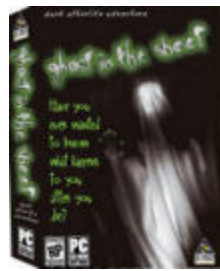


Ghost in the Sheet



Genre: Adventure

Developer: CBE Entertainment

Publisher: Tri Synergy

Released: November 2007

PC Requirements:
Win XP or Vista,
1024x768 display and
soundcard

[Walkthrough](#)

[Additional Screenshots](#)



by Becky

This was the last game I played in 2007, and it was a satisfying way to finish the year. *Ghost in the Sheet* is a first person horror adventure that has little in common with most horror-themed games. I've never played a game quite like it.

Ghost in the Sheet (GITS) opens with a succession of black and white graphic-novel-style drawings, narrated by the voice of the ghost. Our unflappable protagonist ends up dead, then becomes a ghost, and then is sheeted. His Boss, a long-tailed creature with a gruff manner, sends the ghost into a factory called Omega. The ghost knows next to nothing about his mission, and he has only one way to affect his surroundings -- telekinesis. He explores the factory, trying to piece together what happened there.

Welcome Aboard, Amigo

Omega is strange sort of place, located on a mountaintop with access only by cable car. All the employees have had to sign contracts promising that they will ask no questions about the top secret items the factory is producing. A recent cataclysm has trapped the employees, along with several other beings. This is a game where you find yourself in a dialog with shadows, smoke and mirrors. The ghost gradually spreads his wings (so to speak) as he acquires the skills that allow his astral body to move things, push buttons, etc. He reads documents that tell him more about Omega and he speaks to what's left of the

factory employees.

Nothing Fancy, but We Call It Home

You play *GITS* from a first person perspective, using a point-and-click interface without 360 degree panning. There is no inventory, though once you've acquired a skill, you can try to use it everywhere. The ghost can carry one item at a time and only for a short distance. Interacting with the gaming environment is simple, but it's sufficiently novel that the gamer may need an adjustment period. A short tutorial at the game's beginning helps to get you started.

Movement through the factory is easy for the most part. The only drawbacks -- a few of the directional hotspots are in unusual locations, and sometimes movement from screen to screen leaves you turned in the opposite direction.

The factory environment is run-down, rusty, and (in places) bloodstained. It's an industrial ruin with pipes, conveyor belts, and random machinery. Different sources of light seek to enliven the darkness -- light bulbs hanging from wires, emergency lights strung along metal caging, shadows highlighted by what might be a bit of glowing ectoplasm. It's a quirky, neglected, dysfunctional business environment -- "The Office," post-catastrophe, haunted by preternatural oddities.

For Clever-Clogs

Ghost in the Sheet contains a variety of puzzles; some use the factory environment in creative ways. The game provides mechanical puzzles, sequencing puzzles, and dialog-based challenges. Sometimes items and close-up hotspots are tough to find. The hotspots aren't tiny, exactly, but they are located in unexpected places. You'll find a couple of arcade-like challenges -- one where you have to click rapidly, and one where you have to squash scampering rodents. Both are fairly difficult, but can be bypassed (the bypass key is mentioned in the manual). There's a board game-like challenge that was frustrating at first because I was singularly obtuse about the final goal.

I had a great time with an ingenious sound puzzle. It doesn't require musical ability, though you do have to be able to hear the sounds. My nemesis was a puzzle that I thought had to be solved by trial and error involving a lot of back-and-forthing. It includes a diagram that I misinterpreted, causing me to experiment with different settings before I actually had the correct information to input.

"Boo!"

This is not the kind of game for which you should put out the lights, put on headphones, and prepare to lose yourself in a labyrinth of terror. Okay, put on the headphones, because the audio is unusually good. The game menu features a mournful song performed on what sounds like an organ grinder. Cello music plays yearningly as you read a love letter. A whistling tune echoes through the shower stall in the locker room.

Ambient sounds are reminiscent of those in old-style horror flicks. Dissonant tones play in the background, along with multi-voiced chanting and moans. There's a funny "glug-glug" sound that accompanies your use of telekinesis and a curious "plop" when you accidentally hit a box during the rodent challenge.

What hooked me almost instantly was the voiceover talent of Klemens Koehring. He voices the part of the ghost with just the right style of slightly nasal nonchalance. His frequent comments reveal a mordant wit. (You can click through the comments and dialogs if you want). The ghost's verbal inventiveness prefigures his problem-solving abilities. As he gains supernatural

skills, he starts to draw conclusions about Omega and how it relates to his own abrupt demise.

There is some salty language in *GITS* and enough black humor to make the game unsuitable for young or sensitive children. Some unexpected vocabulary choices make me think that the game was localized with the U.K. in mind. (Note to self: find a use for the word "clever-clogs.")

Can You Laugh, Chew Gum, and Feel Fear at the Same Time?

As you may have gathered, this is not a game that's meant to terrify the gamer. That doesn't mean that it won't scare you or startle you or perhaps even make you squeamish. There's plenty of villainy to go around -- maybe too much. There are evil individuals and two large groups of evildoers who blithely abuse the most vulnerable of victims. All this, and not one appearance by a lawyer! (Maybe the Boss is a lawyer in disguise.)

I was disappointed with the ending. Frankly, I thought it bordered on the offensive, though the controversy involved does suit the mischievous nature of the story. I also was mildly piqued by the absence of information about the spring activated toy creatures. By that time, though the game had wound its peculiar way into my heart. Let's face it -- it's impossible to go away with negative feelings toward a game that does what this one does to Cthulhu.

The story leaves enough minor ambiguities that hope springs eternal that our hero may whisk his sheet into another adventure, and possibly resolve these minor ambiguities along the way.

Quick List for *Ghost in the Sheet*

An innovative game that looks like a horror game, but plays more like a wry commentary on Life and the Afterlife. A ghostly hero with brains and panache, setting out on an unusual quest.

First person point-and-click, no 360 degree panning. Navigation can be disorienting. Abandoned factory environment with plenty of wear and tear, rust, pipes and weird machines. Occasional animations. Brief character interaction with some of the oddest beings ever to populate a game.

An unconventional plot, some degree of nonlinearity. A surprise ending awash in villainy with a strong dollop of cynicism. Excellent voice work by the main character, other voiceovers are adequate to good. No dying after the introduction, though there is a sequence in which failure brings you back to the beginning of the sequence to try again.

Varied challenges, including mechanical, dialog, and sequencing. No sliders, one clever auditory puzzle that doesn't require musical ability but can't be completed without hearing the sounds. Two arcade-like puzzles that can be bypassed. No color based puzzles or mazes. A particularly difficult challenge -- a confusingly clued diagram and machinery puzzle that can be solved either by calculation or by trial and error with a lot of back-and-forth slogging. (I slogged interminably.)

A helpful opening tutorial. Unlimited save slots. Installation was smooth. No crashes or glitches.

Ghost in the Sheet is aimed at gamers with a taste for the comically macabre who want a game that is refreshingly different.

Final Grade: B

My Computer Specs:

Windows XP Professional

Pentium 2.80 GHz

2046 MB RAM

Direct X 9.0c

512 MB NVIDIA GeForce 7800 GTX

SB X-Fi Audio

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