisions had been made in case of this event, Kate has a surprise in store

for her. Fearing death was upon her, Anna revealed a startling revelation in a final letter to the town notary; the existence of another heir to the Voralberg estate. Anna's brother Hans, long thought to be buried in the family tomb, is alive and somewhere en route to Syberia in search of a legendary mammoth creature.

Anna has been communicating with Hans through the years with voice cylinders played on a music box. Kate's discovery of the music box in the Voralberg factory provides the first of many flashbacks providing insight into the elusive Hans. We watch as Hans, bent on retrieving a prehistoric mammoth doll from a hidden cave, falls to the floor of the cave suffering irreversible brain damage. In Anna's diary we find that while his genius for automaton creations is intact, he has lost touch with reality and has trouble functioning in the world which he was born into.



Tracing Hans' steps will require an innovative form of transportation. Enter the automaton train which has been built over the years by Anna (at the direction of Hans) in the hopes of reuniting with Hans one day. How in the world are you going to be able to commandeer an automaton train? Never fear. You have Oscar. Oscar is an automaton who was built for the sole purpose of driving the train. Let's go over that again. His sole purpose is to drive the train. Try as you might, don't expect Oscar to be providing any additional assistance on this journey. Oscar is all about regulations and rules. In fact, Kate ends up running around like a madwoman trying to fulfill all the rules and regulations to just get the train moving at all.

Traces of Hans' handiwork reveal themselves all along the trail as Kate meets a myriad of quirky characters. Travel to a prestigious university located in Barrockstadt and deal with 3 stooge-like bumbling university rectors. Then, it's off to Komkolzgrad; a desolate and deserted industrial city run by a madman who will test the limits of your patience. Visit a now defunct Cosmodrome run by an alcoholic Colonel as you desperately search for transportation to your next destination. Finally, visit Aralbad; a once famous relaxation resort for the high class population; where you meet up with a retired opera singer who you must convince to help you.



The voice acting for Kate is done magnificently as is the character rendering. Her personality shines through her voice. It is a joy to listen to Kate and see her facial expressions. Oscar is amusing and infuriating at the same time with his lack of help and constant referral to Kate by her full name: Kate Walker. Throughout the game, we get glimpses into Kate's personal life through cell phone calls. Mr. Marson (Kate's boss) is done pretty well. He is not a pleasant man and this is reflected in his phone calls. Dan, the fiancé, was not done so well. Honestly, you'll wish for Kate to end their relationship just so you don't have to hear his voice again. The same goes for Olivia. They just did not sound realistic. Another odd issue is the lack of accents for some of the characters. Despite the fact that you are in the French Alps, most of the locals sound American. Having visited the French Alps years ago, the only encounter of an American voice was my own. Only Helena and Serguei have an accent and to be honest, Serguei's accent sounded as though he was from 3 different countries. Keep in mind that this game is dialogue heavy and is reminiscent of The Longest Journey in this respect.

As for graphics, words almost cannot describe just how glorious this game is. Each cut scene is a cinematic delight worthy of animation awards. Flashbacks are displayed devoid of color as though we are watching an old black and white movie. The backgrounds are rich with detail and will invoke feelings of wonder. Sometimes it is the less than obvious details that are the most impressive. As you stand in front of the University, four huge elephants stand on each side of the steps beckoning you forward. If





you walk to a different location in the complex, you can see the elephants from a side view in the background looking just as good as they did from the front. The desire to visit places such as these are strong. It's a similar feeling to reading a Harry Potter book and wishing there was such a place as Hogwarts.

The musical score is quite impressive as well. There is definitely a Syberia theme song here. You will hear it often throughout the game in a variety of tempos and it is blockbuster film worthy. Travel to new locations is always accompanied by full bodied orchestral music starting quietly and building to an exciting full crescendo as the scenery whips by en route to a wondrous unknown destination.

The puzzles are intertwined with tasks Kate must perform. At each location, the train will need rewinding. It is up to Kate to beg, borrow, and barter in order to get what she needs. Regulations must always be followed for proper train operation. Paperwork is always a big issue (tickets, train releases, border permissions). It is a good thing that the environments are so beautiful because you will be doing a ton of running back and forth. The fact that you can get Kate to run by double clicking is extremely welcome. Kate also has to perform maintenance or just figure out how to work on the various contraptions Hans has created along his journey. Only one problem was noted with a certain drink recipe puzzle. Perhaps the translation was missed here, but Kate is verbally given a recipe including lime. Unfortunately, only a lemon can be found. Don't waste your time trying to find the lime as this reviewer did --- it's just a mistake. While each task is interesting and different, most are on the easy side. But, they all integrate well into the storyline. There aren't any off the wall puzzles that seem out of place.

If you enjoy a lot of dialogue, a lush storyline and fantastic graphics; by all means add Syberia to your collection. You will understand why Syberia became popular so quickly and how it still impresses four years later.

Final Grade: 96/100

<p><b>Developer:</b> Microids  <b>Publisher:</b> The Adventure Company  <b>Platform:</b> PC  <b>Genre:</b> Adventure  <b>Release Date:</b> 2002  <b>Grade:</b> 96/100</p>	<p><b>Minimum System Requirements (PC):</b>  Windows® 98/ME/2000/XP  Pentium® III 350 MHz  64 MB RAM  16 MB Video Card  DirectX® 7 Compatible Soundcard  CD-ROM Drive</p>
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## Star Heritage 1: The Black Cobra - Preview

Written by Ugur Sener

The attack was sudden and unexpected. The Artangs came from the depths of outer space and invaded our planet. Their technology was superior, the Earth's defenses could not match the destructive force of the Artang weaponry. The aliens wreaked havoc on the surface of Earth. Mankind lost the battle and accepted the Artang occupation.



Yet the human race would not be so easily subdued. The resistance is quietly growing as the humans secretly smuggle weapons and wait for the right time to strike. Each day agents risk their lives in secret missions to prepare for a second war. But humanity's greatest hope is still waiting to be discovered.

Star Heritage 1: The Black Cobra will put you in the role of a secret agent working for the resistance. You are trapped in an uncharted planet. Your ship is destroyed; your secret cargo is gone. You have no way of communicating with the other members of the resistance. In this unknown and hostile place, you are alone. Your mission is to find a way to leave the planet and rejoin the resistance. Yet incredible secrets are waiting to be unlocked in this distant land. The great treasures could help turn the tide against the Artangs and help you fulfill your true destiny.



Step Creative's new Star Heritage game is actually the rebirth of a text adventure originally released in 1995. The original game was developed for the ZX Spectrum platform. Taking advantage of new technologies, the remake brings us an entirely different gaming experience and very promising visuals.

Step Creative describes Star Heritage as an adventure game with role-playing elements. Players can expect combat and character development as well as a good deal of exploration. Your character will gain experience and become more adept at fighting as you proceed through

the game. However, do not expect Star Heritage to be your standard run-of-the-mill role playing experience. The game has a number of features that sets it apart from many other adventure and role-playing games.

Star Heritage will feature dynamic day and night cycles. The beautiful renditions on the same scene in the images below illustrates the use of the day and night cycle. However, in Star Heritage 1: The Black Cobra, the time of day is much more than a visual effect. Visiting a particular location during nighttime or daytime has an influence on the story.



The game also promises a non-linear flow. Players will be able to complete Star Heritage in different ways, which should give the game some replay value. In addition, your character in Star Heritage will have a need to eat and sleep. Players will have to keep an eye out on more than the health level of their characters.

The game promises a considerable number of environments to explore, pleasant graphics, an interesting combat system, and above all an intriguing story. Star Heritage 1: The Black Cobra could deliver a great gaming experience merging elements from adventure and RPG genres. The Russian version of the game is already available. Hopefully this promising title will get international releases in other languages.



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# GUN

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PS2 Review by H. Paul Haigh

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*“An adventure is only an inconvenience rightly considered. An inconvenience is only an adventure wrongly considered.”*

*-- Author: Gilbert K. Chesterton*

With this, my first review for Adventure Lantern, I do hereby embark upon a long, perilous quest of epic proportions. Having spent the better part of my youth and adulthood enjoying role-playing and adventure games on paper, console and computer; I now find myself seeking an elusive digital prey – adventure. The overwhelming flood of first person shooters, military combat simulations, RPG knock-offs and cop vs. crook racer games leave little room for the true puzzle-solving mysteries that challenge me logically. That being said, I have changed my tactics and will endeavor to find adventure within the multitude of other genres that now reign over the world of PC, handheld, and console gaming. No game shall be too old, no platform too outdated. I am convinced that the worthwhile combination of action, strategy and adventure does exist, and I shall not falter in my quest to find it.



The first leg of the journey brings us not to the world of medieval fantasy but instead to the archives of the American expansion into the wild-western frontier. In Activision's rather graphic and risqué release, GUN, you assume the role of Colton White, a weathered yet charismatic young wilderness man. In classic tutorial style, you start by learning the ropes (quite literally) from your father, Ned White, who both looks and sounds like famed actor Kris Kristofferson, who actually recorded the voice-over.

After a few horseback riding, hunting and marksmanship lessons, Ned brings you to a riverboat and a clandestine meeting with a rather sultry parlor-girl. It is here that you start getting the not-so-subtle hints that your father has a few secrets he's been keeping from you. Unfortunately, Ned's past comes back to haunt him and the riverboat is waylaid by hordes of gun slinging villains. Ned has something to hide, and these cutthroats are after it, at any cost. Both Ned and the parlor-girl perish in rather graphic, lawless, vicious fashion. So begins the all-too-common western story of a lone man seeking revenge and answers.

## Let's start this rodeo...

The setting for GUN is the seedy, lawless, greed-driven world of 1880's Montana, starting off in the age-old town of Dodge City. As the sun settles lazily in the dry

western sky, buzzards fly in circles overhead, and a lonely tumbleweed stumbles silently across the desert plain. This is a place and time when not even the clergy or the so-called lawmen can be trusted.



This game is rated M for Mature by the ESRB. The producers didn't hold back at all with regards to the raw grit, unbridled violence and hardcore language. Even with this warning, I dare say a few of the cut scenes will take you by surprise. I can hear my wife yelling at me now, "Paul, our daughter can hear that filth!" So, be prepared, be warned, and turn down the volume if kids are nearby.

GUN is played primarily from the 3<sup>rd</sup> person perspective allowing you to roam freely through the seemingly vast western landscapes. You can either follow the colorfully written, yet linear storyline or you can venture off on a variety of side missions such as gambling, cattle wrangling, hunting expeditions, bounty hunting, deputy marshalling, and the pony express. It may seem nice to freely go sightseeing through the richly detailed Montana backdrop in search of game trails, little-known paths, hidden ravines and gold deposits. But the only true excitement to be found is the occasional bandit attack, which is over in a few seconds. How refreshingly rewarding it would have been to happen upon random sideline encounters or secret missions by exploring the panorama. Alas, the only real challenges are the main storyline and side missions, which are clearly marked on your map, and your compass won't let you go astray.

As you complete various storyline and sideline missions you earn the cash, skill, and opportunity necessary to upgrade your revolvers, rifles, bow, and blade. The upgrades greatly improve your chances against the really tough villains (bosses) that must be defeated at key points during the story. As it turns out, you only utilize the 1<sup>st</sup> person perspective when taking delicate aim or performing a quick draw, which is the GUN rendition of bullet-time (where the action slows down and our hero can aim and spit lead with unnatural speed). While you must carefully manage the ammo for everything else, you never run out of bullets for your trusty revolvers, which are handy in nearly every scenario. And for those occasions when you do get a flesh wound, just resort to the ole' trusty whisky bottle for a quick pick-me-up.

### **Git along little doggies**

The controls are a bit different than what you may be accustomed to, but so is the setting. The horse is by far the most difficult to master. A little practice goes a long way, so if you fall out of the saddle, jump up, dust off, and try again. There's plenty of free time between missions to mosey about the range, to plink at coyotes and to get settled into the stirrups.

As I've already alluded to, the graphics are above average with attention to detail, and remarkable picturesque backdrops. The music is noteworthy as well. The western ambiance helps complete the visual scene, giving you the true sense of just how vast the western expanse is. For that matter, you'll have to search for the invisible "boundaries" of the game.

## The Pros

It was very invigorating to find a shoot'em up with a western setting since they are hard to come across. The controls are easy to learn, which is especially important in an action-oriented game. Players should quickly become comfortable with the control schema of GUN. The missions were both fun and challenging. The AI was neither too dumb nor too alert. The story was well written and the acting was pleasant. Voiceovers tones and lip-synch matched the characters and the background, making the entire yarn believable.



## The Cons

In the quest for greater glory and adventure within the western action genre, this journey and this game fail miserably. Strategy comes into play rarely, and there are no puzzles to solve whatsoever. There's no satisfaction from finding something while wandering about the free range. GUN is not an adventure, nor an action-adventure. It can't even be considered close to either genre.

## Unforgettable Game Moment

A classic western image, when Colton blew away the bad guy, causing the cold-hearted thug to fly backward through a plate glass window.

## Conclusion

All in all, I'd have to classify this game in the "must rent" category. There's no replay value whatsoever; therefore, don't shell out the cash to buy it. Still, there is little opportunity to play anything else quite like this, and it can be finished during a routine rental period. I have high hopes for GUN 2, if there ever is one.

<p><b>Developer:</b> Neversoft Entertainment  <b>Publisher:</b> Activision  <b>Platform:</b> PC; PS2; Xbox; GameCube  <b>Genre:</b> Action  <b>Release Date:</b> November 2005  <b>Grade:</b> 77/100</p>	<p><b>Minimum System Requirements (PC):</b>  Windows® 2000/XP  Pentium® III 1.8Ghz  256 MB RAM  2.8 GB hard disk space  DirectX v9.0c; 3D hardware accelerator;  32MB T and L-capable video</p>
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# Dead to Rights II

PC Review by Ugur Sener

## There is a new case to investigate?

An ordinary police officer might start an investigation with a survey of the crime scene. Interrogating witnesses, running background checks, and meticulously analyzing the available data might eventually lead the officer to a suspect. Grant City's tough guy Jack Slate cannot be bothered with such nonsense.



Almost immediately after Judge Alfred McGuffin announces that he has enough evidence to bring down Grant City's elite and reveal the true corruption plaguing the city, he is "mysteriously" captured. Without wondering too much about why an otherwise brilliant judge would publicly announce the imminent arrest of powerful and influential citizens of a corrupt city, Jack asks his friend Ruby to go undercover and investigate the case. As soon as Ruby uncovers the first semblance of a lead, Jack takes over.

## Hold on, let me just pickup my guns...

Jack does not understand concepts like keeping a low profile or knocking on doors before breaking them down. Minor details like gathering evidence, building up a strong case to stand up in court, or even actually arresting the bad guys are not important. Instead, Jack believes in an instant justice and righteous fury system centered around putting bullets through the heads of miscellaneous thugs. The action begins as Jack literally drives a police car into the door of the club he is supposed to investigate. Forget about a story, plot development, colorful characters, or puzzles... Start shooting already!



The original Dead to Rights told a very intriguing story. Jack got caught up in a conspiracy involving many different factions. As allies turned into enemies, Jack had to fight to stay alive long enough to find the truth and clear his name. The story drove the game forward and offered enough twists to keep players interested until the end. Unfortunately, Dead to Rights II does not even begin to deliver the kind of plot players enjoyed in the original. Sure,

there is a story in Dead to Rights II, but it is nothing more than an excuse to put Jack up against one army of faceless, nameless thugs after another. This is a pure action game in every sense, and that's not necessarily a bad thing.

### **What do you mean we were supposed to interrogate that guy?**

Dead to Rights II builds on the solid gun combat experience from its predecessor. The game runs very smoothly and the simple controls make it easy to tackle large numbers of enemies. Players do not have to deal with targeting enemies manually. With the touch of a button, Jack can lock onto a bad guy. He can run around freely while shooting, hide behind corners, or take a slow-motion dive while dodging bullets.



The game features an array of guns that will be familiar to players of first-person shooters. Jack can blast his enemies with pistols, shotguns, or submachine guns. However, the amount of ammunition he can carry at a given time is much more limited than it might be in an average action game. Thus, Jack occasionally has to rely on his disarm moves to take guns from his opponents. He can also grab hold of his enemies and use them as a human shield.

One of the best elements of Dead to Rights II is Shadow. Jack's canine companion can be extremely useful and keep you alive in many situations. Upon demand, Shadow is capable of picking up guns or first-aid kits and delivering them to Jack. If you are out of ammunition or low on life with enemies lurking right around the corner, this feature can be a true lifesaver. But more importantly, Shadow can also directly help with the fighting. While you are safely hidden, Shadow can sneak upon the thugs and take them out before they even realize what is happening.

In order to order to call upon Shadow for help, execute a disarm move, or take a human shield, Jack needs to have enough adrenaline. Each time he executes a special move, Jack depletes some of his adrenaline. The adrenaline recharges gradually. Jack also gets an adrenaline boost upon successfully completing a disarm move.

Dead to Rights II also features a few melee combat sequences. Jack is equipped with a few simple punches and kicks. He will also





occasionally find a melee weapon such as a knife or a bat. While there is nothing particularly exceptional about the hand-to-hand fighting, it does offer a nice break from the constant gun action. Unfortunately, the gun and melee combat is all there is to Dead to Rights II. The game requires very little in terms of exploration. Jack will sometimes have to find a keycard or a switch, but you will just about always know exactly where you need to go and what you need to do. There are no puzzles. The mini-games from the previous game have also been completely removed.



### **Don't worry; I am sure my bullets asked all the right questions!**

Fortunately, the fighting in Dead to Rights II is not completely mindless. Players will have to analyze the situation and vary their tactics as they proceed through the game. There will be situations where you can just charge in with your guns blazing. At other times, it will make a lot more sense to send Shadow to clear a room. While explosive cans, disarm moves, or human shells might help you, sometimes the best defense will be just to keep moving as you shoot down your enemies.

Dead to Rights II has a small number of missions each of which are divided into multiple sections. Upon completing each section, the game will save automatically and Jack will start the next segment with full health. The different locations include a night club, rooftops, the harbor area, and a casino. While it is nice to have a change of scenery with each new level, the core structure of the missions will remain identical throughout the game. Jack will just move from one room or corridor to the next killing the enemies along the way.

It can certainly be fun to blast your way through dozens of thugs like a true action hero. However, Dead to Rights II simply does not have the level of depth offered in the first game of the series. The interesting plot has been replaced with a shallow backdrop for heavy action sequences. The unique mini-games are gone and there is less exploration required. The game is extremely linear and on the short side. Players can expect to easily get through it in seven to eight hours. If you are looking for a game that will challenge you intellectually or offer any kind of true depth, Dead to Rights II is certainly not your best option. But if you want some solid action gaming to blow off some steam, Jack Slate and Shadow will be happy to oblige.

**Developer:** Namco  
**Publisher:** Namco  
**Platform:** PC; PS2; Xbox;  
**Genre:** Action  
**Release Date:** August 2005  
**Grade:** 74/100

# Ultimate Spider-Man

PS2 Review by Paul H. Haigh

*"If we do not find anything very pleasant, at least we shall find something new."  
- Voltaire*

As we continue our quest in search of adventure via the most unlikely media, we stumble upon a comic-based Activision release entitled Ultimate Spider-Man. While most readers know the basics of the Spider-Man story, one relatively unique and heavily marketed feature of this game sets it apart from the many other comic book hero titles of late.



This game grants the player the all-too-rare opportunity of assuming both the perspective of the good guy, Spider-Man; and that of the bad guy, which in this case is Peter Parker's arch enemy, Venom. At key moments along the storyline you switch roles and complete missions specific to your current point of view. While Spider-Man defends the helpless and protects the city, Venom destroys the landscape and feeds on the life energy of anyone who strays too close.

Ultimate Spider-Man uses the ever-popular free-roaming concept allowing our web-slinging hero to climb and swing his way across the vast flowing landscape that is New York and Manhattan. The controls that allow Spider-Man to swing his way through the city are refreshingly easy to master; given a bit of practice. Before long, you find yourself spending a great deal of time climbing skyscrapers, billboards, water towers and bridges seeking out the elusive tokens that allow Spider-Man to advance the storyline.

## **Bam! Smash! Whoosh! Crash!**

You spend the majority of the game fighting crime as Spider-Man; however, Venom's movement and combat controls are equally easy to employ. Where Spider-Man swings, Venom climbs. They can both jump from one rooftop to the next with overwhelming ease. You can interact with the walls and perform



acrobatic jump attacks, but such moves are only eye candy entertainment and of little strategic value. Spider-Man uses his webslingers to entrap his foe before delivering a rather boringly redundant combination of punches and kicks to eventually render them unconscious. Be sure to web-wrap them when they're down, or they'll get back up and you will have to

fight them again. Venom uses his tentacles in an equally boring blend of swipes and jabs, assuming he doesn't grab his victim and suck them into his suit, draining them of their precious life force.

The game's storyline is derived from the original Ultimate Spider-Man comics, and there are countless cameo appearances from Spidey's friends and foes with unexpected surprises around every corner. Treyarch went as far as to hire the original series writer Michael Bendis and artist Mark Bagley to pick up where the comic left off and create an all-new graphic experience utilizing 3D Comic Ink Technology. Beautifully rendered scenes along with the clever use of inset comic strips and Spider-Man's danger sense give you the impression of playing from within a comic universe. This game graphically mirrors the comic book experience with Ultimate precision, which means there had to be less of the minuscule graphic detail – but that is exactly as it should be.



### **Not so Ultimate after all**

While the building swinging and combat becomes very monotonous, the story and related missions are well written. Unfortunately, the side missions at your disposal are primarily races in which you must swing from one side of town to the other faster than a rival super hero. Or worse yet, you must web your way from one building to another, checkpoint to checkpoint, in a beat the clock format. Yes, there are the occasional civilian-in-distress and street-thug thumping combat missions; but these distractions are few and far between considering the overwhelming number of tedious races.



The music was nothing special, you will find it to be average for a comic-action game. However, I spend little time listening to it as it often distracts from the background noises and sound effects. While there were no celebrity appearances, the voice-overs match the characters and the acting necessary for each scene. Lip synchronization doesn't really apply when most of the characters wear masks covering their lips. Besides, this is a comic strip, consisting of both still-shots and action sequences, so who cares about lip-sync.

Your routine opponent is less than brilliant. However, a variety of strategic AI was used for the story bosses. For instance, when playing as Venom it is not wise to grab Wolverine and try to suck him into the suit – those blades are sharp. Each new level brings the need for new strategy, and different fighting tactics.



**Key moment of the game:** The first time Spider-Man faces Venom in open combat. The closer you get to him, the more your head hurts. What to do?

All in all, you will find the game fun for a while, but then it will be over in a rather short 10 hours. After learning to swing from building to building, and proving your merit by

winning a few races, you will become very bored and ignore as many race missions as possible. Next, you try your hand at combat; only to find that there's no competition if you keep wrapping your victims in web and hanging them from light posts. Likewise, as Venom, you will defeat overwhelming hordes of soldiers and helpless citizens by just slapping them down or sucking their life away. As for rescues, why do people keep getting stuck hanging from the sides of buildings anyway? Next, you'll spend time exploring the vastness of the free-roaming city, seeking out landmarks (and a prize token for finding one). You might even climb and perch atop a few high-rise buildings, just so you can say you did it. Unless you are in need of a token to advance, you swiftly press through the storyline missions. There is little else that offers any challenge or variation.

### Adventure, wherefore are thou?

Unfortunately, the only puzzles that must be solved in this game are deciding which combination of kick, punch, run, jump, and slap seems to work best against a particular boss character. Between your 'spidey' sense and the comic-strip narration there is little to be pondered. Strategy takes a minor role in combat, and could be replaced with random button pushing in some conflicts.

In summary, the game is very appealing to the eye, especially if you are a comic or super-hero enthusiast and the story mission offer a great deal of reward. Regrettably, the designers missed a golden opportunity to hide secret treasures amid the free-roaming setting. Side missions will make you weary and you won't find the wonderful stealth missions or crawling on ceilings, which was prevalent in earlier Activision/Spider-Man titles. We must therefore classify Ultimate Spider-Man in the "must rent" category. Rent it, try it, beat it, and return it; there's little use in replaying it.

**Developer:** Trevarch  
**Publisher:** Activision  
**Platform:** PC; PS2; Xbox; GameCube  
**Genre:** Action  
**Release Date:** September 2005  
**Grade:** 68/100

**Minimum System Requirements (PC):**  
 Windows® 2000/XP  
 Pentium® III 1.2Ghz  
 256 MB RAM  
 3.5 GB Hard Disk Space plus 400 MB for swap file  
 DirectX 9.0c compatible 64MB Video Card  
 DirectX 9.0c compatible true 16-bit sound card  
 Windows 2000/XP Compatible Quad-speed CD Drive

# Agon- The Mysterious Codex - Walkthrough

Written by Ugur Sener

## Episode 1: London Scene

You will start the game in your office. Take a look at the papers lying at the corner of your desk. Click on the newspaper and read the article. Now click on the letter lying between the newspaper and the envelope. Make a note of the phone number 55-623 on the second page. Finally, click on the envelope to open it. After you read the letter, click on the second piece of paper inside the envelope.

Walk out of the room. Turn left and walk to the end of the corridor. Click on the door of the director's office. Samuel will realize that the door is locked. Turn around and walk to the opposite end of the corridor. When you turn left, you should see a door labeled 'Back Staircase'. Walk through this door and down the stairs. Climb down four flights of stairs and you will end up in front of a door. Enter into the next room.

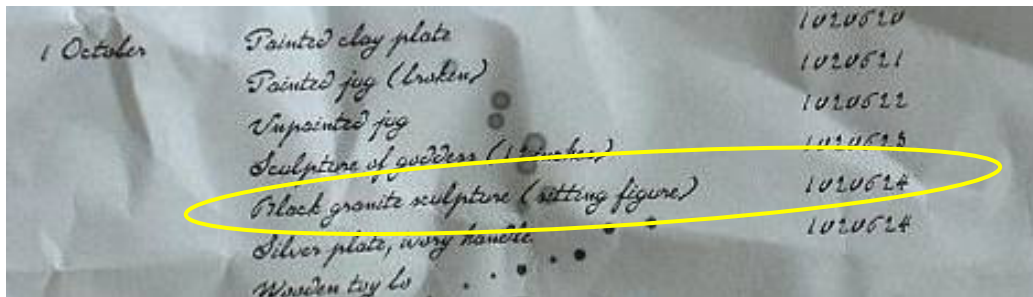
Talk to the guard seated at the desk. When the conversation is over, take the inventory file from the desk. Note that you can scroll through the inventory report a couple of times to see all of its pages. Talk to the guard again. He will give you the keys to the director's office. Walk up the stairs and all the way back to the director's office. Use the key you got from the guard on the office door. Once you are inside, turn on the light switch behind you.

Walk up to the cabinet underneath the window. Click on it to take a look at its contents. Take the bottle of whisky from the cabinet. Now take a look at the documents lying on the desk. You will see an inventory order form on the far left corner of the desk. Samuel does not currently have the information required to complete the form. We will come back to it later. For now, go through the side door to the unexplored area. Once again, you will have to turn on the light switch behind you.

You are now in Moresby's office. Walk up to the director's desk to take a closer look. Click on the phone on the right side of the desk. Dial Smythe's number: 55-623. After the conversation, take the rubber stamp from the desk. Finally, take a close look at the business card on the left side of the desk.



Before you walk away from the desk, take a close look at the trashcan standing next to it. Take the piece of paper inside the trashcan. Smythe mentioned a black granite sculpture when we called him on the phone. The list of items on the piece of paper does refer to a black granite sculpture! Make a note of the item number next to the entry for the sculpture: 1020624. Also note that the date October 1<sup>st</sup> next to the list of items where the black statue is mentioned.

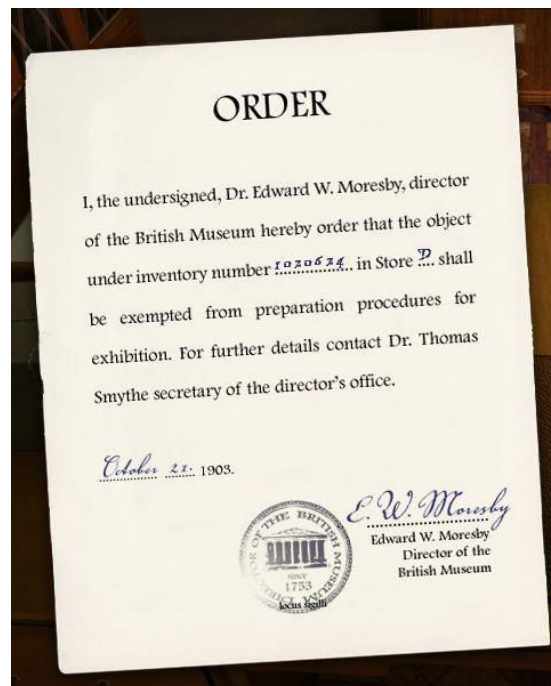


Walk up to the fireplace next to the desk. There is a matchbox on the shelf above the fireplace, next to the candle. Put the matchbox in your inventory. Leave the office and go all the way back to the guard's desk on the lower floor. The good professor will "accidentally" leave the office door unlocked.

Once you are back at Swanson's desk, talk to the guard. Samuel will return the key and give the guard the bottle of whiskey. Now take a second look at the inventory report on the desk. The inventory report contains two entries about sculptures. The sculpture shipment from November 6<sup>th</sup> is in Store B. The shipment from October 1<sup>st</sup> is in Store D.

Piecing together the information from Smythe, the paper in Moresby's office, and the inventory report on Swanson's desk, we know that a black granite statue was delivered on October 1<sup>st</sup>. The item was placed in Store D and was assigned the number 1020624. Now it is time to put this information into good use.

Go up the stairs and return to the door leading to Moresby and Smythe's offices. Walk up to Smythe's desk and take a look at the sheet of paper that is on the far left corner. This is an inventory order form. Complete it using the information we have about the black granite statue. Type 1020624 for the inventory number. Enter D as the storage location. Click on the enter button. Use the rubber stamp in your inventory on the bottom portion of the



form. Samuel will enter the date and stamp the form.

Go down the stairs and back to Swanson's desk. The guard should be asleep. Before we can solve the next puzzle, we need to read make a few notes about the locks on the doors. The following entries can be found on the last pages of the inventory report:

- "Leak in store A. Lock needs to be changed!"
- "New upper safety lock on store C since January."
- "Mrs. E. von D's legacy was placed in the special glass cabinet (keys attached)." Going back to the second page of the inventory report, you will also see that Mrs. E. van D.'s materials are in Store B.

Go back to Swanson's desk. Stay close to the wall on the left side of the desk. Walk forward directly towards Swanson. Samuel will trip on Swanson's bag and come close to waking up the guard. Now that you are right next to Swanson, you can take a closer look at the box of keys on the wall to your left. We will have to organize the keys:

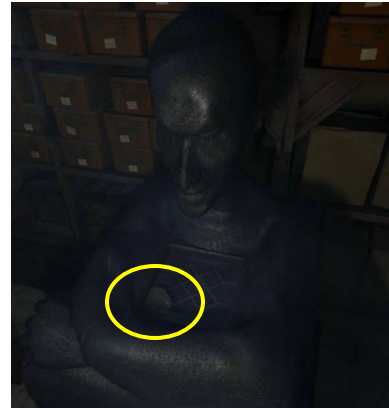
- We already know that the key with the green ribbon belongs to Dr. Moresty. We used the key earlier to unlock his office. Take the key with the green ribbon and place it under Dr. Moresty's name.
- One of the remaining keys has a small tag labeled M. B. It should be safe to assume M. B. stands for Main Building. Put this key under the Main Building label.
- We read a note about Storage Room A being in need of a new lock. Put the newest looking single key under the label A.
- We read a note about Mrs. E. van D.'s notes being placed in a special cabinet with separate keys. We also found out that her materials are in storage B. One of the large keys has two small keys attached to it. Place this large key under the label B.
- We know that store C has a new upper safety lock. There is one more large key with a smaller key attached to it. Put this set of keys under the label C.
- Put the remaining rusty key under the label D.



Once you solve the puzzle, Samuel will put the Storage Room D key in his inventory. Walk down the corridor to the right of the guard's desk. After moving

forward twice, you will be next to a lantern on your left. Click on the lantern to put it in your inventory. Continue down the corridor until you get to the wooden door along the right wall. As you should see from the label next to the door, this is Storage Room D. Use the key in your inventory to unlock the door. Samuel will automatically enter.

In your inventory, combine the lantern with the matchbox. Go to the far left side of the storage room. Walk down the aisle closest to the wall on the left side of the room. When you get to the end of the aisle, you will be able to turn right and continue forward. At the end of the path, you will finally find the elusive black granite sculpture.



Click on the pattern at the center of the statue to take a closer look. Click on the tile on the left bottom corner. Samuel will pick up the stone and comment on the message engraved on the stone.

Return to Samuel's office. This is the room where you started the game. It is time to do some decoding. There is a multitude of books along the left wall. Take a look at the very first bookcase as you enter the room. There is a single green book on the second shelf from the bottom. Click on the book and Samuel will open it. The book seems to contain information about a number of different alphabets. Skip through to the page discussing Hungarian runes. Using these Hungarian runes, you can decipher the meaning of the message engraved in the stone.



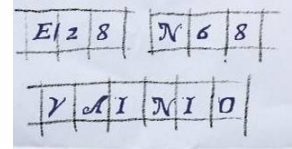
The characters on the stone can be deciphered as follows:

- The entry on the top left: E 3 5 20.  $3+5+20=28$ .
- The entry on the top right: N 3 5 60.  $3+5+60=68$ .
- The entry along the bottom: OINIAV



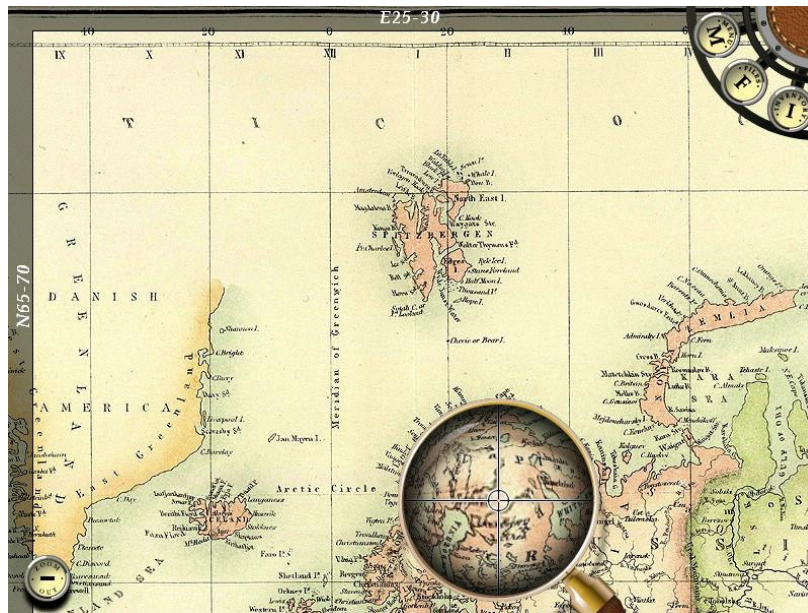
The book on the runes also notes that Hungarian runes were traditionally written “in boustrophedon style (alternating direction left to right then right to left)”. Open your inventory and take a look at the stone. Combining the information we decoded with what we found out about the writing style for the runes, enter the following as the puzzle solution:

- Enter E28 as the first set of 3 characters.
- Enter N68 as the second set of characters.
- Reversing OINIIV, enter VAINIO as the last set.
- Click on the enter button.



Walk up to the map on the far wall of Samuel's office. Take a close look at the map. Samuel will be able to inspect it with a magnifying glass. Try to find the coordinates you decoded:

- Move your magnifying glass around Europe until you find E 20-30 and N 60-70. Click on the map to zoom in further.
- Now look for the coordinates E 25-30 and N 65-70. Click on the map to zoom in one more time.
- You can finally move your magnifying glass over E28 and N68. Click on the map. Samuel will realize that he needs to go to Lapland.



Return to the director's office. From the director's desk, dial Smythe's number for a second time. The correct number is 55-623.

Congratulations! You just completed the first episode of Agon. Enjoy the ending movie and get ready to explore the next location.

## Episode 2: Adventures in Lapland

### Train Station

The professor's journey will be illustrated along the map. Click on the letters and postcards that appear around the desk to read them. These documents provide detailed information about Samuel's journey and what Smythe was able to find out about the codex in the professor's absence. When you are done reading the documents, click on the exit button to start the episode.

You will arrive at a small train station. You should see a door to your left. Click on it and Samuel will knock. Click on the door again and Samuel will enter the room. There is a map on the wall close to the door. Click on it to see the names and the locations of three small villages and the train station. Remember the coordinates E28 N68 from the first episode. The village closest to these coordinates is Borgesiida.

Note the illustrations on the walls around the desk. Take a close look at the illustration the wall to the left of the desk. Note the word Kaira and the circled letters c-f-c-f-c-d-c.

Zoom into the desk and read the letter at the center. It seems like Kaira is the name of the stationmaster's pet. Make note of the hint: "... She will wait patiently after three identical sounds. If however one of the sounds is higher than the other two, she knows she should start with the baggage. The wider the difference between the sounds and the two others, the more North she will turn..." There is a sealed envelope on the far left corner of the desk. Take a look at this as well.

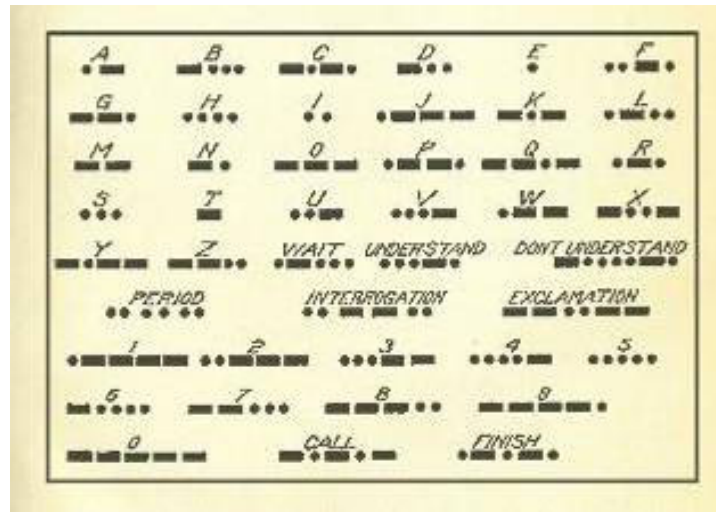
Walk up to the sleeping man on the bed. Click on him to try to wake him up. There is a bookshelf on the wall to across from the bed. Click on the right side of the bookshelf for a closer look. Click on the books to separate them. Find the box of matches lying between the books.

Go over to the wood-burning heater close to the entrance door. There are logs of wood to the left of then heater. Click on the logs to take one. Zoom in on the heater to get it started:

- Click on the small handle to open the heater.
- Put your log of wood inside.
- Now put in the newspaper in your inventory.
- Finally, use the box of matches to start the fire.

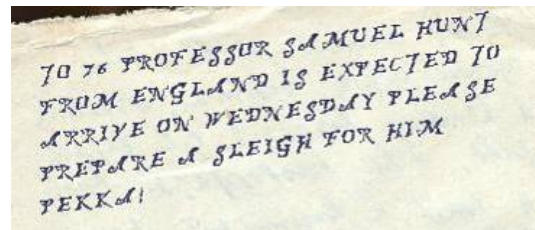
Across from the heater, there is a telegram machine. If you click on the strip of paper that is still attached to the machine, you can see a message from Smythe. Unless you already know how to read Morse Code, you will need some help decoding the message. Note the books on the shelf directly above the bed. The blue book on the right will teach us how to decipher Morse Code. Flip through the

pages until you see a chart with the translation of each letter. Use this information to decipher the message in the telegram machine.



Decode the message as follows:

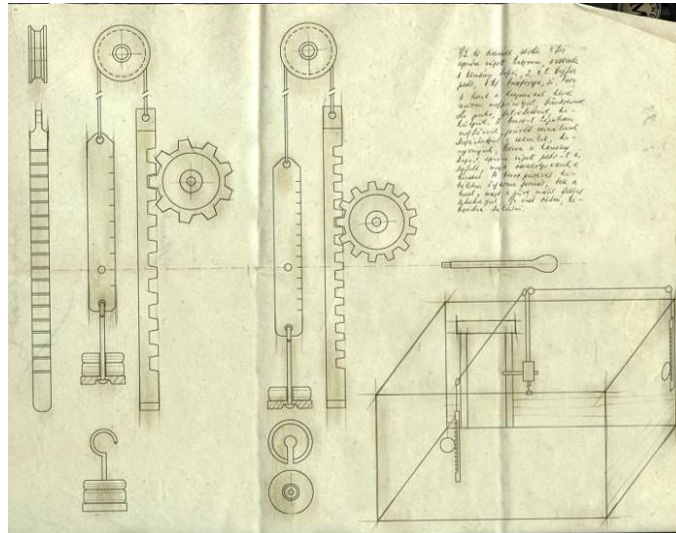
- The message starts right at the beginning of the strip. The first character is denoted by a single line: `_`. This represents T.
- Note that there is a noticeable space before the next character. The second character is three lines: `__`. This represents an O.
- Note the bigger space between the characters before the second word starts. The second set of characters spell out 76.
- Continue down the strip to decipher the rest of the message. The complete message is:  
 "To 76 Professor Samuel Hunt is expected to arrive on Wednesday please prepare a sleigh for him Pekka"
- Enter the message on the piece of paper using the keypad. To leave a space between words, click on the "Next" button. When the entire message is typed in, click on the "Enter" button.



Walk out of the room. Take a moment to survey the station area. Note the water tower next to the main building. Also, walk around to station building to discover a locked door on the back side. Finally there is an intriguing looking wheel on the side of the building facing the water tower.

Return to the room where we deciphered the Morse Code. The stationmaster will have turned over in his bed. Take a close look at him. There is a key in his pocket. There is a small cabinet next to the desk. Use the key you just found to open the cabinet. Take the bottle of medicine. Read the letter that was underneath the bottle. There is a diagram attached to the letter. Note the positions of the two geared wheels illustrated in the diagram. The one on the left

is on the second slot from the top. The wheel on the right is on the fifth slot from the top. Also note that the diagram is showing an illustration of a room. There is one geared mechanism to the right side of the room. There is a second one on the back side of the room.



Walk back to the door. It is time to unlock the door on the back side of the building. To do this, we have to adjust the geared wheels from the diagram to the right position. Unfortunately, the gears are not immediately visible. There are three plates on the wall across from the entrance door. One of these plates controls the gear illustrated on the right side of the diagram. There is also a wheel outside on the side of the building facing the water tower. This wheel controls the gear that was on the left side of the diagram. To unlock the shed, use the following steps:

- Take a look at the stool underneath the three plates across from the door. Move the stool to the left. Zoom in on the plate on the left side.
- Turn the plate to the left until you cannot turn it any more. Now turn it to the right once. This should put the gear on the second slot as illustrated in the diagram.
- Walk outside and find the second wheel on the side of the building facing the water tower. Turn the wheel to the left until it cannot be turned any more. Now turn it to the right four times.
- Now we need to go behind the building and take a look at the locked door. Zoom in on the hole on the wall next to the lock. It appears that moving the two gears managed to reveal the lock. We just need to find a key.
- Walk around the station to the bell hanging on the side of the building away from the water tower. The key is hidden inside the bell. In order for Samuel to see it, you need to look at the bell from underneath it.
- Use the key on the lock to finally enter the shed.



There is a strange organ inside the shed. Walk up to it for a closer look. If you remember the notes we read inside the stationmaster's room, there is a way to get Kaira to deliver mail by playing notes on an instrument. But before we can operate the organ, we need to provide it steam:

- There is a valve on the wall of the shed across from the door. Click on the valve once.
- Walk up to the water tower next to the station. Climb up the ladder all the way to the top. Once you are at the top of the water tower, circle around it. You will get to a valve attached to a pipe on the floor. Click on the valve.
- Return to the room where the stationmaster is sleeping. Take another look at the heater. There are two gauges at the top of it. To the right of the gauges, there is a valve. Click on it once.
- Return to the room where we saw the organ. It looks like we managed to supply steam but it is escaping the pipe. There is a shelf on top of two barrels and underneath the pipe. Take the lint from this shelf.
- Use the lint on the spot where steam is escaping the pipe. Now the organ is finally operational.

Remember the illustration we saw inside the stationmaster's room earlier. There was a set of circled letters: c-f-c-f-c-d-c. Play these notes on the organ. Walk outside. It looks like an exceptionally clever horse answered the call of the organ.

We had read a note about Kaira being able to travel to the north if you play two identical notes and a third different note. The higher the difference between the notes, the farther north Kaira will travel. We had taken a look at the map inside the stationmaster's room earlier. The village closest to the coordinates E28 N68 from the first episode was Borgesiida. That village also happens to be the one farthest note of the train station. So let's instruct Kaira to go far to the north. Go back to the organ and play C – F – C.

When you walk outside, you will notice that Kaira is turned towards Borgesiida. Click on the horse to take a ride to the village.

## Borgesiida

You can try clicking on the doors, but nobody will answer. Go down the center road. After you move forward four times, you should end up next to a door with a black circle. Click on this door. Nobody will answer, but a moment later Samuel will enter anyway. Try talking to the barkeep and the woman. They will not respond to your questions.

Across the room, there are three stools along the far wall. Take the cup from the shelf over these stools. Go outside and face the door. Take one of the icicles from hanging to the left of the door. Go back to the bar. Use the icicle on your cup. Use the cup with the icicle on the stove. Now combine the cup of water with the medicine. There is a sick dog lying next to the door. Use the dissolved medicine on his bowl.



After the cut scene, walk outside. The mysterious woman is waiting for you to the right. Talk to her and she will tell you about Vainio.

Before leaving, return to the location where we first arrived at Borgesiida. Walk down the left road. When you get to the second house, walk around it. You will be able to see a pile of logs. There is a message etched on the wall over the logs. The numbers 2-6-4-3-5-1 are carved into the wood. The message is signed W. K. This is the solution to a puzzle we are about to encounter.



Go back to the pub. Click on the fence at the spot where you talked to the villager. Walk through to the next area. Take the oilcan next to the sleigh. Click on the sleigh to ride it. Unfortunately, a bridge that you need to pass will collapse just as you are about to reach it.

Walk across the crumbling bridge. It will completely collapse behind you. All we can do now is to press forward. Once you get across, go down the path on the right. Continue to walk forward until you get to a large rock. There is a wheel stuck in the snow and propped up against the rock. Put it in your inventory.



Now go back to the bridge and take the path on the left. When you move forward once you should see a hill with a strange device on top of it. Walk all the way up the hill and take a closer look at the device.

You need to enter the number we saw etched to a wall in the village. Clicking on the buttons under the zeroes will cycle through the numbers. Enter 264351. Use the oilcan on the left side of the contraption. Now use the wheel you found earlier on the left side as well. Click on the wheel. A drawer will open up and reveal a parchment. Read the document.

Make your way back to the bridge and take the path on the right one more time. Go all the way to the rock where you found the wheel. When you are back next to the rock, move forward once. Turn right and continue forward. You will eventually arrive at dock. Turn right at the dock and keep walking. You will eventually see a hut in the distance. Walk up to the hut and enter through the door.

Give the letter in your inventory to the man sitting by the fire. After the cut scene you will get to play a board game called Tablut.

Read the instructions to play the game. You will be playing as the defenders of the king. The game will of course pan out somewhat differently each time you play. The objective is to get the center piece, the king, to one of the corners. As a general strategy, try targeting your opponent's pieces on one side of the board. Try to maintain two pieces on two opposite sides of your king. Once you win the game, the episode will be over. Enjoy the short ending movie.

### Episode 3: Pirates of Madagascar

Once again, you will be able to watch the progress of the professor's journey. Read the letters that appear around the desk. They will give you detailed information about Smythe's activities to aid with Samuel's expedition. Click on the exit button to start the episode.

The sunny shores of Madagascar are quite a change from Lapland. To the right, there is a path leading into the forest. Walk down this path and you will get to the entrance of a village. Talk to the guard at the gate. Ask him about entering the village and seeing Rakotonarivelo. New topics will become available after you ask about the first two. Samuel will eventually learn about an old man living in the forest. When you ask about navigating the forest, the villager will tell you that berries can be used to get lemurs to help you through the forest.

There is a container of berries next to the right. Click on the container to put some berries in your inventory. There are two paths behind you. One of them will take you back to the shore. The second one leads deeper into the forest. Go down this second path to look for the old man. You will encounter a lemur along the way. Click on the lemur to take a closer look. Put berries from your inventory on the rock in front of the creature.



The lemur will walk into the forest. Go after the creature to enter the forest maze. There will be four directions available around you. Move towards any of them. When you arrive at the second "node", you should hear the lemur's cry repeatedly. Listen carefully and find the direction where the lemur's cry is loudest. Move forward in this direction. Repeat the process until you are out of the forest. A cut scene will follow as Samuel arrives at the clearing.

There are remains of a fire and a barrel in front of you. Walk up to the clearing. Take the rags on the log across from the remains of the fire. Approach the tree house and you will see some of the steps leading to it are missing.



Walk around the tree house and you will see two crates. A sculpture is on top of one of the crates. There is also a pile of wooden planks behind the crates. Click on the pile to take some slats. Now continue walking around the tree house. You will eventually get to a spot where plants are blocking your passage. There is some firewood in front of cactus-like trees. Put it in your inventory.

Combine the slats and the rags to make two “temporary steps”. Return to the spot where we saw the missing steps leading to the tree house. Use your ingenious temporary steps on the empty slots. Climb the steps you just created. When you reach the first level above ground, you will be standing on your higher makeshift step. Remove the lower step from its spot and use it on the higher empty spot. Continue your ascent to the tree house. Enter through the door.

Take the box of matches from the desk. Take a look at the piece of paper that is also on the desk. It contains a few verses and it is labeled Enina. There are some wooden planks next to the desk. Click on them to take one. You will need it when you leave the tree house. Also take the piece of paper on the ground next to the planks. It is similar to the short poem we found earlier. The second piece is labeled Iray. There is a third piece of paper inside a stone column on the left side of the planks. This one is labeled Efatra. Finally, take a look at the painting on the wall across from the steps. Note the name of the ship in the painting: Abe.

There is a ladder on the back side of the room. Climb up to the next level. Enter through the door. Use your bottle of wine on the man. Take a look at the shelves on the opposite corner of the room from the bed. Take the bowl, some brown berries, and the lantern. Combine the lantern with the box of matches to light it. There is a small makeshift table next to the bed. Take a look at the note on this table. This one is labeled Dimy. There is yet another piece of paper on the shelves across from the bed. The paper is tucked behind the bag on the top shelf closest to the doorway. The poem is labeled Roa.

Go back to the entrance of the tree house. There is a basket of rice on the shelves next to the entrance doorway. Use your bowl on the basket. Leave the tree house and go down the steps. You will be stuck after you go down twice. Use the step in your inventory to complete the staircase. Return to the ground level.

Note the pot that is hanging from a branch over the remains of the fire. Use your bowl of rice on this pot. Turn to your right. Note the trees where we found the firewood earlier in the distance. Take a step towards these trees and you will be next to a water barrel. Use your bowl on the barrel to fill it. Use the bowl of water on the pot of rice. Repeat the process to add one more bowl of water to the pot. Use the firewood underneath the pot. Use your matches to start the fire.



Leave the area for a while. You can take a trip around the tree house. When you come back a few moments later, the rice will be cooked. Use your empty bowl on the pot of rice. Return to the bed inside the tree house where the old man is sleeping. Use the bowl of rice on the man.

When our friend finally regains some energy, talk to him. When the old man asks who you are, tell him you are a scientist. Exhaust all conversation topics. The man will tell you the story of how he came to live on the island. He will also provide us vital information as to why the villagers no longer welcome strangers and reveal the author of the poems we have been finding. Make sure you talk to the old man for a second time after the initial lengthy cut scene and ask about all of the topics.

After talking to the old man, climb up the ladder to the third level of the tree house. There are some more poems nailed to the wall next to the telescope. Click on them to put them among your files. They are labeled Valo, Folo, Fito, and Sivy. You should now have a total of nine poems listed among your files.

There are many books scattered around the room. Two of them are especially important. The first one is a brown book close to the telescope. Click on it to reveal three questions: Where? What? When? This is one of the puzzles. We need to take care of a few things before we can solve the puzzle. The tenth and the last poem, Telo, is on the ground behind the brown book.

The second book is directly underneath the hammock. It is called “Vocabulary of the Malgasy”. This book offers us translations for the names of the poems we have found. The names of the ten poems can be translated as follows:

- Iray: One
- Roa: Two
- Telo: Three
- Efatra: Four

- Dimy: Five
- Enina: Six
- Fito: Seven
- Valo: Eight
- Sivy: Nine
- Folo: Ten

So the poem names were only the numbers one through ten after all. We will use this information to solve a puzzle.

Look through the telescope. You will initially see a fuzzy image of the forest. You can use the three levers attached to the telescope to change what you are viewing. There are certain phrases you can see at some of the locations. The following is a list of all the phrases and the corresponding lever positions. The locations where you will not be able to see a message have been excluded:











Left Lever	Center Lever	Right Lever	Phrase
I	10	10	on the Beach
II	10	10	at midnight
II	10	20	at dusk
II	10	30	behind the village
II	20	10	the skull rock
II	20	30	at the baobab trees
II	30	20	bottle tree
III	10	30	after rain
III	20	20	at ebb of tide
III	30	10	the pebble hill
III	30	20	on the forest path
III	30	30	the pond

Climb down the tree house to the ground level. Walk around the tree back to the spot where we saw the two crates and the statue. Use your brown berries on the statue's mouth. Click on the lever on the back side of the statue. Take the red berries.

Go back to the spot where we first entered the clearing. Give some red berries to the lemur. Follow the lemur into the forest. If you follow the loudest lemur cries again, you will end up at the village. However, this is not what we want to do. We need to find the captain's grave so we can recover the treasure. So let's try reversing the logic this time around. Go into the forest and move forward once in any direction. You should start hearing the lemur at the next location.

Listen carefully to the cries of the lemur. Go in the direction where the cries are the faintest. When you do this correctly twice, you will completely stop hearing the lemur and Samuel will exclaim "Have I lost my little friend?" Move forward two more times and you should arrive at the captain's grave site.

You can remove the grave posts around the captain's resting place. The goal is to put them in the correct order. To accomplish this, you will need to use the poems as a point of reference. Note the shapes carved underneath the bull on each sign post. You need to match the drawings on the poems to these shapes. Then you need to put the posts corresponding to the poems in the correct order. Starting with the post on the farthest left, put the posts in numerical order. You can use the following chart to match the numbers to the shapes carved on each post. Note that while there are a total of ten poems, there should be only nine posts for you to arrange. You will only use numbers 1 through 9:

Iray (1)		Efatra (4)		Fito (7)		Folo (10)	
Roa (2)		Dimy (5)		Valo (8)			
Telo (3)		Enina (6)		Sivy (9)			

Once the posts are in the right order, Samuel will comment about who might have put them in an incorrect order in the first place... If you thought organizing the grave posts was going to be enough, I am sorry to inform you that you were mistaken. Now that the ten posts are in order, we need to look at the runes engraved underneath them.

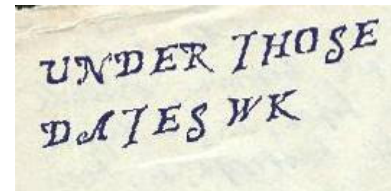
In order to decode the message, first walk around the tomb and take a look at the back of the tombstone. You will see some engravings matching the symbols on the posts along with their translation.



Use this information to decipher the message on the posts. The letters on each sign post are:

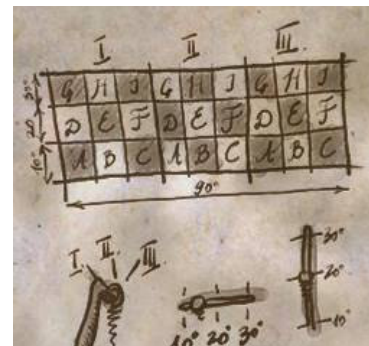
- |       |       |       |
|-------|-------|-------|
| 1- UN | 4- HO | 7- TE |
| 2- DE | 5- SE | 8- S  |
| 3- RT | 6- DA | 9-WK  |

Piecing together the letters we get UNDER THOSE DATES WK. Go back to the tombstone. When you click on the engravings behind it, Samuel will be able to enter the deciphered message. Use the keypad to type in the message and press "Enter" to submit the answer.



Go around the tomb. Look at the grave from the entrance of the area. Go to the right side of the grave. From this angle, you will be able to zoom in on the dates engraved on the front side of the tombstone. Use the knife in your inventory on the dates. Samuel will find another page of the mysterious codex and a journal. Read both of the documents.

The last page of the journal has illustrations resembling the levers of the telescope. There is also a chart with some letters. We need to combine the letters from the chart with the messages we saw through the telescope earlier. Using the labels of the chart, you can match the images as follows:



Left Lever	Center Lever	Right Lever	Phrase	Code Letter
I	10	10	on the Beach	A
II	10	10	at midnight	A
II	10	20	at dusk	D
II	10	30	behind the village	G
II	20	10	the skull rock	B
II	20	30	at the baobab trees	H
II	30	20	bottle tree	F
III	10	30	after rain	G
III	20	20	at ebb of tide	E
III	30	10	the pebble hill	C
III	30	20	on the forest path	F
III	30	30	the pond	I

It is time to return to the tree house. Enter the forest area again. When you move into the forest, you will start hearing the lemur's cries. Go towards the direction where the sound is faintest.

When you reach the clearing, return to the room with the telescope. Open the brown book on the ground in front of the telescope. We can finally answer those where what when questions by using the messages we discovered using the telescope and the chart we saw on the last page of the answer. The final clue we will use is the ship name ABE we had seen earlier on a painting. The solution is:

- There are two messages that have the code letter A. The messages are "on the beach", and "at midnight". "On the beach" describes a location. Type it in as the answer to the where question. Click on the "Enter" button.
- There is a single message that has the code letter B. The message is "the skull rock". Enter "the skull rock" as the answer to the what question. Click on the "Enter" button.
- There is also a single message that has the code letter E. The message is "at ebb of tide". Type this message as the response to the when question. Click on the "Enter" button.

As you can probably guess, we need to make our way back to the village. Take some more brown berries from the room where the old man is resting. Take the berries to the sculpture on top of the crate behind the tree house. Use the berries on the sculpture's mouth and pull the lever to crush them. Take the red berries to the entrance of the clearing. Give the berries to the lemur. The professor should automatically make his way back to the beach.

Turn left and move forward once towards the sea. Samuel will look towards the rocks in the distance and see the shape of a skull. Before leaving this spot, take two pieces of seaweed from the ground. Now walk up to the rock you saw in the distance. Walk all the way around the Skull Rock. You should see a cavern several feet ahead of you. Walk into the cavern.

Once inside, click on the bamboo sticks floating in the water. Walk back outside. Take the nine bamboo sticks lying around the palm tree near the cavern. There should be nine of them in total. Go back to the cavern. Use the nine bamboo sticks in your inventory on the two that are already positioned on the ground. Samuel will put all 11 sticks together as a makeshift raft. Use the seaweed to tie the bamboo sticks together. Click on your raft to use it.



Walk into the cavern. If you had not done so already, use matches on your lantern to light it. Walk through the cavern until you get to a treasure chest. Click on the chest to open it. Remove the rocks inside the chest by clicking on them. Finally, click on the board game to put it in your inventory. Continue down the cavern. Your path will be eventually blocked by boulders. Zoom in on the rocks. Try to take the tool. Samuel will be unable to remove it.

Go back to the chest. Click on the chest and Samuel will push it aside. Walk into the newly discovered tunnel. Continue down the long tunnel. You will eventually find yourself at the bottom of a well. Take the ladder to the right. Walk up the rope attached to the bucket. Look up and find the hotspot above you. Use the ladder on this hotspot to climb up the well.

Click on the bricks for a closer look. They have markings on them. Try clicking on the brick on the bottom right. You will not be able to move it with your bare hands. Click away from the bricks and look at the ground. Take the pick axe shaft. Go all the way back to the spot where we saw the rocks blocking our path earlier. Use the pick axe shaft on the pick axe blade stuck to the wall. Samuel will remove the axe head. Combine the shaft and the head.

Go back to the marked bricks on the wall of the well. Use your pick axe on the marked brick to the bottom right of the screen. Now that we removed the first brick, make note of the actual symbols on them. A number of bricks should be marked with an X. These are the ones we can remove. However, there are also small lines on the sides of these bricks. There are one to four lines on any given removable brick. Solve the puzzle as follows:

- The idea is to reorganize the lined bricks to create steps. Trial and error will show you that certain bricks will slightly stick out of certain spots. Other bricks will fit the spot perfectly, while still others will be too small. The number of lines tells us the size of the brick. Pieces with four lines are the largest. Pieces with a single line are the smallest.
- Note that there are a total of four columns of bricks. You need to organize pieces to create the steps in the two center columns. In general, replace any existing brick in the center column with a brick that contains one more line. Move smaller bricks to the far left and right columns as needed.
- To start solving the puzzle, take the lowest one-lined bricks and put it in the empty spot.
- This should leave an opening in the second row from the bottom. Fill it with the lowest two-lined brick.
- Now move a three-lined brick to the spot where the two-lined brick used to be.
- There is an unmoved two-lined brick on the fourth row from the bottom. Move it to the empty spot.
- Fill the gap with any three-lined brick we haven't moved yet.
- Now move any four-lined brick to the empty space.
- Use an unmoved two-lined brick from one of the two center columns to fill the opening.
- There should be one last three-lined brick we haven't touched yet. Move it to the empty spot.
- Fill the gap with any four-lined brick from the far left or right columns.
- Move a two-lined brick from the center column to the opening.
- Move the last remaining untouched four-lined brick to the empty spot.
- The last brick to replace has a single line. However, it is too small to even go into the empty spot. Temporarily fill the empty spot with a two-lined brick from the far left or right column.
- Now move the one-lined brick to the empty position.
- Finally, use any two-lined brick from the far left or right columns to fill the empty spot.





Samuel will climb up the steps you just created. After the cut scene, talk to the village chief. When you exhaust all conversation topics, show him the board game. Talk to the chief again about all of the topics.

You will eventually get to play Fanorona with the chief. Read the rules to learn the game. You will be playing as the white side. The objective is to capture all of your opponents pieces or keep him from being able to move any of his pieces. You capture pieces by either moving your pieces directly towards or away from your opponents. You will be allowed to make multiple moves in a turn to capture several pieces. Remember that you can move and capture pieces diagonally as well as horizontally and vertically. In general, try to eliminate multiple pieces of your opponent in each turn. Assess the board before moving to determine which positions will allow you to continue moving and capture several pieces at once. When you win the game, the episode will be over.

Enjoy the ending movie and the surprise letter from Smythe. It is time to wait for episode 4.

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## Hope Springs Eternal - Walkthrough

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Written by Suz

Navigation: Hope Springs Eternal uses basic point and click navigation. Arrows will show you what directions you may move. A magnifying glass will show when you can examine something closer. Gears show that there is an inventory item needed to solve the puzzle. A hand appears to pick up items, or to open things.

Inventory is accessed at the top of the screen. A speech bubble will appear when you can speak to a character. You should always exhaust all dialog possibilities. Take time to look around, this game has lots of beautiful detail.

You may save your game at any time. There are unlimited saves available. There are 6 puzzles in the game. If you are having serious problems working out the solutions, there is a by-pass button on the lower right of the screen that will solve the puzzle for you so that you can go on. The puzzles aren't horribly difficult so give them a shot before using the by-pass.

### Home

There is a letter on the table. Pick it up and read it. You're writing a letter to Lovisa. You rent this flat from her. The letter lets you know that you are trying to run a detective agency that you took over from Conrad, but business is not good so far. Maybe you'll have something more interesting to add to the letter later. Stand up and investigate the room. There is nothing special to do here, but the graphics are nice. Enter the bedroom you can see through the open doorway. Turn left and open cabinet with plant on it. There are scissors inside, go ahead and pick them up. Turn until you face the doorway, near the angel on the way. Go through into the entryway.

Look at the front door. Pull the string on the jumping jack. Oops! Pick the jumping jack off the floor. We will have to fix that. Turn left and enter kitchen to look for something to rehang the toy. The counter to the right has a phone and a dead answering machine. The batteries are dead and the recharger is broken. The table on the left has a newspaper with your ad in it. Pick up newspaper. Look past the table to the blue cabinet. Open cabinet and pick up hammer. Look at hammer in the inventory. Luckily a nail came with it so you don't need to find one. There are other things to look at in the kitchen, but they aren't necessary to complete the game.

Exit the kitchen, back into the entryway. You can check out the WC on the right if you like. Again its not necessary for finishing the game. Rehang the jumping jack on the front door by placing the hammer on the gears that show on the door. That put a nail in the door. Now place the jumping jack on the nail. Turn away from the door and the telephone in the kitchen will ring. Go answer the

telephone. Katarina Vogel, Conrad's sister, wants your help. She asks you to come over. Exit through the front door to a map. Click on Katarina's name.

## Katarina's Apartment

You will arrive in her apartment. Go through all the dialog options. It seems a fellow teacher has gone missing the past three days and Katarina is worried about her. She asks you to find out if anything is wrong with Anna Bergion. You will exit to the map, click on Anna.

## Anna's Apartment

Go through passageway turn left and face orange building. Pick up the bottle by the small door. Open the door by the #6 light. Look for Anna's flat by reading the names on the mail slots. Her flat is the second flat. Ring the bell, no one answers, you'll need to find a key. Exit the building. Talk to the caretaker by the wheelbarrow. Exhaust all conversation possibilities. Try and take the keys from the wheelbarrow. He won't let you, so find a way to distract him. Go back to passageway through the orange building. There is a magnify glass cursor in the middle of the passageway. Click on magnifying glass and see gears. Place the bottle in the newspaper. Hit the newspaper with the hammer. Place the broken glass on the ground. Go back and report the broken glass to the caretaker. Turn away and the caretaker will go to clean up the broken glass. Take the keys from the wheelbarrow. Go back Anna's apartment and unlock the door with the keys.

In Anna's apartment turn left and see chest. Get the photo of Anna from chest. Close chest and turn left, open brown door. This is the bathroom. Get pencil from on top the magazine on the floor. Pick up and look at the latex gloves. You can't take them right now. Exit the room, oops, it locked behind you. Turn and open the brown door opposite the bathroom. Move the wall hanging to see the living room. Take the key from the door. Turn right and go down the hall to the kitchen area. Turn right and see white door. It is locked. Open it with the key from the brown door. Take the pencil sharpener and look at painting. Anna signed it and dated it Sept 04. Note the symbol  $\Phi$ . Put the painting back and shut the closet door. Note the painting on the wall. It is signed Anna Dec 04  $\beta$ . Explore the kitchen area. Take note of the painting by the entry to the living room. It is signed Anna May 03 Y ( with 2 lines through it). Enter living room. Turn right and look in waste can. Animal burials on Tuesday?? Axel?? Who's Axel?? Close can and look at painting over can. Anna May 03 Y ( with 2 lines through it). Turn toward desk. Examine the typewriter and the recipe in the typewriter. It seems that this typewriter drops the letter n. Look at sheet of paper. There are impressions where someone wrote on it. Sharpen the pencil with the pencil sharpener and use it on the paper to make the writing legible. We need to look for an October painting. Back away from the desk and turn right. Go forward and check the telephone and answering machine. There are no messages. Turn left and examine bed. There's nothing there. Turn around and

look at the cabinet with the guitar leaning on it. There are gears showing on the drawers, but you can't do anything yet. Turn right and examine painting over blue couch. It's the October painting, take it with you. Note the signature Anna Oct 04 0. Exit apartment. Carol says she'll leave the door unlocked for now. Don't forget to return the caretaker's keys to the wheelbarrow. Exit through passageway and back to the map.

## **Kiosk**

Go to the Kiosk and talk to Stina. Again exhaust all dialog options. Now you have an idea where the pet cemetery is located. Exit to the map and click on the West Side.

## **The West Side**

Follow the path past the yellow building. Follow the walkway over the water until it turns to the right. At that point turn left and note handbag sitting on rails. You can't reach it right now. Turn back to the right and continue around the water. Follow the path until it splits at a small waterfall. Take the left fork of the path up to the first landing. Turn left and go into a seating area. Take the roll of tape from the bench. Turn around and go back to the stairs. Turn left and continue up the stairs to the street. Continue down the road between the yellow and orange buildings. You will need to turn left at the T in the road. There is no option. Continue past the human cemetery to the end of the parking lot. You will turn left at the big tree and go down a grassy path. There is groundskeeper working in the pet cemetery. Go through all the dialog options. Go back to the parking lot area and turn left. You will get an exit icon that will send you back to the map. There is now a Pet Cemetery location on your map.

## **Katarina's Apartment**

Go see Katarina and see if she knows anything about the October painting. She will tell you about it and the Axel that lived 200 years ago. There is now a Lofstad Castle location on your map. Go visit the castle.

## **Lofstad Castle**

Go down the dirt road three clicks and turn left to see the castle stables. Note the AFHCD 1783 engraved on the building. Turn around and see the path split around the castle. Take the fork to the left and enter the castle courtyard. Note the letters AFHCDG 1753 on the front of the castle. Turn left and see guide sitting on the bench. Speak with her, if you can get past staring at the yellow jewel on her forehead. You need a ticket to enter the castle. To get a ticket you must pass a quiz about the castle. There is an ATM looking machine in the wall opposite the guide. This is where you need to take the quiz. But first you need to look around the grounds to learn more about the castle. When leaving the

guide turn right three times to see a walkway between buildings and the quiz/ticket machine on the wall. Go forward twice and through the metal gate. This is the castle grounds; follow the path down to the grounds. Turn left and follow the path around the castle to the left. Go as far as you are allowed and then turn right, away from the castle. The path will zigzag back and forth. Follow the path until you see a red flyer on the ground. Pick up and read flyer. There have been concerts at the castle since 2001. Continue down the path. There is a Y in the path at the pond. Go to the left, take the little bridge and look at the monument. It reads the 20<sup>th</sup> of June, 1810. Turn around and go back over the bridge, stay on the path to the left. You will end up in an area with exits to the map straight ahead and to the left, so go right. There will be another fork in the path. Stay to the left. Follow the path until there is a small trail to the left. It is just before the path comes out in front of the castle. Follow the small trail down to the summer house. Note the Swedish flag on top of the summer house. Turn around and follow the trail, turn left where it joins the main path. Follow the path back to the stable area. Turn around and take the left path into the castle courtyard. Go to the main door of the castle and turn right. Go toward the ticket machine. Click on the silver panel to the lower right of the ticket machine. This is one of the puzzles that it is possible to bypass. The goal of this puzzle is to push the buttons in the correct order. The buttons will stay down and lit, if the order is correct. If you make a mistake the buttons will reset. Hint start with the second button. The solution is 25143. The ticket machine is now on, go and take the quiz. The answers are all available throughout the castle grounds. The answers are 1C 2A 3E 4D 5D

To finish the quiz there is a slider puzzle. This is another puzzle that can be bypassed if you wish, but give it a try first. Start with the top row and get them in their proper places, the bottom right will be empty when the puzzle is done correctly. Take your ticket. Turn around and give it to the guide. What is wrong with her??? Take the yellow jewel that she offers you. Turn right and enter castle. Follow the red carpet. Turn left at T. Read the two plaques on the walls; make sure you click on the one with the X. This will allow you to go into the cellar. Go back down the hall, past the entry wall. Read the information plaques on the walls. One of the plaques will tell you that Axel's lucky number is 211. You can visit upstairs if you wish, but it isn't necessary to finish the game. Go to the end of the hall. Turn right and see locked white door. Turn left and see old toilet, turn left again to enter salon. Go into next salon toward green chair. This will take you to the left and into the next room. Turn to the right and see a locked table. Enter Axel's favorite number and press large square button. Take the key and turn to the right. Go forward one click toward the green wall, and then turn right. One click forward and you will be at the locked white door. Use the key from the table to unlock the kitchen door. Pick up the matches from the table. Exit kitchen and go down hallway, past the staircase to the left and back to the entryway on the left. The front door to the castle will be open. Don't leave the castle. Turn to the left and face the small gray door. It leads to the cellar. Go down the stairs, oops its dark. Use the matches to light the lantern. Explore the

cellar, note the X on the wall, poor kid. Back up from X and turn right twice. There is a map of the grounds on a chest. Read the map, and click on it until Carol says something about the secret meeting place. Go back upstairs and exit the castle. Go straight ahead, out the gates to the stable. Turn left at the stable, go forward three clicks and turn right. There is now an arrow leading into the trees. Keep going until you find a mound of rocks. Turn right and see a bag in the grass. Open the bag and find a letter to Axel from Anna. They are suppose to meet at a cottage in Finspong. Turn around and exit back to main road. Exit to map.

## Anna's Apartment

Let's go back to Anna's apartment to look for information about the cottage. Something fell when we entered the apartment. Read the mail that has been delivered. Something from the prison? Go into the living room. A plant fell off the window sill, revealing a small purse. This is the third puzzle that may be bypassed. The goal of this puzzle is to move all the buttons to the left to unlock the purse. The solution is: Numbering from 1-3 across the top and 4-6 across the bottom, 54663. Get the key from the purse. Turn and use the key and the drawers under the rocking horse. The drawer on the right reveals a letter from Axel that was typed on Anna's typewriter. The drawer on left reveals the fourth puzzle. Note that the symbols on the drawer are like the ones the Anna put on her paintings. Go by the dates of the paintings to find the order of the symbols. The order is Y00β. Look at ring and read the contract to find the address for the cottage. Exit the apartment building. Go through the passageway and exit back to the map. There is a new location, The Cottage.

## Katarina's Apartment

But first go ask Katarina about Anna and the prison. She'll give you some information on Anna's job there, then go to the cottage.

## Cottage & Kiosk & Anna's Apartment

The backdoor is locked. You need to find a key. Visit the Kiosk for hints on the cottage and the West Side handbag. Go back to Anna's apartment. The caretaker is there. Humor him and you will go to Anna's apartment. Check the telephone answering machine. The chimney sweep left a key under the mat at the cottage. Go to the cottage.

## Cottage

Go behind the cottage and turn to face the green door. Move the mat and pick up the key. Replace the mat and unlock the door. Turn right and enter the living room. Read the note on the table and pick up the telephone. Anna plans on meeting Axel in Spain. Turn left and go forward. Hear strange noises upstairs.

Turn left and go upstairs. Look out open window. There's no one there, turn and look in other room. There are two hotspots on the bed. One shows the nightstand with a key like yours and a watch from the Animal Cemetery Committee. The second shows a newspaper. Exit the cottage and go back to the map.

## **Pet Cemetery**

Go to the pet cemetery and ask the caretaker about the watch. Two new sites will be available on the map, the police station and the library. But first notice the hoe leaning against a tree. Borrow the hoe; you need to go fishing for a handbag. Go back to the West Side, face the handbag and reach it with the hoe. Take the library card from inside. Go back to the pet cemetery and return the hoe. Exit back to the map and go visit the library.

## **Library & Kiosk**

Use the library card and click on the keyboard to read info about Axel's conviction. Take library card and exit back to the map. Go to the kiosk and ask for a phone book. You will find the address for Axel's lawyer on the third page. Exit to the map and go visit Urban Nystrom.

## **Urban Nystrom's House**

Knock on the door. A lady answers the door and says that she is already a member? A member of what? Knock on the door again. She'll comment on the yellow jewel on your forehead and then let you into Urban's den. Look around there is a lot of detail to appreciate. Near the computer note the battery charger, don't take it yet. Turn right to face the door. Look at the boxes on top of the storage cabinet. Oops, you can't reach them. Note the gears at the bottom of the storage cabinet. You need to place something there for you to stand on. Turn around and pick up ugly chair. Turn and place ugly chair where the gears were located. Stand on chair and reach green box. This is the fifth puzzle. The goal is for all the parts of the picture to become visible. Each section of the puzzle interacts with other section of the puzzle. It is similar to the purse puzzle at Anna's apartment. If you have problems you can by-pass the puzzle. My solution is Middle, Upper Middle, Upper Left, Middle Left, Middle, Upper Left, Lower Right, Lower Left.

Once you open the box, there are notes about Axel's case and how he may have been framed. Who would have place the Digoxin in this apartment? You will need to visit Nisse's junkyard and find out if they made a key to his apartment. Exit the room and visit the Kiosk.

## Kiosk and Nisse's Junkyard

You need an address for the junkyard. After you speak with Stina the junkyard will appear on the map. Go visit the junkyard. When you enter Nisse's junkyard go forward and enter the blue building on the right. Speak with Nisse. He has a rather inflated opinion of himself. But the important thing to discover is that he needs batteries for his MP3 player. Exit building and turn right, turn right again to see gray door on the outside of the blue building. The door is open but stuck. Turn right and go forward toward the blue car. Turn right and enter the wrecking yard, search the cars for something to open the door. After you find the crowbar go back to the gray door in the blue building. Try the crowbar on the door. Oops, you can't do that yet, he might hear you. Go back to the entrance of the junkyard and exit back to the map.



## Home and Urban's House

Go home and enter the kitchen. Remove the batteries from the answering machine. They are uncharged. To charge them, leave home and exit to the map. Select Urban Nystrom's home, there was a battery charger on the desk. Go to the back of the room. Turn right and pick up battery charger. Put batteries in charger. Turn left and plug charger into the power strip that is on the floor. It will take time for the batteries to charge. Leave the room. This will put you back to the map. Return to Urban's home. His wife will answer the door with a letter from Urban's boss, Lotta. Read the letter to find out that someone has been embezzling from the company. Lotta arranged to meet Urban on the day of her murder. After you read the letter you will automatically go to Urban's den. Pick up the now charged batteries. Exit the room back to the map. Select the junkyard as your next stop.

## Nisse's Junkyard

At the junkyard two clicks forward and a turn to the right will put you in front of the blue building. Enter the building and turn right. Give the batteries to Nisse. He won't be able to hear you now. Exit the building, go forward 2 clicks, turn right, forward one click and turn right again. You should now see the red building. Go forward twice and turn right to return to the gray door. Nisse should be occupied now and unable to hear you break in. Use the crowbar on the door.



Opening the door reveals a hidden key cutting machine. Barely sticking out from under the machine is an unsent envelop. Open the envelop and read the note. There's definitely a touch of blackmail going on. Pick up gold key. To the right of the key master is an sheet of blanks. Match the gold key to the blanks. It lines up with A.W. Is it Axel's key? Exit back to the map. Go check out the address on the envelop, 142a Risselgatan.



## Risselgatan 142a

The front door is locked. Turn left and go the side of the building. Turn right and go down the stairs to the basement. Turn and open the first door on the left. Turn left again and look in the dark corner. There is a screwdriver on top of the papers on the floor. Leave the room and look at the bulletin board directly across the hall. There is a note says that the main fuse is broken and needs to be fixed so that the front door opens. Turn left and go forward twice, on the right is the fuse box, however its locked and needs a key to be opened. Continue forward to the gold door on the right. Open the door to the bathroom and pick up the gold key on the floor. Go back to the fuse box and unlock it. There are bare wires that need to be fixed. Bare wires can't be handled with bare hands. Where were those latex gloves?

## Anna's Apartment

Exit and use the map to go back to Anna's apartment. When you get back to Anna's apartment, enter the door and turn left. Click on the left brown door. The bathroom door locked behind you when you last left. To fix the door use the screwdriver on the lock. Enter the bathroom and get the latex gloves. Exit back to the map and go to Risselgatan 142a.

## Risselgatan 142a

Go back to the basement and the fusebox. Open the fusebox and click on the wires. A few sparks later they are twisted together. Use the scissor to cut a piece of tape from the roll. The use the tape piece to finish the wire repair.



The fuse box is the 6<sup>th</sup> puzzle that has the by-pass option. You can by-pass if you like, but its not so hard. There is a piece of paper behind the wires leading to the fuse box. It has directions on how the fuses work. You will need a good fuse in slots #3 and #6. That is the front door and the main fuse. Fuse #3 is blown. You know that from the note on the bulletin board that said the main fuse is blown. So put the Fuse #1 in slot #3 and fuse #2 in slot #6. Now you need to set the switch for the front door to the off position. That turns off the locks. You press the switch so that the lower side is toward the off. Go to the right and back up the stairs. At the top of the stairs turn left. Go in front of the building and try the front door again. It should now be open.

Per Vegander has the first door on the left. Ring the bell and try to talk to him. He sure doesn't remember much. Why did he set up Axel? Exit the building and turn right. Go forward a few clicks and you can exit to the map. Its time to talk to the police.

## Police Station and Library

The police will arrest Per Vegander. Go to the library, use the library card on the computer and then click on the keyboard to read the lastest newsclippings on Per Vegander's arrest. Its really not very nice for a lawyer to set up his client for a crime that the lawyer committed. Take the library card and exit to the map. That's all you can do for now, so perhaps you should go home.

## The Ending

As you enter your apartment Axel's cell phone rings. Anna is planning on meeting Axel at the Viking terminal. Go and tell him that his name has been cleared. The Viking terminal is now available on the map. When you get to the terminal go forward into the building. Axel is sitting on the right. After you speak with him you will automatically go back to the map. Go visit Anna's apartment and see if she is there. Speak with her and the end sequence will start. You will end up back at your apartment, finishing your letter to Lovisa. As you finish the mail arrives. There are 2 items, a postcard from Axel and Anna. It looks like they are doing well. You also get a letter from Urban's wife Edit. It seems he is not really dead, but has disappeared while investigating the Draghat society. Is this a hint about the next Carol Reed mystery...