

From Dust to a Blade

Written by
Kyle Biery
Full Sail University

Executive Summary

From Dust to a Blade is an action video game where players take control of Eli, a boy orphaned in the fictional Kingdom of Ven in the kingdom's conflict with its neighbor Leon and is found and trained by one of the kingdom's best swordsmen to be a warrior.

Audience Analysis

This game is intended to appeal to players of action games such as For Honor, Assassin's Creed, and other similar history-based games set in ancient times while also bearing resemblance to the Witcher 3's combat mechanics. Players of those games will find themselves drawn in by the swordplay and the character interactions as well as the open world with multiple stories to be told.

General age ranges would be above eighteen years or more due to the game's intended M-Rating much like the aforementioned games. Those interested in medieval/feudal style games would also have potential interest with

Story

From Dust to a Blade follows the story of Eli, a serf in the kingdom of Ven ruled by the House of Salt, as he goes from being a farmhand to a warrior. The story begins in Eli's home village as they are attacked by bandits from a rival kingdom. Eli flees and goes to the neighboring town for help. By the time he returns with the small band of warriors that volunteered for the job, his home has been destroyed and his parents slain and his brother missing.

One of the warriors, a man named Jek Sel, takes pity on Eli and takes him in as his student in the way of the sword. Throughout his training and journeys across Ven, his fury and sorrow cause him to make easy mistakes to the point that Jek takes him to Enki, the capital of Ven to seek advice from Jek's own mentor, Ven Les, a member of the House of Salt. The meeting goes poorly when Eli's emotions earn him a new scar around his eye. Les tempers Eli's emotions and trains the young man for a few months, providing him with small errands around the city that help him train while earning some coin. The call soon comes in from the House of Salt to rally their loyalists to deal with the enemy bandits.

Eli hears of this impending battle and his emotions return full force, leading him to rush off to join the first groups of warriors riding to the area near his home, some of Les' pupils amongst them. Jek chases after him and catches up in time for the group to engage several of the bandits, one of whom boasts of killing Eli's family. Upon hearing this, Eli slaughters the bandit group so brutally to the point that Jek is forced to knock him out.

Eli reawakens in Enki and finds himself on the receiving end of Jek and Les' lecture to him. He only barely pays attention as he comes to realize that nothing has changed after he's murdered the bandit group. He descends into despair until Jek knocks him out of the trance and pull him up to continue his training.

Later on, Jek reveals that a few of the bandits that survived Eli's rampage spoke of a man similar to Eli's missing brother. He tells Eli that Les is willing to allow Eli to go and search for his brother on the condition that he come back to Les' school every month. Eli agrees and departs.

Several years pass and Eli soon finds himself back in his home village, which has since been restored by the other survivors. While he stays in the town, he is directed to where his old home once stood. While he pays his respects to his family, Eli discovers that a young child is watching him from nearby. When he questions the child, they reveal that they are an orphan. Eli considers his course of action before he offers the child an apprenticeship under his wing.

Characters

Eli (Protagonist/ Player controlled)

A young orphan whose village was destroyed by bandits. Fueled by the sorrow and rage at the loss of his home, he trains to be a swordsman to eliminate the bandit groups plaguing Ven's western border. At the time of the game, he's an apprentice to Jek Sel.

Jek Sel

A wandering swordsman of minor renown. He trained with one of the best swordsmen of the country but didn't take advantage of the fact to gain employment with the Ven Royal Army. He travels the country instead helping out whatever town he comes across. Eli is his first apprentice.

Ven Les

Jek's mentor from Enki, the capital of Ven, who now runs a school in the city for aspiring swordsmen and women. He only teaches three other students personally before Jek brings Enki to him. He is often seen by others as cold and methodical to the point that he would kill one of his own students if the situation called for it.

Karia

One of Les' current pupils. She tries to imitate her mentor's personality, but she often cannot hold it for long in combat. She's more of a graceful fighter and wields a shorter blade than others for the speed it grants her.

Jin

The second of Les' pupils. He's more of an easygoing personality, having been raised in the capital and hasn't known the hardship most of his classmates have known. He often wields a heavier category of sword, specializing in one hit kill moves and overpowering his opponent.

Kuro

The last of Les' pupils. Mysterious as he is quiet, Kuro wields the shortest of the blades Les trains his students in. He is more of an assassin than a swordfighter, preferring to stick to the background and striking when he sees an opening. He's also trained in using a bow and arrow.

Mako

The heiress of the House of Salt. She was a student of Les alongside Jek until Les released her from his tutelage for her to return to her duties as heiress. She is often the Mission Contact for Jek and Eli when they're traveling.

Competition Analysis

The market for Open World Action games are heavily saturated. Alongside the release of games such as Assassin's Creed: Odyssey, there are games such as Monster Hunter World that have similar elements to what From Dust to a Blade is intended to be.

From Dust to a Blade is intended to be a merging of the two, with much more visible story immediately available at the start of the game, with loot mechanics similar to Monster Hunter World.

In addition to this, the game has companion mechanics that one would find in a Mass Effect game, with the companions providing support for the character in a similar way.

Gameplay

From Dust to a Blade, as mentioned earlier, has sword mechanics similar to games such as Assassin's Creed and For Honor. In addition to the sword, Eli also can level up his skills with a bow and arrow that he has from the start.

Eli can upgrade his weapons with different variants that grant additional benefits such as attack speed, damage, poisoning, etc. and can upgrade his armor as well. A similar system is in place for his allies and their gear as well.

The main story progresses in a linear fashion, surrounding Eli as he trains to be a swordsman and get revenge on the group responsible for his family's deaths. This would involve hunting down individual members of the bandit group that attacked his village.

The primary gameplay loop involves bounties that grant weapons and armor to allow the player to level Eli up as the story progresses.

On both these bounties and main story bounties, players select two of Eli's companions to accompany him on the missions with each companion offering a different skill to the party.

Combat with two companions:

Jek: The average companion who provides a health boost to the player and draws enemies to him due to his more recognizable status.

Karia: Staggers opponents with quick attacks and darts around the battlefield, never focusing on one opponent alone.

Jin: Throws enemies that get close to him away via a ground pound attack.

Kuro: Ranged support who takes out anyone who attempts to kill the player if their health is low.