

Jaws of Ice

Pitch Document

Written by
Shane Eric Dent

Executive Summary

Jaws of Ice is a triple-A survival action game about mankind's struggle against a nearly invincible race of Vampiric creatures called Ravagers. It tests mature players' abilities to adapt and survive in a harsh winter landscape against an unpredictable, evolving enemy, offering an experience of uncompromising systemic depth and narrative impact.

Audience Analysis

The target players of *Jaws of Ice* are mature males and females (age 18-32) with an interest in visceral, impactful narrative-driven action games that offer a foundation of systemic choice and who are thrilled by experiencing fear within the safe parameters of an immersive gaming experience.

Story

Humanity has been pushed into underground bunkers by a nearly invincible race of Vampiric creatures called Ravagers. We have lived a relatively peaceful existence for decades, until organized Ravager attacks began to crack our “Shell”. Expeditions to the surface have brought back reports of exponentially increasing numbers of the bloodthirsty monsters: it is only a matter of time before they break through our defenses and consume every last one of us.

Jiraiya is newly recruited to the “Frostborne”, a small army of likeminded individuals dedicated to the protection of the Shell and the eradication of Ravagerkind. She lost her younger brother, **Sammy**, to the Ravagers in a Summer expedition outside the Shell that went horribly wrong. Her training under a hardened veteran named **Rowan** begins in the Autumn, where he will teach her everything she needs to know about how to kill a Ravager.

Ravagers as we see them are nothing more than husks, remnants of what used to be people and animals. A living, symbiotic “blood” animates their frames, rendering them nearly immortal. Their flesh heals when cut, limbs regenerate when severed, and their bones mend themselves when crushed. They are unnaturally strong up close, able to pluck a man’s head from his neck the way a child might pick a berry from a vine. Their true lethality is known from a distance: they are able to call the blood out of a person’s pores and pull it to them, funneling it from a distance of several yards directly into their gaping maws.

In the past we have known two primary methods of subduing a Ravager: intense light blinds them, rendering them momentarily defenseless, and bursting their hearts by means of blades and piercing instruments, emptying the Symbiote from the husk and forcing it to find a new vessel. Once freed from the husk the viscous, fluid Symbiote is impossible to trap, able to squeeze into the smallest openings. Its only known weakness is the cold, which severely hinders its mobility and solidifies it, rendering it vulnerable to attack.

And here we arrive at the meaning behind the name of Jiraiya’s comrades: the Frostborne, soldiers being trained in the art of Ravager warfare in the Autumn so that they can make the largest expedition outside the Shell that mankind has ever seen. When Winter’s cold grasp freezes the earth, Jiraiya and the Frostborne will make their stand... or paint the snow with their corpses.

Characters

Jiraiya

Jiraiya, 17, is lean and lanky, with a thick tangle of black hair and dark skin. She has large green eyes and is considerably taller than others her age, girls and boys. Jiraiya, called Ji Ji by her brother is an intensely caring person and is terrible at hiding her emotions. She's also been known to have an anger problem, but it only manifests when people she loves are put in harm's way, particularly her younger brother, Sammy, whom she is fiercely protective of.

When Sammy goes missing during a catastrophic Summer expedition beyond the Shell, Jiraiya resolves to join the newly formed "Frostborne" and take part in a Winter expedition of a scale never seen before. She knows there is a good chance she will never come back home; but what is a home worth without your family?

Sammy

For a boy 10 years of age, Sammy doesn't have the best life. He and Jiraiya's parents died shortly after he was born, and although he adores his older sister she is also fiercely overprotective of him to the point of being stifling.

To an extent, Jiraiya's behavior is normal. In a world where every second could be your last you have to fight for the time you share with the ones you love. But with Sammy, things are different: Sammy is terminally ill. Born with an uncommonly frail disposition, Sammy's bones break all too easily, his skin is sensitive to natural light, and he is almost constantly bed-ridden.

As he gets ready to enter into his 11th year, the pressure is on for Sammy to learn how to take part in critical expeditions beyond the Shell to find supplies. For Sammy, this life just isn't enough. He knows he won't live much longer and he is determined to make the time he has left mean something... *Anything*.

Rowan

Rowan is a veteran of the surface and, in addition to leading dozens of successful expeditions beyond the Shell, was a teenager when the Ravagers first pushed people underground.

Rowan is hard on those under his command, and has been bearing down especially hard on the sickly Sammy, who is about to come of age, viewing his illness as strictly imagined and the result of fear. As a result, he feels personally responsible when Sammy goes missing during the Summer, which plays a pivotal role in his decision to organize Frostborne.

Competition Analysis

The market holds examples of cinematic action games, such as *Uncharted 4: A Thief's End* (Naughty Dog, 2016), examples of survival games built around systemic choice, such as *Don't Starve* (Klei Entertainment, 2013), and horror games centered on a continuously evolving threat such as *Alien: Isolation* (Creative Assembly, 2014).

There are precious few examples of titles that combine traits of all three, with *The Last of Us* (Naughty Dog, 2013) providing a rare but notable model that proves there is an appetite for multifaceted experiences like *Jaws of Ice*.

Gameplay

The primary interactions in *Jaws of Ice* blend the gunplay of weighty, grounded third-person shooters like *The Last of Us* and *Dead Space* (Visceral Games, 2008) with an improvisational crafting system, stealth, a choice-driven character progression system, open-ended level design, and dynamic enemy A.I. that afford the player with dozens of ways to survive against the Ravagers (or die horribly to them).

Features include:

- Reactive enemy A.I. that changes its tactics in response to the player's strategies and its environment
- Challenging enemies that are lethal at all ranges and complicated to kill, requiring use of stealth, situational awareness, spatial reasoning, and strategies combining earned abilities, crafted items, and the environment to succeed
- Winter weather simulation that affects character movement and enemy A.I.
- An improvisational crafting system that allows the player to craft weapons and support items using materials found in exploration
- Meaningful exploration with tangible, systemic rewards for crafting and character progression
- An accessible but impactful skill tree, in which decisions matter and upgrades are uncommonly substantial
- A unique timing-based "counterattack" health mechanic in which players can sacrifice some of their blood to stun a Ravager feeding on them from a distance
- Brutal melee finishing moves that destroy stunned Ravager husks and free the Symbiote inside, rendering it vulnerable to attack
- Dynamic Symbiote A.I. that is capable of invading A.I.-controlled NPCs and transforming them into Ravagers