

= Grabbed by the Ghoulies =

Grabbed by the Ghoulies is an action @-@ adventure video game developed by Rare and published by Microsoft Studios for the Xbox . It was first released in North America on 21 October 2003 , in Europe on 21 November 2003 and in Japan on 29 April 2004 . It was re @-@ released worldwide on the Xbox 360 as a downloadable Xbox Live Originals title on 16 February 2009 , before being removed from the store on 16 June 2015 . However , it was later released as part of the compilation Rare Replay for Xbox One . The game follows a young boy , Cooper Chance , who sets out to rescue his girlfriend from a mansion haunted by supernatural creatures .

Having originally been in development for the GameCube , Grabbed by the Ghoulies was the first Rare game to be published by Microsoft after Rare was bought out from Nintendo . The game was met with mixed reviews upon release . Criticism was directed at the art style and gameplay , but the game 's graphics were praised . Grabbed by the Ghoulies was nominated for the Cons

= = Plot = =

A young boy named Cooper and his girlfriend , Amber , are seen searching frantically for civilisation after they take a wrong turn . They are caught in a storm and head to a nearby mansion to seek shelter . Once outside , Cooper checks his map , but is unaware that someone is watching . Baron von Ghou , the game 's main antagonist , looks down from his window and orders two gargoyles to retrieve Cooper and Amber . Amber is kidnapped by the gargoyles and is taken into the Ghouly Mansion , with Cooper in pursuit . Once inside the mansion , Cooper realises that Amber is nowhere to be seen in the Grand Hallway . Crivens , the mansion 's butler , tells him to go to the archives where Amber is held . On the way , a huge group of boxing skeletons challenge Cooper to a boxing match , with Cooper emerging victorious . Upon reaching the archives , Cooper finds Amber being held hostage by a mad scientist named Dr. Krackpot . Krackpot then shoots Amber with his laser rifle and she transforms into a horrible creature .

Cooper runs for help and goes into the kitchen . Ma Soupwill , the cook , is delighted to help , but Cooper must retrieve three ingredients : Glowworms , a giant egg , and a sprig of dungweed . After retrieving the ingredients , Ma Soupwill creates a potion to reverse the effects on Amber . However , she unwittingly transforms Amber into an even more hideous monster , having added the wrong spice , and Amber attacks Cooper in anger . Cooper defeats the mutated Amber and Ma Soupwill arrives with the correct spice , finally transforming Amber back to herself . Afterward , Cooper and Amber attempt to escape the mansion but are stopped by Mr. Ribs ( Ma Soupwill 's assistant ) . He tells them to help free the other children who are imprisoned all over the mansion . Cooper seeks Crivens for help and tells him that only the Baron has the key to free them . To get to his room , Cooper must collect three pieces of a rhyme which opens the door to the Baron 's room . Once there , a battle ensues , and Cooper emerges victorious .

Cooper allies with Mr. Ribs to free the imprisoned children before finally reaching the exit of the mansion . Once outside , imps knock Cooper and Mr. Ribs out , but Ma Soupwill arrives and defeats them . Cooper regains consciousness and he and Amber leave the mansion , but the household staff prefer to stay . As Cooper and Amber walk towards a small town , the Baron can be seen flying his plane towards it .

= = Gameplay = =

Grabbed by the Ghoulies is a 3D action @-@ adventure game with platforming elements . Breaking with the style of previous Rare platformers , the gameplay is simple in design , utilising the premise of moving through areas of the game 's mansion and completing the required beat ' em up challenges in each room . Such challenges include eliminating all ghouls in a room , beating only a specified kind of ghoul while avoiding eliminating the rest or defeating a boss before the player @-@ character , Cooper , can continue . All combat and melee attacks are manoeuvred by the control sticks , whereas the game 's camera can be rotated by both triggers . When the player fails a

challenge or takes longer than a set time limit to complete one , the Grim Reaper chases after the player @-@ character ; the Reaper will rip out Cooper 's soul if the character does not leave the room in time . Standard enemies in the game include zombies , mummies , imps , skeletons and zombie pirates . There are also various bosses that must be defeated in order to advance . Many objects in the game with which the character can interact ? including chairs , knives , and axes ? can be used as weapons .

The game also features various Bonus Challenges . When Cooper collects five Rare books ( there are 100 Rare books in total ) during his adventure in Ghoullhaven Hall , a Bonus Challenge is unlocked . The main objective of the Bonus challenges is to revisit one of the rooms and perform a different task within it , such as defeating a number of enemies in a certain amount of time or surviving a duel with the Grim Reaper . Upon completing a Bonus Challenge , the player is awarded with a bronze , silver , gold or platinum medal based on their performance . For every platinum medal earned , a piece of the game 's concept art is unlocked . If the player collects all 100 Rare books and earns all 20 platinum medals , the player is given the option to reset the game with Amber unlocked as the new playable character .

= = Development and release = =

The development of Grabbed by the Ghoullies began after the release of Conker 's Bad Fur Day . The idea for the game began with the name which comes from the slang term for being " grabbed by the testicles " . According to designer Gregg Mayles , the name of the game materialised after he overheard someone mention " being grabbed by the goolies " , and thought that it would make a suitable name for an upcoming Rare game . Before any details of the game were publicised , it was rumoured that Grabbed by the Ghoullies would be the subtitle to the next Conker the Squirrel game . After Microsoft purchased Rare for £ 375 million in 2002 , development of the game for the GameCube was delayed until Rare converted it to the Xbox console .

Development of the game took under three years . It was originally conceived as a larger , non @-@ linear open platform game for the GameCube . However , a simpler design and simpler concept were adopted due to the Microsoft buyout and increasing time constraints . After Microsoft 's purchase of Rare , the studio re @-@ affirmed their " simple design " of the game so that players would be able to easily adapt and devote less commitment to it . In a retrospective interview , Mayles stated that the change from GameCube to Xbox was difficult and required a lot of changes as Grabbed by the Ghoullies was " an original game that started life as a Nintendo product " .

According to Mayles , Grabbed by the Ghoullies was not inspired by Rare 's similar @-@ themed Atic Atac . The cel @-@ shaded art style and design of the characters in Grabbed by the Ghoullies were inspired by Hanna @-@ Barbera cartoons , and the various character personalities were based both on historical figures and people from Mayles ' childhood . Antagonist Baron von Ghoull was " a mix " of the Red Baron and British aristocracy , whereas supportive characters , such as Ma Soupwill , were loosely based on staff from a school . Mayles considered the conversion of the game to the Xbox to be one of the hardest challenges during development , as Rare had less than a year to finish the game once it was converted .

The game was revealed at E3 2003 , with a playable demo being a mostly complete version of the game , albeit with a few levels missing . Grabbed by the Ghoullies was released in North America on 21 October 2003 , in Europe on 21 November 2003 and in Japan on 29 April 2004 , becoming Rare 's first game to be released under Microsoft . It was later re @-@ released as an Xbox Originals game for the Xbox 360 on 16 February 2009 , later being removed from the store on 16 June 2015 . At Microsoft 's E3 2015 press conference , the compilation title Rare Replay was unveiled . Rare Replay has a selection of thirty games from Rare 's lifetime game library , including Grabbed by the Ghoullies . The game was remastered to run natively on the Xbox One , increasing its resolution and framerate relative to the original Xbox release .

= = Reception = =

The game was met with mixed reviews from critics upon release . It holds average score of 70 % at GameRankings , based on an aggregate of 71 reviews and an average score of 66 / 100 at Metacritic , based on an aggregate of 42 reviews .

The graphics and animation were praised by critics . Kevin Gifford of 1UP stated that the cel @-@ shaded graphics were " perfect " for the " spooky " theme of the game , and that the smooth animation resulted in the enemies appearing " endearing " . Ronan Jennings of Eurogamer was less impressed by the graphics , stating that the game " never blew him away " but always kept a high standard of creativity . However , Jennings did praise the animation and character designs . Reviewers of Game Revolution gave praise to the game 's visuals , comparing them to be sharper and clearer to the visuals of Banjo @-@ Kazooie . However , they noted that the character designs still seemed " tied down to the past " , being more suited to the Nintendo 64 than to the Xbox .

The game was criticised for its simplistic gameplay and lack of innovation . Gifford noted that the game 's " biggest problem " was its unchallenging gameplay , stating that it was " repetitive " ; he compared it to gameplay of the 16 @-@ bit era . Game Revolution stated that the gameplay appeared " interesting " at first , but grew tiresome the longer the game is played , despite its short length . Jennings noted that the gameplay was not " groundbreaking " and similarly stated that the game relied heavily on " what is practically 16 @-@ bit gameplay " . The camera controls were another criticised aspect of the game , due to the control sticks being allocated for attack functions . Gifford labelled the " forced shunt " idea as a " terrible drag " which became troublesome during the latter half of the game . Game Revolution 's review also criticised the camera controls , stating that the use of triggers to rotate the camera was " on the clunky side " . Jennings , however , felt that the camera was " fine " and did not provide any obstruction .

Grabbed by the Ghoulies was nominated for the Console Family Game of the Year and Outstanding Achievement in Original Music Composition at the 2004 Academy of Interactive Arts & Sciences Annual Interactive Achievement Awards . The awards were given to SCE London Studio 's EyeToy : Play and Electronic Arts ' The Sims : Bustin ' Out , respectively .