

Proxima: Humanity's Event Horizon

Kyle Salitrik

Genres

Story: Sci-Fi, Psychological Horror, Isolation

Gameplay: First-Person Shooter, Survival Horror, Walking Simulator

Intended ESRB



Intended Audience

Fans of story-driven survival horror games.

Platforms:

PC (Steam)

Game Summary

Velren wakes up stranded on an alien planet and communication with his only hope of being saved, a distant space station, is only periodically available. He must use the environment and ingenuity to survive long enough for a rescue team to be sent back. Surviving the alien wilderness will not be easy as hazards come in the form of alien life, natural disasters, lack of human necessities, and a faltering mental state.

Game Outline

Velren is sent on an exploratory mission with a group of four others to humanity's next frontier: colonizing another planet. However things go awry during the trip and he finds himself alone, stranded on an alien planet known as Proxima b with the nearest humans orbiting in a space station named Proxima Infinitum. He spends most of his days on Proxima b trying to survive and stay sane, but everything from losing contact with the space station to breaking limbs causes his mental state to deteriorate. Through trial and error he must find what he can and cannot eat, create makeshift weapons for defense, locate or make shelter, sleep to have enough energy to continue on, and keep in contact as much as possible with the Infinitum if he is to stay sane and be rescued.

Meanwhile, Velren finds strange ruins and artifacts that seem similar to those on Earth scattered around the planet as he explores it, opening a possible line of investigations before his rescue. He must choose whether the task of finding out what secrets lie within these ancient structures. The daunting tasks of exploring them will take a physical and mental toll, along with potentially cause him to miss his contact with Proxima Infinitum, potentially causing them to believe that he is dead and leave him there. However the secrets he can uncover may make it worthwhile after all.

Unique Selling Points

- Most survival games put an emphasis on physical human necessities, however in Proxima, time management and mental health play a larger part in success.
- Proxima Infinitum is the only human contact our player has with other human beings and is necessary for keeping him sane.
 - Unfortunately as the space station is in it's own orbit, much further from Proxima b, communication is only available for approximately 5 of every 11 days in-game.
- As players experience events, Velren's mental state will be affected. If his mental state declines too far, the game ends in various ways. The following are examples of mental ailments that will affect Velren:
 - Depression - caused by failure and loneliness.
 - Paranoia - caused by lack of returned communication.
 - Anxiety - worsened by staying in the dark for too long or disasters; symbiotic with paranoia
 - Insomnia - influenced by lack of secure shelter and increasing anxiety

Similar Competitive Products

Gone Home, The Vanishing of Ethan Carter, Firewatch, Resident Evil

Story Refinement

Kyle Salitrik

Genres

Sci-Fi, Psychological Horror

Genres

Gameplay: First-Person Shooter, Exploration

Plot

Set in the distant future, attempts to start a settlement on Mars ended in disaster with thousands dead. This spurred apprehensions to colonize another planet. In the face of backlashes, **AXIS** (*the Agency for the eXploration of Interstellar Space*) instead sent space stations into orbit around the Sun. Each one reached further than the last in order to observe distant stellar systems.

Finally humanity has begun to extend it's reaches outside of the Solar System, placing their first station in orbit around *Proxima Centauri* in hopes that a new planet can be inhabited. Although potential Goldilocks planets have been observed from the Solar System for quite some time now, there have been no attempts to land on any of these planets – let alone start a colony.

In the endless pursuit to find a second home our protagonist is sent on an exploratory mission three years after *Proxima Infinitum* was established. Along with four others, a small rocket is launched to the nearest potentially-habitable planet: **Proxima b**. However, on their way to the planet something goes awry during the separation of the second and third stage rockets, and the stages don't separate. The engines kick in and cause all of the unburnt fuel to explode.

Our wakes up and fear immediately sets in as he realizes that he is floating off into the endless abyss of space. As he surveys his surroundings remnants of the ship he was occupying drift by, engulfing him in a sea of debris. Questions rapidly run through his head: "Am I going to die? Is everyone else dead? Does anyone know what happened? What *did* happen?"

The radio inside of his suit crackles and then a faint voice asks "Did anyone survive the explosion?"

Game's Beginning

After a cutscene depicting the events from before and a conversation with the space station, an alien craft picks up Velren. However, instead of coming to his rescue they strip him of all of his weaponry and leave him to fend for himself on the nearby planet, Proxima b.

Mechanics

- The only communication our protagonist has is with the nearby space station.
 - Unfortunately as the space station is in it's own orbit, much further from Proxima b, communication is only available for approximately 5 of every 11 days in-game.
- As players experience events, Velren's mental state will be affected. If his mental state declines too far, the game ends in various ways.
 - Mental afflictions include the following:
 - * Depression - caused by failure and loneliness
 - * Paranoia - caused by lack of returned communication
 - * Anxiety - worsened by staying in the dark for too long or disasters; symbiotic with paranoia
 - * Insomnia - influenced by lack of secure shelter and increasing anxiety
- Combat
 - Makeshift weaponry can be created from resources found on the planet, however it's not very effective against threatening opponents.
 - Some powerful alien weaponry can be found, but has extremely limited use.
 - Due to the imbalance of power against the player, they are encourage to avoid conflict as much as possible unless it is absolutely necessary.

Character Sheet

Character Name

Velren

Desires

- Finding a way to return home.
- Remain calm and sane.

Personality Traits

- Clever
- Outspoken
- Heedless
- Abrasive

Reactions to Success

- Tends to be more talkative with his contacts.
- Becomes less aggressive towards others.
- Improves mental state:
 - Reinforced sanity
 - Less paranoid
 - Becomes more comfortable with the situation.

Reactions to Failure

- Begins to care less about the consequences of his actions.
- Hostility towards others increases and tends to keep to himself.
- Less likely to ask for help.
- Mental state declines:
 - Becomes less sane and paranoia increases.
 - Fear sets in and clouds judgment.
 - Reaction time lowers.

Roadblocks

- Loss of radio connection.
- Being bombarded by debris left over from the wreckage or randomly flying through space.
- Running out of food or oxygen before help arrives.
- Effects of hyper- or hypothermia.
- Being overcome with fear from any combination of roadblocks.

Proxima: Humanity's Event Horizon

Kyle Salitrik

Beat Chart

Level: <i>Where am I?</i>	Level: <i>Comms Lost</i>
Time of Day: Late Night/Early Morning	Time of Day: Early Dawn
Story: Velren wakes up on Proxima b, realizes he is alone and has no idea where he is or how he got there. Communications from Proxima Infinitum are barely audible through his headset. The basic controls tutorial is carried out through these communications. Through telescopes, Proxima Infinitum can guide the player toward landmarks and keep track of his progress.	Story: After finding shelter, Velren lays down to go to sleep, but when he wakes up all communications with the Infinitum have been lost. The feeling of isolation ramps up and he tries to focus on survival, wondering what caused his communication lines to go down. He decides to try to find a vantage point in order to survey the area. As he is exploring for a better idea of his surroundings, he stumbles upon what appear to be ancient artifacts, however they seem very familiar; akin to ancient South American civilizations. Paranoia begins to set in as he reaches a cliff, standing high above ruins of what appears to be an Incan temple.
Progression: The player learns how to navigate the planet using stars (read: no map), how to find basic food, locate shelter, maneuver character, & how to deal with their first mental state: <i>Isolation</i> .	Progression: More mental health mechanics (<i>Paranoia</i>) are introduced along with learning recipes for crude implements of survival such as campfires, leaf bedding, improvised hammers and so on. They are left with the choice of focusing on survival and rescue or to explore the temple they have discovered.
Playtime: 30 min.	Playtime: 20 min to 1 hour
Enemies: N/A	Wildlife: Small alien creatures, none threatening
Threats: Isolation, Starvation, Dehydration, Sleep Deprivation	Threats: Isolation, Paranoia, Starvation, Dehydration, Sleep Deprivation, Death (falling/environmental, mental instability)
Environment: Vast forest area, visibility is cut short by the dense vegetation.	Environment: Dense forest into large cavernous areas. As the sun rises, visibility is much greater.
New Mechanics: Foraging, Navigation, Locating Shelter, Communication/Reducing Isolation,	New Mechanics: Trailblazing, Crafting
Economy: Materials for crafting essential items are scattered about the landscape.	Economy: Materials for crafting essential items are scattered about the landscape.
Audio: No background music, distant wildlife sounds, heavy breathing from Velren during sprinting, radio static, & voices.	Audio: Rustling of creatures moving, sounds from alien wildlife, radio static when trying to contact Infinitum, Velren talking to himself.
Visual: Pitch black distance, very dull colors at short distances. Plants viable to forage are denoted by presence of colored fruits. Most vegetation is green-brown, but foreign. Stars are bright, cardinal directions are shown as different colors: North - Red, South - Green, West - Purple, East - Blue.	Visual: With the sun rising, blue-hued beams of light shine through the forest canopy, allowing the players to see the bright colors of the plants. The sun causes some plants to give off bioluminescence. In the day, navigation stars are no longer visible and the players must keep track of their path by marking the environment.