

**Map name:** Survive Fear

**Map Goal:** Create a compelling Doom map with elements of fear, action and revenge while showcasing level-design skills.

**Premise:**

**Why:** Lost communication with Mars facility. An investigation into what happened is needed.

**Who:** You are one of the investigators sent to the site. HQ has lost communication with your team and you are on your own.

**Where:** Mars A-41 Facility.

**What:** Investigate and report back.

**When:** "The future". Time is not very important for an isolated singular map.

**How:** You are equipped with a basic shotgun. As you explore, you will encounter different creatures and environments. They will induce fear and provide moments of action with an ending twist of revenge.

**Walkthrough:**

I will be walking through every room in the map discussing the space and events and how and why I implemented them. As a note, all props, big and small, were manually placed. The rooms themselves and their architecture were picked out of a collection of rooms available.

**Room 1: Hangar:**

The initial room sets up the initial tone of the map. It is a big room with barrels, crates, consoles and transportation equipment. This room was once very busy but now is completely empty and lonely. This evokes a feeling of loneliness and intrigue. The room has windows that inform the player of the external Martian environment. It is important to let the player know how the outside looks like as it evokes a feeling of immersion. When the player loads into the room, he is shown a message from his commander briefing him on all the information needed (why, who, where, what, when). He also hears a small message from the facility AI announcing that the facility is still on lockdown. This is a very basic way for communicating narrative to the player but it fulfills its purpose. There is an ambient sound in this room akin to generators/machinery sound that is slightly creepy. This gives an industrial vibe fitting to the facility the player is in. The lighting in this room is untouched/unfiltered.

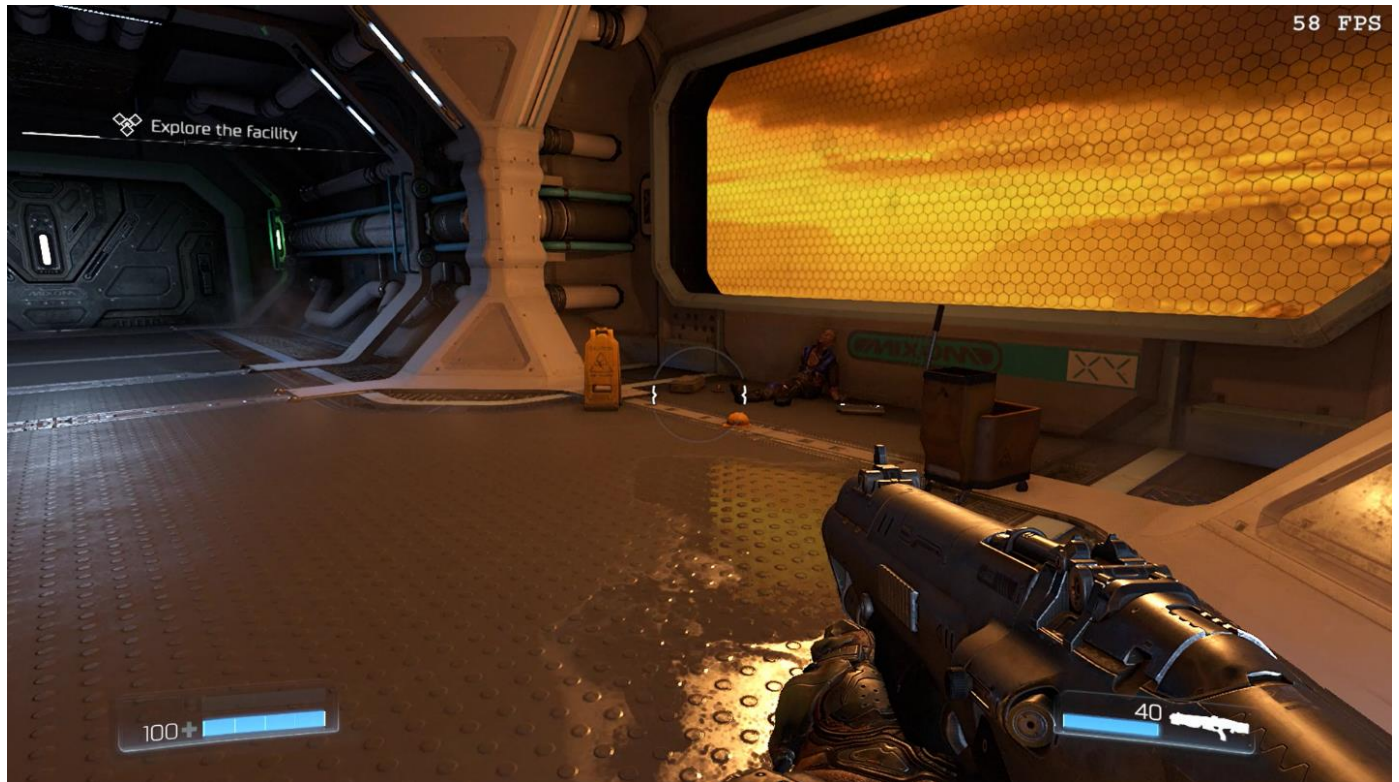
**Room 2: Hallway:**

Hangars are usually present at lower levels and so a stairway up makes sense. Also, in some games (creation engine games for example), verticality is important to maximize optimization as different rooms can be rendered when needed more easily. The hallway has the same ambient sound as the hangar.

**Room 3: Facility Entrance 1:**

In this room, the tone of the game becomes darker. As you exit the stairs, you see a deceased janitor on the right next to a window. Once you enter the section where he is visible, a different ambient sound starts playing. This sound is creepier. The reason I chose a janitor is because they evoke sadness better than other ranks, mainly because they are often at the bottom of the corporate ladder and are assumed by most players to be “innocent”. You can find a big keycard that can’t be missed next to the janitor. This keycard will open the locked door. To pick up the card, the player has to come close to the body, adding to the fear tone.



**Room 4: Facility Entrance 2:**

This room is present to add more to the environmental storytelling. We started in an empty room with plenty of windows and have transitioned to two rooms with one window each to finally no windows (no hope) and more gore in the coming rooms. We see detached wires, a busted pipe and debris all around. This adds to the feeling that something bad has happened.

**Room 5: Decontamination Room:**

This decontamination room is where the complete tone shift happens. A decontamination room often signifies that the player is now deeper inside the facility and has no contact with the outside. After decontamination, the overall light setting changes to a darker setting.

**Room 6: Grim Hallway 1:**

As we exit the decontamination room, we see a minion with his back turned against the player. This gives the player a feeling that the monsters of the facility are not expecting him. This is also a very common scare that is implemented in horror games and movies.



**Room 7: Grim Hallway 2:**

In the next room, we are presented with a gory display. This is a form of environmental storytelling. The player is informed that humans in the facility were brutally killed and that the enemies are monstrous. When walking through this room, we can hear a growl from behind the walls. This reinforces the feeling that something big is inside the facility.



**Room 7: Grim Hallway 3:**

In this room, we have two “skulls” surprise the player and rush towards him. This is used simply to jump-scare the player.

**Room 8: Intersection:**

In this room, the player is presented with two doors. One door leads to a closed door that requires a battery to open. Another door leads to a big room. Intersections are important in games as they slightly break up the linearity and give the player an illusion of choice.

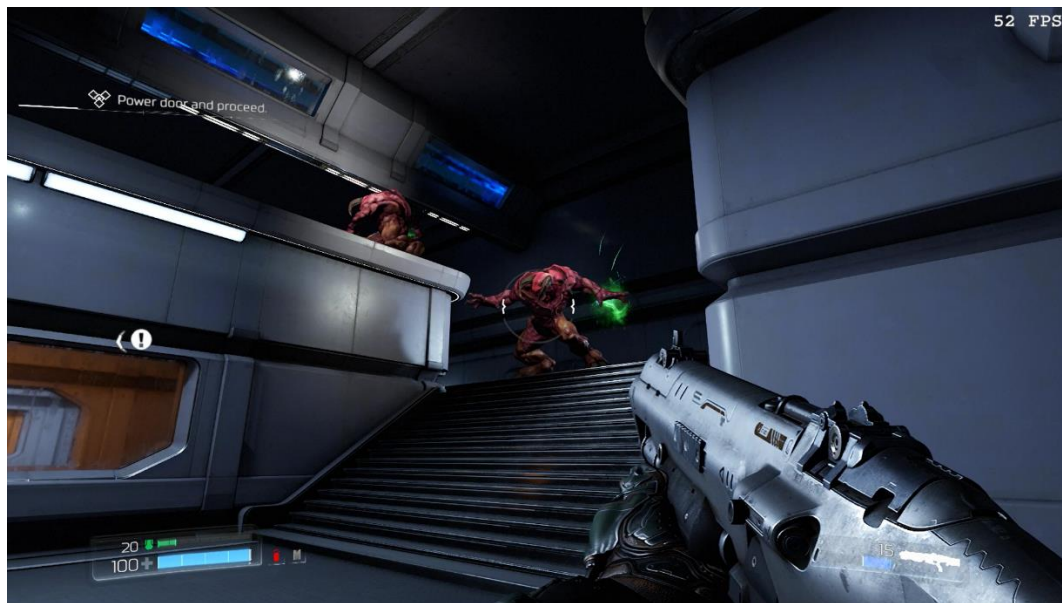
**Room 9: Labs:**

Upon entering this room, if the player looks forward, he can see a baron of hell (big monster) in the distance behind the windows. The silhouette of the monster is slightly blurry, adding to the fear factor. This AI is triggered once the player enters the room. Upon completing his short walk, the monster disappears. There are armor and health drops to help the player out as there is a big fight in the next room. This big room is key after the player exits the next room. I will be returning to talk about it.



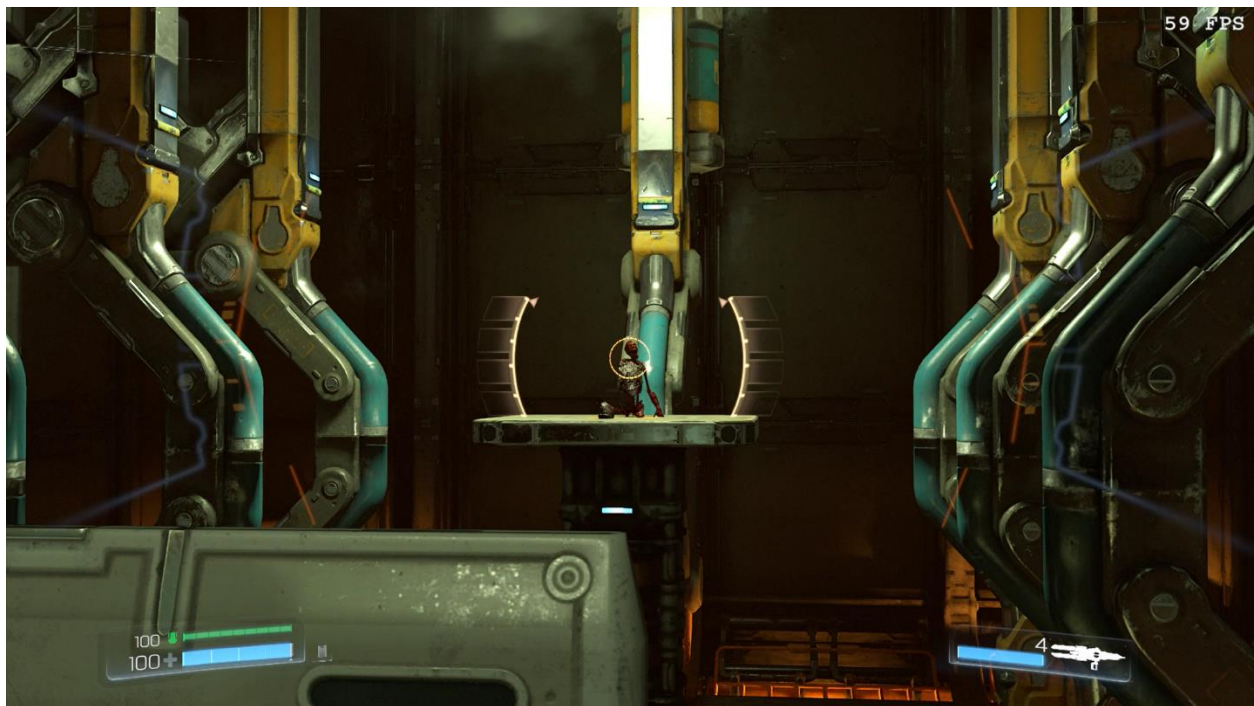
**Room 10: Crypt:**

In this room, the player sees a horde of monsters congregating around an altar. A demonic voice speaks to the player and taunts him. The room is extremely gory. As the player approaches, the horde targets him and a heavy-metal track plays (to increase excitement). The room gives a demonic vibe and informs the player about the nature of the enemies. The enemies are mostly made up of zombie minions and exploders that when killed, can take out other enemies around them. There is also a small number of ranged enemies to add to the challenge. The horde is accompanied by a "tanky" flying enemy boss that increases the difficulty. The fight is diversified but not too difficult. There are drops at the top of the room for players that run/explore. Once the horde is eliminated, the music stops, a red battery drops on the altar and the player is informed that he has to pick it up to open a door. Informing the player here is needed as this is a dead-end and he has to go back. The player is also informed by text of what the character he is playing thinks. This can increase immersion but its main purpose is to communicate narrative.

**Room 11: Labs (again):**

When the player reenters this room, a voice tells him to “run”. The player is ambushed by three barons of hell. They spawn to the right of the screen where it’s darker. To the left of the screen, there are boxes and a light to indicate the direction the player needs to take. All these elements come together to attempt to inform the player about what he should do. In testing, the elements were understood by most players. Here, a more fast-paced heavy-metal song plays to match the intensity of the moment. As the player runs to his objective, the barons are able to keep up. If the player is too slow, he can be hit while trying to open the door, which is very scary. Once the player goes through the now-opened door, the door permanently closes and the barons are destroyed. This sequence the player went through is an exciting chase sequence that signals the vulnerability of the player to the environment. This increases immersion and excitement.



**Room 12: Armory:**

This room is easily perceived as an armory. There are health and armor drops all around and some weapons. There is an upgrade bot that upgrades the shotgun, an LMG placed on a bench next to a yellow object (to make the player see it) and a gauss rifle placed next to the firing range. At the end of a firing range, there are burnt remains of a human. This is included for (dark) comedic purposes, as if the weapon was tested on that human.

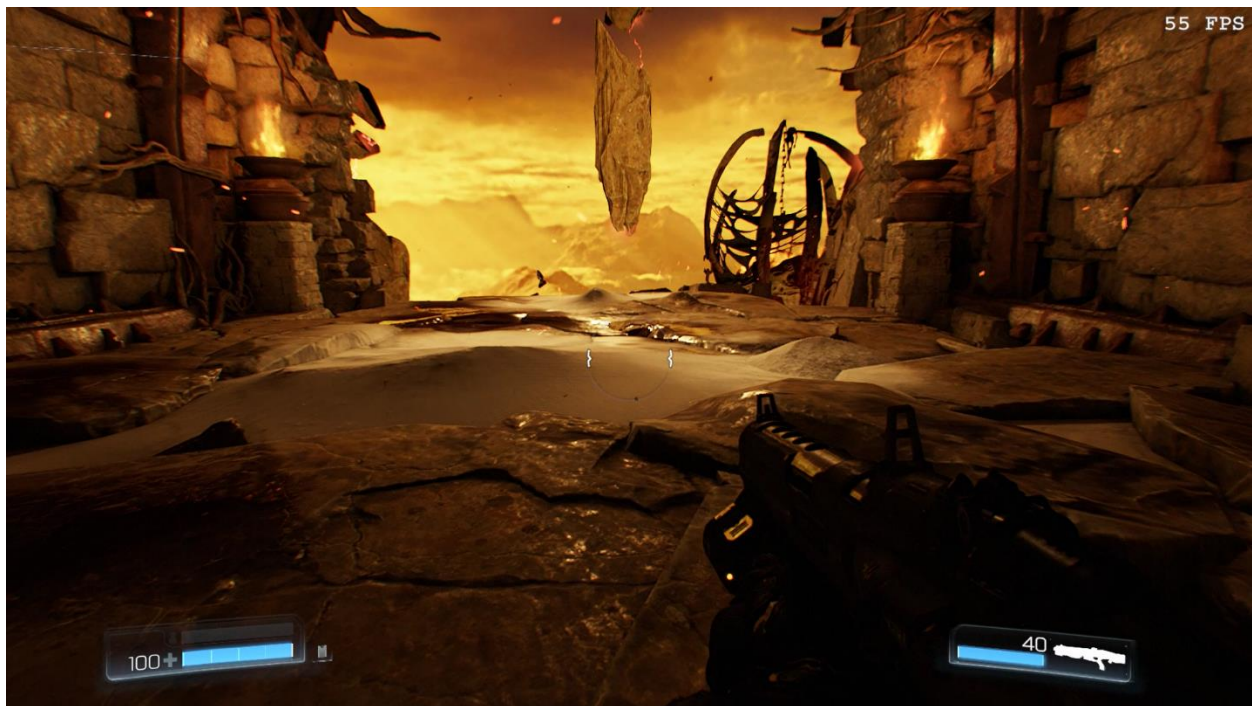


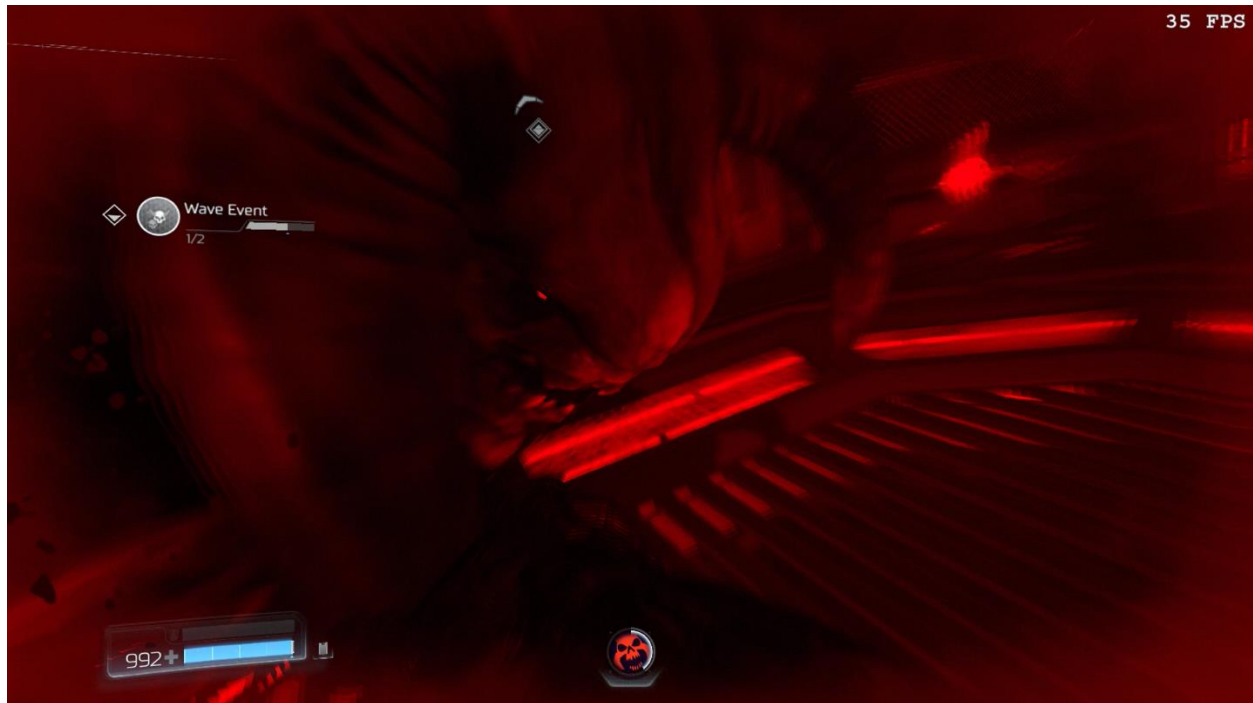
**Room 13: Small Hallway:**



This hallway serves as a transition to the big fight. The player hears a demonic voice that attempts to intimidate him.

**Room 14: Bio Room:**





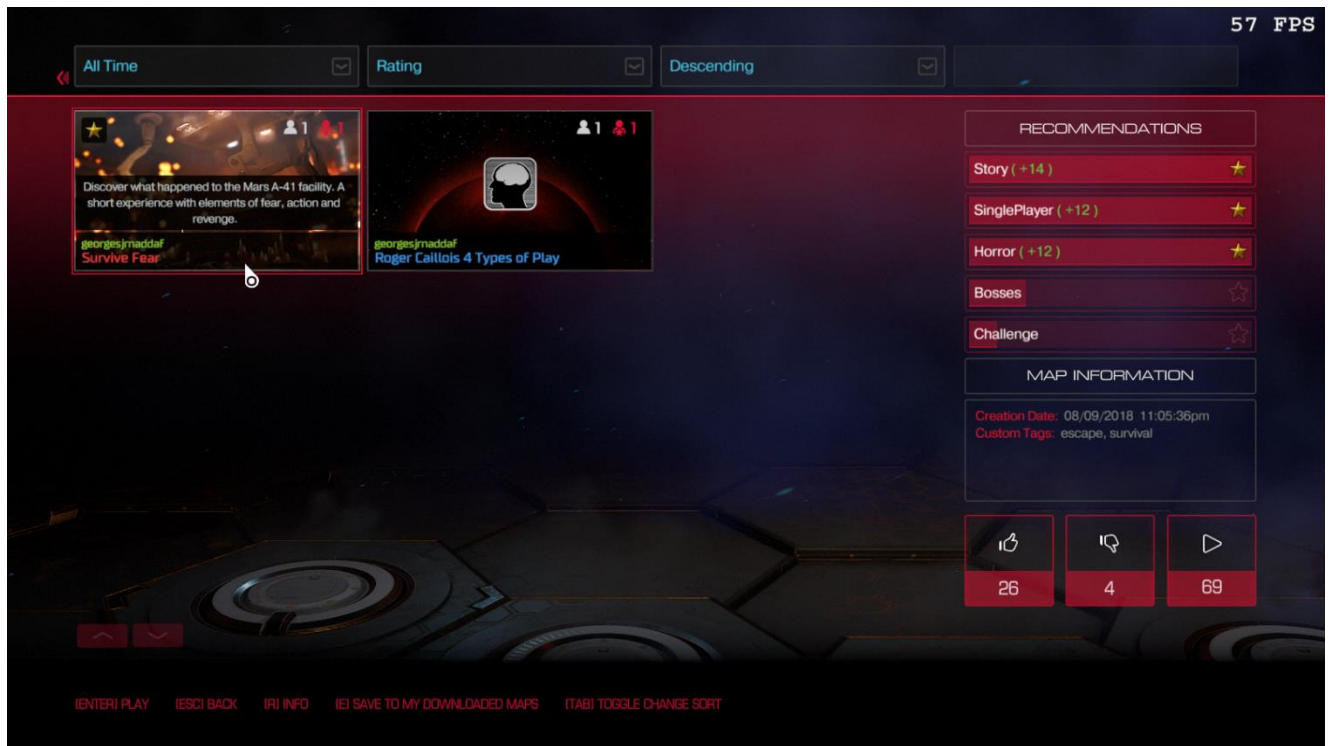
Once the player enters this room, the door behind him is closed permanently, a heavy-metal song starts playing and infinite waves of enemies (on max difficulty) spawn. The player is informed to “survive as long as possible”. The player is informed, in case someone with incredible skills stays alive for a long time (which should be impossible). The objective also pushes the player to try his best. Once the player is killed, the player is transported to hell. There, he hears the demonic voice claiming its victory. As the player goes forward, the screen turns red (in rage) and the player is brought back to the bio room. The player is now reborn with maximum health and infinite power-ups are scattered around the room. The player gets to have his revenge. He faces three waves of maximum difficulty and a final boss wave with only big monsters. This whole process is extremely satisfying for the player and gives a great feeling of revenge fulfillment (and subsequently relief).

After the waves are finished, the demonic voice announce the player’s freedom. The player is signaled the full-story via text and is shown where the exit of the map is.

### **Conclusion:**

This map serves what it set out to do. Fear, action and revenge are all presented and highlighted in the map. The level-design is simple, mostly linear and fun. Most developers nowadays tend to stress on the fact that linearity in games is not good. This is partially true when it comes to player freedom and play-time. However, linear levels can be incredibly immersive and very predictable. Striking a balance between linearity and diversity of choice and freedom is crucial to a game.



**Statistics:**

This capture was taken on 09/28/2018. The map was overall well-received.