Review of *Siren*

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created Saturday, 31 July 2004
updated Saturday, 31 July 2004

1   What It Is

Siren is a program for Sony Playstation 2. It was published in North America by Sony in April 2004. More such information about the game is at GameFAQs.

2   My Review

I don't like it. I don't like it at all. It might be the first game I've bought that made me with I hadn't bought it.[1]

In the announcements, ads, & previews I saw, *Siren* was presented as horror. I love horror games. It's not horror. It's a stealth game. I guess those are popular among people who like military games, & maybe *Siren* is a good stealth game, but it's not horror.

In a good horror game, you have lots of creepy story which you learn in pieces presented to you (or found by you) throughout the game. As with horror in other genres, the story itself should be creepy, & its presentation (the order & form of the pieces of story) *must* be creepy. The other trappings of horror – namely the unearthly abominations that complicate the task of the hero – are arguably necessary but absolutely not sufficient to qualify a story as horror.

Siren is not a horror game. It doesn't have much story. It has some creepy baddies, but if the artists had dressed them in jungle cammies instead of rotting rags, the game would be completely transformed into a military special forces stealth genre.

Game play in *Siren* proceeds like this: At the beginning of a stage, you are given a mission. (Yes, a mission. If that doesn't dispel the atmosphere of horror, I don't know what would.) Maybe you have to reach the other side of town with a non-player character in tow. You probably aren't armed, but maybe you can

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[1]I've played games that made me wonder why they existed, but I was lucky enough not to have bought them.

find a weak weapon during the stage. To reach the goal, you must use your character's telepathic abilities to look through the eyes of the local baddies. You do that to determine where they are, their patterns of movement, & what they can see. You do that so you know where & when you can move. Sometimes you must disable the baddies, but for much of the time, you sneak around.

It's also very difficult. If you are caught (which usually just requires a baddie to shoot you twice or touch you once), the stage is over. You are given an opportunity to restart the stage.

It's not horror, & there isn't much story to it. Since horror is what I enjoy second most in a game, & story is what I enjoy most, I don't like it. Maybe people who like stealth games will enjoy it.