

[HL1] Todesangst

Written by Doc_Brown
Tuesday, 30 May 2006 18:00



Author: [Daryn Waite](#)

Number of Maps: 13

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Office Politics

Every hero needs a villain. An alien menace and ranks of faceless soldiers are all well and good, but a more central antagonist is required for our dear Dr. Freeman. Into that role steps Jack Newell, Black Mesa's Director of R&D. Newell claims responsibility for containing Xen, and he's miffed that everyone is focused on Gordon instead. "Gordon is just a fool who was lucky enough to survive," he sulks.

Like any good megalomaniac, Newell retaliates with a plan to take over. For Gordon, he even arranges the special treat of a headcrab courtesy call. The gameplay centers on putting a stop to Newell's evil plans before it's too late, picking up immediately after Gordon is awakened by his little uninvited guest. Looks like it's going to be another one of those days...



Mortal Fear

The back-story is conveyed to you in a roughly five minute long scripted intro. While author Daryn Waite states that the story was crafted to suit the levels after they were already made, it works well because he put a lot of effort into its presentation. There are several cutscenes throughout the game, and all of them show the same level of dedication as the intro, which swoops and dives through the complex along with musical accompaniment.

While the levels are not quite as polished as some, the general design and flow of the game is very good. You don't immediately start out with lots of firepower and armor and start blasting everything in sight, nor will you ever become a walking tank. Your beginnings are fairly humble and you work your way up as appropriate. The combat, while a tad easy overall, is nonetheless a lot of fun.

There's even some new content thrown into the mix to liven things up. Helping you along the

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way is Joe the security guard, and while he doesn't fight alongside you he does prove his worth by directing you through the levels around laser barriers. His voice acting, like Newell's, isn't exactly of a professional quality, but it has a campy sort of appeal to it.

Hindering your progress, meanwhile, are the Xenanthromorphs—reskinned Vortigaunts with some creepy new sounds. Your first major encounter with them, a hide-and-seek fight in a gloomy sewer setting, is actually somewhat spooky: you can hear their utterly alien growls, but can't get an exact fix on their position. It's definitely one of the high points of the mod.



Conclusion

While not quite as professional as it could be, Todesangst is so much more than a simple combat romp. The levels feature some fairly creative design and there's even some new content along the way. The extra effort put into its presentation makes for one very satisfying experience, and with thirteen playable maps and a few lengthy cutscenes to enjoy, it's just the right length. All told, a very solid effort.

Note: Originally posted at Hangar16.com on 10/28/02

Game Rated

8/10