

When the team stumbles upon a trio of abandoned drop modules, they find a cryptic message, a lone survivor and a lurking death that comes with every footfall.

This scenario is set Early or Mid-Colonization. It works best with either the Investigative Horror or Survival Horror modes of play.

Siren's Call

This scenario takes place on the exoplanet Siren, which is explored in the *Siren's Call* campaign and sourcebook.

Perfection

When the ARC colony ship broke apart and its various drop modules were scattered across the planet, three of them landed together on an extinct volcanic plain northwest of Mount Icarus. Emerging from their stasis pods and surveying their new environs, the recently awakened colonists soon set about establishing a small settlement, which they named Perfection.

Unfortunately, Perfection was anything but perfect. The colonists soon discovered that countless small lava tubes ran throughout the plains, making the regolith both rocky and porous. Any large structure built there would soon cause the ground beneath it to collapse. This would crack walls, floors and atmospheric seals.

With no way to transport their most valuable resources, the colony's residents adapted to this architectural challenge by constructing their settlement as a series of small, independent domes, each housing half a dozen colonists, and with no single dome heavy enough to cause the ground beneath it to collapse. This worked well for a time.

The Stormlurker

In the lava tubes beneath Perfection dwells a massive organism the colony's sole survivor refers to as the Stormlurker. This creature consists of a twisted and interconnected root structure, with a central beating heart and countless long tendrils that can reach down the tubes, break through thin sheets of rock and seize their prey. Once grabbed, the creature's victims are pulled underground, squeezed until they quit fighting and then are slowly absorbed.

This is the fate of most of Perfection's colonists.

At first the Stormlurker didn't trouble the fledgling colony. When the drop modules arrived, the creature was in a state of hibernation. As the settlement expanded, it continued to sleep, unaware of the growing colony above it. Then Siren reached the apogee of its orbit, and rain came to the plains. This woke the organism. And it was hungry.

During storms, the lava tubes beneath the plains flood, and the creature sends its tendrils to the surface. There, they act as both a

breathing mechanism and a means to seize prey. To the unknowing observer, they look almost like dozens of pale and quivering tree trunks, rising from the ground and reaching to the sky.

The Attack

The colonists didn't stand a chance. When the most recent storm came, the creature broke through their flimsy domes and pulled many to their deaths. Some fought their way free, but drowned in the flooded tunnels. Others attempted to flee the colony on foot, but the blind creature sensed their footfalls and pulled them back, screaming into the night.

Only a single colonist—Sagra Alaqa—survived, and she only managed to because she was in the infirmary and remained very, very still, fooling the creature's pallesthesia (tremor sense).

That was three days ago. Today the team is about to stumble upon the aftermath and discover what became of Perfection.

The Team's Arrival

While the team is out exploring, they come across the ruins of Perfection. First it shows up as a blip on their sensors, then as they approach, the silhouette of three drop modules and numerous small domes becomes visible on the horizon. If the player colony hasn't yet made contact with any others, this is a momentous sight indeed!

As the team gets closer, the ground changes and the plain becomes more difficult to navigate, with bits of loose rock and small fissures providing treacherous footing. Have one of the characters make an **Int/phy-sci-10** flip to recognize the surrounding land as an old volcanic plain. Meanwhile, have a different character make a **Dex/athletics-10** flip to avoid twisting her ankle. Failure results in her temporarily gaining the **Impairment (limp)** weakness until she rests her leg for a day or two.

Exploring the Settlement

A sign on a metal post saying, "Welcome to Perfection" stands at the edge of the colony, but otherwise everything is eerily quiet. No colonists walk the corridors between the domes, and if the characters call out, there is no reply.

Looking around, a **Per/investigate-10** flip reveals that the domes are mostly light and flimsy. Almost all of them have several punctures, each 10 to 15 cm across. Several of the domes even have larger rips, as though a human body crashed through the wall. The characters won't know it yet, but these punctures are where the Stormlurker's tendrils broke through, searching for victims.

Let the team explore dome by dome, coming up with creepy details and small clues that hint at the Stormlurker's attack. When you're ready

to push the scenario forward, have them discover the message in one of the drop modules (see below). Then the storm should hit.

Salvageable Resources

Characters looking for salvageable goods won't be disappointed. Ration bars sit untouched in storage drawers. An H₂O electrolysis machine can be found in one of the drop modules, and a pair of AR glasses lays on the ground at the edge of the colony. One side of the glasses, and the surrounding rock, is smeared with blood, as if a colonist hit her head on the ground and started bleeding.

The most important goods—such as the drop module's batteries and construction equipment—will need to be retrieved at some later point, as transporting them requires a vehicle.

The Message

Inside of one of the drop modules a message has been left for anyone who discovers the colony. It is written in blood and scrawled across the wall in large capital letters. The message reads: "When the Stormlurker comes for you, not another step."

The Storm

As the team explores, the weather quickly turns, bringing with it a massive storm that rolls in off of Mount Icarus. The first hint is a darkening of the sky in the southeast, followed by a powerful thunderclap that shakes every dome in the settlement. Moments later, a flash flood sweeps across the plain, surrounding the colony and cutting off any possible avenue of escape. Moments after that, the rain begins to pour.

The Stormlurker Rises

Give the characters a chance to react. The damaged nature of the colony's domes means that it will take some work to secure them against the wind and rain. Next time the team looks outside, however, numerous trunk-like tendrils have emerged from the many cracks and crevices in the surrounding plain.

At first they are only a meter or two in height, wavering slightly in the wind and reaching towards the sky. As the next few minutes pass, however, they continue to grow until some stand ten meters tall.

If any of the characters step outside, the Stormlurker senses their steps and the closest tendril whips around to attack! It targets her, or another colonist, as long as ones continues to move. Firing a gun likewise attracts the creature's attention.

Should the entire team remain completely still, it becomes blind to their locations, but knows that its prey is still present somewhere. The creature patiently waits for one of them to move or make a sound, all the while the nearest tendril slowly twists and turns, searching the area by sense of touch.

Stormlurker Tendril

Str 9, **Dex** 8, **Spd** 7, **End** 5, **Int** 2, **Per** 8, **Chr** 5, **Det** 5

Defense 11/23, **DR** 0, **Shock** 10, **Wound** 7

Skills: Athletics 3, Awareness 3, Melee 3, Naturalist 4, Stealth 2

Tendrils: +7 (♠27L/♥18L/♦9L/♣4L). Range 20. Also grapples the target. Can only grapple one character at a time.

Drag Away: On its turn, the Stormlurker can attempt to drag away a grappled victim. This happens in Phase 3 and requires no AP expenditure. Make a **Str vs. Str** flip. On a success, the character grappled with the Stormlurker's tendril is dragged up to 9 m.

Size +1: Stormlurker tendrils are quite long. Their size has been factored into the creature's Defense and Shock.

Underground Heart: The Stormlurker can only truly be killed if its underground heart is destroyed. Its heart is **Size 2**, cannot move and has **DR 0, Shock 12 Wound 10**.

Survivor

Just as the team defeats one of the tendrils or decides to remain very still, a scream rings out from the far side of the settlement—it appears that there is a survivor! Investigating the source of the scream, however, requires getting to the other side of the colony. This means making it past dozens of wavering tendrils.

A daring colonist might attempt to run as fast as possible, dodging whipping tendrils along the way. A more careful character might make it across by moving very, very slowly. Doing the former is an extended **Spd/athletics-12 (Tally 10, 1 round)** action. The latter is a **Det/stealth-12 (Tally 10, 1 minute)** action. Regardless of method, failure on any individual flip results in the character being struck by a tendril and receiving **9L** damage.

Characters who make it across the colony will find Sagra Alaga hiding in one of the drop modules. She is bandaged from past injuries and not in very good condition. Nevertheless, once rescued, she tells the heroes about the colony, Stormlurker attack and that one of the settlement's scientists believed the creature could be killed by destroying its heart-root. Before her death, the scientist concluded that it is located underground, somewhere beneath the colony's sanitization dome.

Aiming for the Heart

Teams who aim to kill the Stormlurker will need to scour the colony for explosives, escaping or fighting tendrils along the way. Then they will need to locate the sanitization dome, set the explosive charge and make it far enough away so as not to be harmed by the blast. It's best to play this through one step at a time, rolling with whatever plan the players come up with.

Once the blast ignites, the force of the explosion tears through the flimsy domes like wet paper. The creature lets out a mighty shriek that causes the ground to shake. And all around the characters, dozens of tendrils fall limp. It appears that the team is safe... for now.