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Stop me if you’ve heard this one before: RAGE is set in a postapocalyptic wasteland where towns and supplies are limited, but bandits, mutants and side quests are plentiful. The storyline of id Software/Bethesda Softworks’ first-person shooter for the PlayStation 3, Xbox 360 and PC is very much clichéd, but it could have been acceptable if the rest of the game was executed properly.

RAGE’s story builds over time, but a very anticlimactic ending will leave most players scratching their heads. In one of the most significant WTF moments in recent gaming history, RAGE ends with no critical final boss fight, and gives you only a hint at RAGE 2 in a very short cutscene rather than a proper ending.

In addition to its stereotypical plot, RAGE has a humdrum protagonist as well. The silent, faceless hero may have been sufficient in older titles, but it just seems lazy and uninspired instead of nostalgic in today’s gaming generation. Couple that with forgettable supporting characters, and RAGE leaves a lot to be desired in the storytelling department.

You spend most of your time in RAGE clearing out dens full of baddies and completing missions for people who would rather have a stranger complete these important tasks than do the work themselves. You have your usual arsenal of weapons to take out enemies: shotgun, sniper rifle, machine gun, etc. All of this may make RAGE sound like most FPS and RPG mashup games you’ll find nowadays, but RAGE differentiates itself by replacing the commonly used leveling system with a creative new crafting system. You find different components and blueprints while salvaging through your adventure, and these looted items can then be turned into powerful ammunition and special accessories and gadgets that will help you take down even the most intimidating foes.

RAGE isn’t your typical FPS, because there is a very intricate and entertaining driving aspect added to the play action. The campaign gives you the option to delve deep into the car side missions and complete a number of races and contentious events; most of multiplayer is based on this auto-combat aspect as well. With its elaborate stat tracking and progression system, it would be easy to lose countless hours unlocking new cars and customizing them to your satisfaction. Multiplayer also contains a cooperative mode called LEGEND OF THE WASTELAND that allows two players to team up and take out enemies, but with very little purpose.

RAGE is a game with many things to appreciate and loathe simultaneously. On one hand, you have entertaining combat and plenty of side missions to pass the time, while on the other, you have to endure dreadful storytelling and character development. One may find it difficult to get past the negative aspects of RAGE to enjoy the game, but some of this can be overlooked with all of the revolutionary features it offers.