

# The Non-Comp Review Project 2005: Mystery House Taken Over

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## The Reviews

### [Where There's a Will](#) by [Dan Shiovitz](#)

Platform: Z-code

A [Mystery House Taken Over](#) game

[Author's web site](#)

Download: [Game's home page](#) or [Baf's Guide](#)

Reviewed by [Jess Knoch](#)

A complete reinvention. In this version, you and your relatives are looking for a diamond necklace, but your character is somewhat naïve. He doesn't seem to notice that every other person there is trying to kill him. It's straightforward and forgiving enough even for someone who never played the original Mystery House. The implementation is a bit rough in spots, the worst offense being you start the game in the wrong location (as near as I can figure out). This leads to seeing things in the "wrong" order, but you can get around this by going straight to the Entry Hall upon starting the game. This version is a lot of fun with some very amusing endings.

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### [Mystery House Kracked by the Flippy Disk](#) by [Nick Montfort](#)

Platform: Glulx

[Author's web site](#)

Download: [Game's home page](#) or [Baf's Guide](#)

Reviewed by [Jess Knoch](#)

Though the gameplay in this incarnation is similar to the original, what I call the "baseline," there are two things that set it apart from all the other versions. First, the graphics seem to be overlaid with screens from other games of the era. The effect is more entertaining than disturbing, since the graphics weren't really that fantastic to begin with. Second, all of the game's text is in hacker-speak. For example: "TYPE 'WTF' FOR 1NS7RUCTIONS." and "U R IN THE FR0NT YARD..." This version would be somewhat difficult to play without some prior knowledge of the game, since so many objects aren't named in the text. Play this after, say, Michael Gentry's version.

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### [Mystery House Makeover](#) by [Adam Cadre](#)

Platform: Glulx

A [Mystery House Taken Over](#) game

[Author's web site](#)

Download: [Game's home page](#) or [Baf's Guide](#)

Reviewed by [Jess Knoch](#)

Short and simple. Cadre uses just a few locations from the original game, and the "gameplay" consists of moving from space to space to see the new additions and read the commentary from the host and the designers, who would fit right in at *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*. Meanwhile, homeowner Phil adds his own reaction to the changes (such as "What the hail?"). Not a lot of interactivity, but entertaining enough. Once you tour the house and leave again, you're done.

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[Casa Tomada](#) by [Daniel Garrido](#)

Platform: Glulx

A [Mystery House Taken Over](#) game

[Author's web site](#)

Download: [Game's home page](#) or [Baf's Guide](#)

Reviewed by [Jess Knoch](#)

A Spanish version. It appears to be updated with a modern parser, and there is new (pretty) artwork as well. Since I only read Spanish tolerably well, I didn't get very far into this one.

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[\[You wake up itching.\]](#) by [Michael Gentry](#)

Platform: Glulx

A [Mystery House Taken Over](#) game

[Author's web site](#)

Download: [Game's home page](#) or [Baf's Guide](#)

Reviewed by [Jess Knoch](#)

The house is the same, but instead of relatives at the house with you, it's your film crew. Michael Gentry invents an entirely new story to go with the action, and the result is a brand new game. Even though it is quite different from the original *Mystery House*, this version makes an excellent introduction to the set of *Mystery House Taken Over* games because it is so well implemented, making it easy to get around, make a map, and discover the names of objects you find. It's still a murder mystery, and thanks to the new storyline, a bit more creepy than the original. Recommended.

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[Glass Boxes](#) by [Yune Kyung Lee](#) and [Yoon Ha Lee](#)

Platform: Glulx

A [Mystery House Taken Over](#) game

[Yune Kyung Lee's web site](#); [Yoon Ha Lee's web site](#)

Download: [Game's home page](#) or [Baf's Guide](#)

Reviewed by [Jess Knoch](#)

Unfortunately, this version preserves the two-word parser. Fortunately, there are all-new pretty graphics to look at. Unfortunately, the text describing the world tends to be rather vague and unclear, making it even harder to get things done than in the baseline version of the game. Bonus: the setting has been reinvented as a theater, and the people inside are actors -- or are they? Give this a try after you know your way around.

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[Mystery House Remixedup](#) by [Scott Rettberg](#)

Platform: Glulx

A [Mystery House Taken Over](#) game

[Author's web site](#)

Download: [Game's home page](#) or [Baf's Guide](#)

Reviewed by [Jess Knoch](#)

A lot of fun. Actually, the gameplay is very close to the baseline or "original," to the point that I think you can use the Mystery House walkthrough for this version, but the improved descriptions and responses make a big difference. It almost feels like a parody of a "great American novel," aiming for a literary level it can't quite reach. The effect is amusing and a bit charming. The graphics are definitely basic, with just a few embellishments over the original.

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**[Mystery House Possessed](#)** by [Emily Short](#)

Platform: Z-code

A [Mystery House Taken Over](#) game

[Author's web site](#)

Download: [Game's home page](#)

Reviewed by [Jess Knoch](#)

Fully implemented Z-code version that retains the feel of the original, while vastly improving the mechanics all the way around. The NPCs in this version become much more important: first of all, you can talk to them, and not just talk. You can try things like "Sam, is Tom dead?" and ASK TOM ABOUT DEATH AND TOM, combining two keywords to get a finer shade of meaning to your question. In practice, I didn't get answers a lot of times. But I was still able to try it, and that was huge. The second thing with the NPCs is that you can actually try to save some of them. All of the NPCs move around independently, and they seem to have very different opinions about things. If you can find out who the murderer is quickly, you have the chance to save some lives. Also, there are multiple ways of dealing with the murderer after you know who he (or she) is. The scenery is fleshed out and given life, the story is fleshed out and takes on a real shape. A good murder mystery in its own right.

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**[Mystery House Nightmared](#)** by Art Destroyer

Platform: Glulx

A [Mystery House Taken Over](#) game

Download: [Game's home page](#)

Reviewed by [Jess Knoch](#)

The graphics are all upside down. There is something disproportionately disturbing about this, and the odd colors don't help. As we go on, it gets stranger and stranger looking. Gameplay seems to be strictly baseline, so that the original walkthrough will work.

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**[Mystery House: Occluded Vengeance](#)** by Guy Minor

Platform: Glulx

A [Mystery House Taken Over](#) game

Download: [Game's home page](#)

Reviewed by [Jess Knoch](#)

The major change here is the text: it appears that the poetry is from an anonymous dramatic monologue from the 17th century. The surprising thing is that it actually fits in quite well with the game. The actual layout seems to be mostly unchanged and the gameplay is very similar to the original, though some differences in the objects made everything a bit more difficult.