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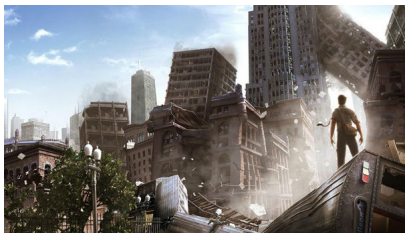
I AM ALIVE first began development in 2008 and was originally planned as a feature length game. Fast forward close to four years and two development teams later, and the game was finally released by Ubisoft and Ubisoft Shanghai as an Xbox LIVE Arcade exclusive on March 7, 2012. The lengthy development time ultimately left anxious fans wondering if the game was worth the hype that surrounded the game.

I AM ALIVE stars a protagonist who is on a mission to find his family in a post-apocalyptic world. It has been nearly a year since ‘The Event’ turned the entire world into a wasteland covered in toxic dust clouds. The few remaining survivors are sick, hungry, hostile and desperate while buildings, roads and other structures are just as brittle and decaying as the peoples' psyches. As he reenters his hometown of Haventon, the man will have to overcome all of these obstacles if he ever hopes to see his wife and kid again. I AM ALIVE is a sad tale full of interesting characters that you'll meet throughout the game, and the ending is one that you won't soon forget.



Gameplay in I AM ALIVE can be broken down into two parts. The world as we knew it has been entirely wiped out. Homes and buildings are left crumbling with the roads that once connected them nearly nonexistent. This means simply navigating through the game becomes a puzzle in itself. Since many of the simpler pathways are blocked or destroyed, you will have to climb, jump, slide and otherwise make your way across obstructions by the use of strenuous moves

that drain your stamina. A stamina meter will let you know when you're about to lose all strength and fall to your death. To regain stamina, you can consume food products or water; however, this is a post-apocalyptic world, so these precious resources should be conserved as much as possible. The climbing controls here are a little loose, but the feeling of accomplishment you feel upon reaching your destination more than makes up for any risks that are taken.

The other important mechanic in I AM ALIVE is combat. You'll encounter various NPCs throughout your time in the game. Some of them may be friendly or only attack you if you are threatening their territory, but others will simply attack you hoping to gain whatever resources you may possess that they would like for themselves. You'll be armed throughout a good portion of the game with a machete and pistol. Ammo is very scarce in Haventon, so you'll typically want to save your lone bullet for the direst of situations opting for machete kills and environmental kills whenever possible. You can use your gun as intimidation and eventually force an opponent into a hole or off the side of a building with a swift kick to the stomach. This presents one of the few problems in I AM ALIVE in that enemies will conveniently forget you carry a gun as soon as you stop aiming it at them. It's not a game breaking issue, but it does take away from the realism in the game when an enemy begins charging, because you let go of the aim trigger.

The game is rounded off nicely with some pretty good graphics, some suspense provoking music and decent voiceovers. The excellent presentation sets just the right tone for this dreary world full of death and desperation; you won't find a game that showcases a more realistic world.

Essentially, this is one of the best Xbox LIVE Arcade titles around and one of the top survival horror games this year. When you combine a game of this quality with a $15 price tag at launch— there are no reasons not to pick up a copy of I AM ALIVE.