Review of *Blood Rayne*

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1 First Impression

My first impression is before playing the game. You see, I came home from Software Etc with *Blood Rayne*, put it in my PS2, & started flipping through my mail while the game loaded. I planned to play it right away, but I got distracted by a horrible billing mistake in my mail. Two hours later, I've been watching the game's intro on screen while I dealt with the billing error for a couple of hours. So I've seen & heard the intro a lot.

Looks good. Catchy, dark, techno music with a nifty bass riff. Lots of slinky, thin, acrobatic, female vampire running around. Don't care for that red splotch on her crotch; makes me think of a baboon.

If the pre-game previews are to be believed, I'm in for hand-to-hand combat with slo-mo, aerial acrobatics, bazookas, tanks, Nazi-bashing, KKK-bashing (!?), & still more slinky, thin, female vampire action. Excellent.

2 First Impression for Real

The game strongly reminds me of a game for Playstation 1 called *Danger Girl*. You control a main character (the slinkly young girl) who's an expert at hand-to-hand combat & firearms. Simple button-presses create some impressive acrobatic attacks & defenses. With a little practice, & after Blood Rayne has learned more attacks by defeating bosses, you can produce some effective & impressive combos.

You are assigned missions, such as finding & killing the next Nazi commander bastard. It sometimes requires a little problem solving, but it's mostly straightforward combat.

As part of her vampiric abilities, Blood Rayne learns to speed up her reflexes which has the effect of slowing down the visuals & your opponents. That makes it easier for you to dodge bullets & create more impressive, acrobatic combos.

If you like hand-to-hand, fast-paced combat games, especially ones where you get to control & see a slim, nubile sex-pot, you'll love Blood Rayne. This type of game is not my usual fair, yet I enjoy it. I suspect there'll be some decent replay value to practice my reflexes & combo attacks. Some of those combo attacks really are damned impressive–& I'm not claiming any skill at playing these types of games.

I think this game, along with *Devil May Cry*, *Gungrave*, & some other recently released & soon-to-be released games create a new gaming genre which I'm tempted to call "badass". The idea is that you control a character which kicks butt on all the baddies. Plot, story, & even tactics are secondary to nifty-looking combo attacks like gun-toating cart-wheels, mid-air flips, running up walls, & whatnot.

I find the missions somewhat repetitive, but if you like this kind of game, don't place much weight in my criticism. My usual gaming fair is survival horror & adventure. So the fact that I appreciate this game at all is a point in its favor.

3   One More Interesting Thing

Cheat codes are built into the game; you don't need a Gameshark. You can find a list of cheat codes at Game FAQs[1]. As of Thursday, 14 November 2002, it looks like there are 14 cheat codes. I'll be interested to see how many other codes crop up over the months or years.

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[1]http://gamefaqs.com/