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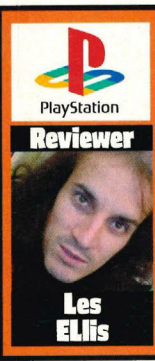
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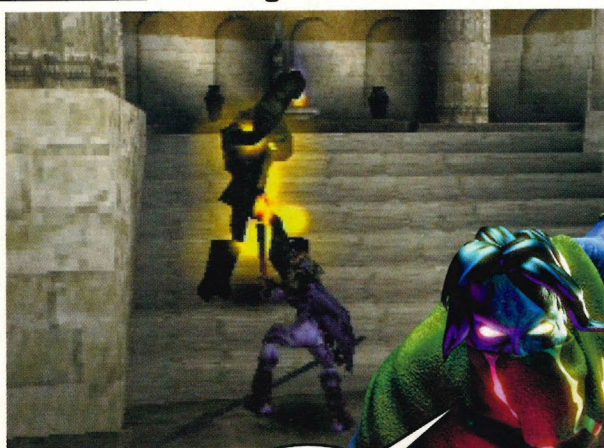
REVIEWS * TIPS * PREVIEWS * NEW POSTERS * COMPETITIONS



Being a vampire is something you can get your teeth into, and with *Soul Reaver*, you're a vampire with a taste for Claret rather than Croft Original.



LEGACY OF KAIN: SOUL REAVER



Can I interest anyone in a massage?

Imagine Lara Croft with razor sharp teeth and an unquenchable thirst for sucking souls from any living (or undead) creature.

Now get rid of all the pony tail, the satchel and of course that pneumatic chest, rot a bit of the flesh away and you have Raziel, the latest and most gruesome 3D gaming hero.

so can he, but better. Lara runs and jumps, Raziel runs, jumps, crouches, floats and changes direction in mid air. Lara shoots her foes, Raziel rams metal spikes through them or impales them on sections of the scenery. Lara looks at her enemies, Raziel sucks their souls out. Let's face it, when it comes down to who's the

LOVELY MOVER

Whatever the lovely Lara can do,

▲ Graveyard shift. Just one of the wholesome locations you can expect.



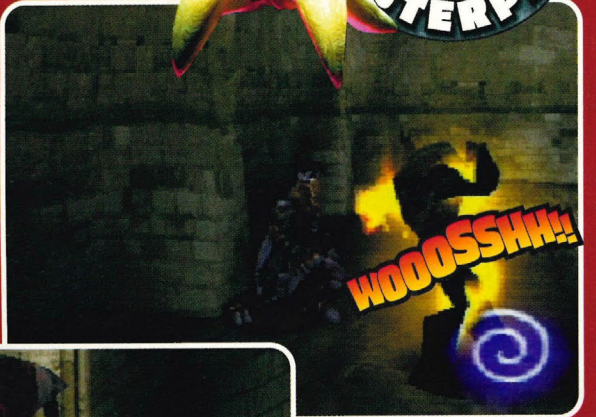
IT'S FANGTASTIC!

Crucifixes are no good when it comes to dealing out a hard time to your vamped up former best mates in *Soul Reaver*.



▲ The soul of yet another undead victim snaps into your chest, revitalising you.

► Fire attacks leave your enemies gently crackling at gas mark 3.



◀ Just like Vlad, impaling seems to be a favourite with Raziel.

▼ Those weapons look like they might come in handy. If you had hands that is.

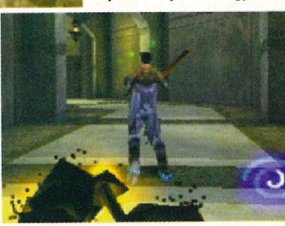


▲ Keep an eye on the blue spiral. It's your energy.



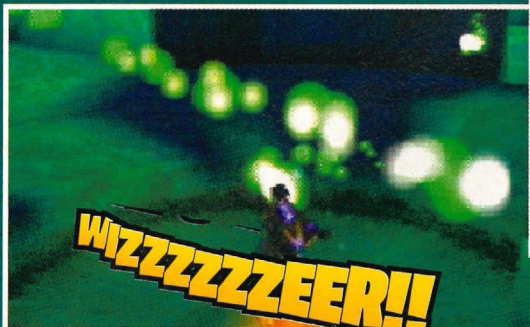
▲ Lighting effects are highly impressive, especially when using the torch.

▼ The nasties that chuck themselves at you come in some odd shapes and sizes.



2 INSPECTRAL MORSE!

This is the place where Raziel can mug any freaks wondering around for their souls and manipulate objects in weird ways. Once you recharge your energy you can pop back to the real world for more carnage.



▲ By the colour of the flame you can tell that the world of lost spirits is heated by British Gas. Which is nice.



▲ An attack of the green goblins isn't a pretty site. A job for the Soul Kleenex.

◀ Time to replenish the electric blue Swiss Roll power gauge.



Must find chemist. Must get optrex eye bath!



▲ Too many late nights and sessions with the evil spirit - vodka, have taken its toll.



◀ Raziel's threadbare attempt at wings not only generate sympathy for his lack of wardrobe, but also produce some sinister swirling action.

toughest out of these two, the tomb raiding bint is outdone in every way by the undead avenging angel.

SUPER MODEL

Combine all that with the minor fact that *Soul Reaver's* amazing light-sourcing techniques, almost flawless 3D and supermodel standard of graphics makes the *Tomb Raider* games look about as sexy as the old crone down the chippy. If the developers of *Tomb Raider 4* aren't careful (and cleverer than they've ever been)

their annual Christmas time chart-topper could well look dated even before it's released.

In fact, it's fair to say that when you experience the 3D levels in *Soul Reaver*, you'll be left thinking that the likes of *Croc* and *Gex* were serving up goods well short of the mark. Stand in the middle of any *Soul Reaver* level, press the two shoulder buttons and use the analogue stick to look



3 MATERIAL WHIRL!

In the material realm Raziel's energy constantly needs charging. If it drops too much he gets pulled back to the Spectral Realm. In this realm you get to use blocks and solve the normal sort of puzzles, as well as fight some abnormal creatures.



▲ A soul a day helps you work, rest and reave although Raziel is still sickly for a well rounded diet.

▶ I'm reaving on a jet plane. If you really don't fancy a bit of a ruck, then don't be ashamed to leg it.



▶ Kain upsets the locals again.



4 IMMORTAL COMBAT!

When not solving puzzles, you'll be cracking seven shades of ectoplasm out of the armies of darkness.



▲ You'll have to resort to bare claws on more than one occasion...



▲ ... but, you'll also have plenty of opportunities to use magic and weapons.

FREE POSTER

Brrr... Sure you can handle him staring down from your wall?





5 ONE STEP BEYOND!

Not only do you get to scamper, fly, swim and creep, you also have the chance to use these rather nifty warp gates – which are a damn sight quicker than a bus to the shops. They also look incredibly attractive when they fire up.



▲ Don't be afraid, it's just like your first time on an escalator.

▲ Look at the lights! We'd advise you to do this on an empty stomach though.

4 PUZZLER!

It's not just hack, slash and soul suck, you're going to have to use your undead brain to solve puzzles as well. Some of them are fiendishly hard, requiring you to use both the material and spectral planes in order to achieve a certain goal.



← around, and you'll witness a fair portion of the 3D graphical trickery that stands *Soul Reaver* head and (rotted) shoulders above the rest.

BRUTAL

But it's not the just the graphics that make *Soul Reaver* earn that coveted 'better than *Tomb Raider 3*' title. Everywhere you go the levels are packed with cool features that will take your breath away. The most obvious, and the one that appealed to us most, comes in times of combat.

Remember in the first *Legacy* game you slapped someone and then sucked their blood? Cutting edge for its time, but surpassed in truly gruesome style by the sequel's awesome soul sucking.

For the old traditionalists there's the bog standard punch attack. Raziel's got a blow that Lennox Lewis would be proud of, and a few of them strung together will get the job done on most creatures. However, vampires recover from such attacks pretty quickly, so you're going to have to use slightly nastier methods. Land a lucky punch to the face and your

poor opponent gets stunned. Then a whole world of nastiness opens its doors and welcomes you with open fangs... You could pull off a straightforward fatality blow, a la *Mortal Kombat*, but we prefer to use the tools that the developers obviously worked so hard to give us. See those spikes sticking out of the walls? Wouldn't it be fun just to pick someone up and ram their body against them? How we laughed. See that water? Vampires have a rather spectacular allergy to it. And daylight? Oh, you just have to try that. In



▲ This game takes a lot of searching and thinking so be prepared to do plenty of leg work.

← While picking up the odd big pointy stick and shafting someone is fun, you'll have to use your brain as well.



← Raziel contemplating his existence either that or he's just wazzed his pants.

▼ As you get further into the eerie gloom, the monsters get uglier and uglier.



▲ Raziel's Dreamcast logo power bar is fading fast. Where's the nearest soul?

▼ Standing alone against the evils of the world is one freak and his stick.



MYSTERY MAN!

Behind our anti-hero's mysterious mask lies the evidence of Kain's torture. Not only did he break Raziel's wings, but he stole half of his face (hence the mask). Ah...



LEGACY OF KAIN: SOUL REAVER





fact, just about anything you find lying around can be picked up and used to devastating effect. We could go on, but your stomach is probably churning enough, so we'll let you find the rest out for yourselves.

LEVELS

Soul Reaver has huge levels. Even some RPGs have been smaller than this and you get two advantages with the game. Unlike *Tomb Raider* where everything is enclosed and you spend half your time running straight into walls as you

try to turn corners (soooooo frustrating), or *Croc* where the levels may seem open and big but you only ever get to take one linear path through them, *Soul Reaver* gives you all the space you could want to move around in.

There's also a lot to explore. You'll be amazed at what you can find if you take time out to look around rather than just go for the most obvious route. It also means that the game lasts longer. *Metal Gear Solid* fans take note, you won't finishing this one in a day! With *Soul Reaver* and *Ape Escape*, the PlayStation has two serious contenders for the 3D crown worn for so long by *Mario 64*. It's just a pity it's taken so long to reach this standard.

INFINITE DEATHS

Raziel has the handy ability to live in two different worlds, the Material and Spectral realms. If he's getting his undead butt whooped in the Material world, he'll flip back to the Spectral realm to recharge his batteries before

heading back for revenge. In other words, you can't die! Performing tasks in both planes are essential to progress so you're never really given a knockback! Excellent!

TRAINERS

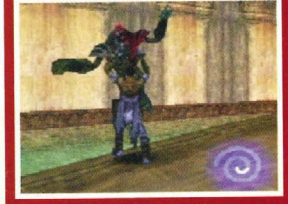
As you progress through the game you come across tougher and tougher vampires to kill – and they always try to attack in numbers. Strwn through the levels you will also come across the occasional survivors of the human race, presenting a highly entertaining gaming dilemma...

You can attack these poor souls if you want, but then they become scared and you go down in their legends as an evil killer. Be nice to them, and maybe just steal a little bit of their souls while they're still alive, or save them from the other vampire attacks going on and you will become a God among men.

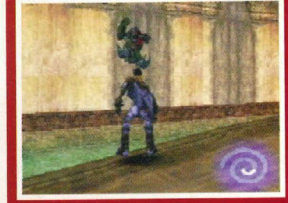
Nice for a while, but not half as much fun as going on a slaughter-fest, sucking souls and ripping bodies as you go.

7 THROWN!

Monsters are like pens. If they don't work, shake 'em. If they still don't work, chuck 'em, then hug their souls.



▲ In true Tekken style Raziel has got a few fly grabbing moves.



▲ Kuma would be proud of this pick and throw. Check out the distance.



▲ A good scrap just isn't complete without stripping away their life-force.

Gruesome? Yes. Dark? Definitely, but so much fun!
A particularly nice touch is the intro/training level. There's no leafing through the manual to find

8 THE CAMERA LOVES YA!

The 3D game designer's greatest enemy is the camera. Many games have tried to get it right, but most of them have failed. In *Soul Reaver* you can swing the camera around whenever you feel like it, and even hit R1 to focus on your nearest enemy. Hurrah!



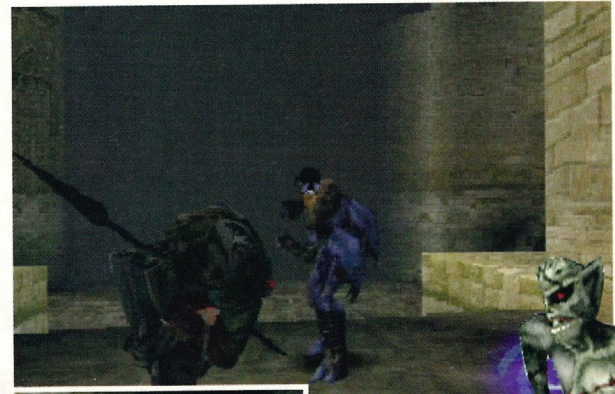
▲ Tired of the same old 'look at the character's arse' point of view? Then why not spin the camera for that new look?

► Drop the camera down and marvel at the gothic beauty of the architecture.

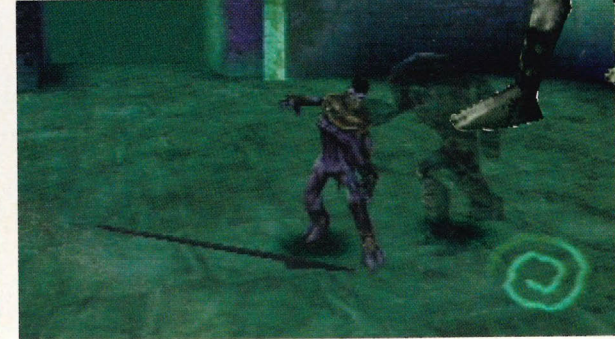


◀ Take up a side perspective for combat to see all your moves in gory detail...

▼ ... or peek over the edge and check out what awaits below.



▲ Raziel, popular at barbecues due to his shish kebab skills.



9 STICKS AND STONES WILL BREAK MY BONES!

True enough, but there are far more imaginative and fun ways of inflicting pain on those poor lifeless souls around you. Like these for example...



▲ This flaming pole should be a piercing illumination for this poor soul.

◀ "Don't you throw those bloody spears at me" - The Legacy of Michael Caine.

▶ If you go down to the woods today your sure of a big surprise. There's no teddys, but a fair few bogey men.



what button does what. Instead you're presented with a series of rooms and chambers where you learn to pull off everything you will need to do in the game.

The story, which is pretty deep and involving, carries on throughout in a series of cut-scenes and narratives that kick in when you reach certain points. As well as telling you the whos, whys and whens of the plot, they also offer up the odd clue as to what you are supposed to do and

where you are heading. It all binds together to make *Soul Reaver* more immersive than your usual run of the mill 'go here - kill this' type of game. It's more akin to a blockbuster movie or a really good fantasy book (or a combination of both).

GAMEPLAY

So now that you have mastered the controls (an easy job thanks to that the tutorial intro) and are

starting to get familiar with the vampire out for revenge plot, just what exactly will you be faced with? If you've been raised on a gameplay diet of a few precise jumps, the odd bit of gunplay and two oversized polygon lumps hanging off the front of your character then you're going to be in for a bit of a pleasant surprise with *Soul Reaver*.

It's got the platforms to jump onto, but uses them in a much more intelligent manner, encouraging you to explore the possibilities rather than just take a set route. It's puzzles are far more in-depth and interesting than the usual find-a-key-for-a-door-type

affair, and the fact that you've got two realms to work with adds a whole new dimension.

Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver is a gruesome yet enjoyable experience which is made more fun thanks to the gory impalings and over-the-top death sequences. And don't let that put you off, it's much more of a 3D explorer and puzzler than that. Which elevates *Soul Reaver* to the head of the 3D adventure pile thanks to killer gameplay, fantastic graphics and an immersive plot. Be warned. If you involve yourself with this, you could become as soulless as one of Raziel's victims. It'll literally take your life away!

10 SCENIC!

All the structures throughout the game are incredibly impressive. And so they should be as the game designer was previously an architect. As a result all the buildings you see are sumptuously over the top creations, boosting that gothic atmosphere sky high!

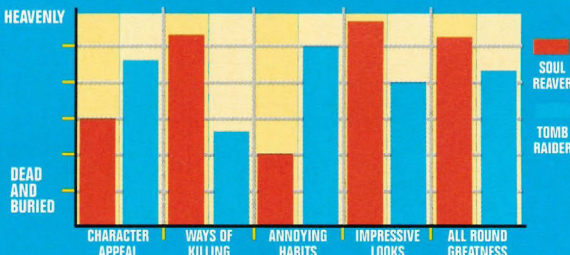


▲ The action certainly gets past the simple rough and tumble stage. Heads will roll, legs will roll, arms will roll...

◀ An Emerald Isle of a building. A bold choice of paintwork, but it may get a bit sickly after a while.

TRAMP VS VAMP...

Polygon parts aside, has Lara Croft got what it takes to beat off the challenge from the undead?



“ EVERYWHERE YOU GO THE LEVELS ARE PACKED WITH COOL FEATURES, AND TOUCHES THAT WILL TAKE YOUR BREATH AWAY ”

JUDGEMENT

PRESENTATION

Locations and character animation to die for alongside some really repulsive monsters. Glorious.

GAMEPLAY

Smooth as a unengraved tomb stone. Raziel's range of movements is staggering!

LIFESPAN

He can't die! Which effectively means you'll spend an eternity trying to complete this one.

THE BEST BIT

Shoving another piece of scrap metal through you victims chest cavity and quaffing their soul. Yum!



THE WORST BIT

Occasionally a bit linear and slightly repetitive. Meet nasty - slay nasty - meet new nasty....



An incredible game that slips over from the dark side. The plot, action and puzzles all combine to wedge it firmly beneath your skin.

95%

If you like this... Take a jaunt to the bargain shelves of your local game emporium and get the whole *Tomb Raider* series.