



Forbidden Siren

A conversation with Mr. Keiichiro Toyama and Ms. Naoko Sato of the Development team of Forbidden Siren

A Japanese brand of fear is unleashed upon the world

When we set out to create this work of horror, we asked ourselves what we as Japanese feared the most. You will find the ultimate answer in SIREN. The setting is a typical Japanese village, home of very typical characters. But it is here that a terrible event occurs and soon, a dreadful law hangs over the village. In this game, there is no hero. There is no hope. You can only bury your fears and follow your instinct to escape.

Visuals that make your spine tingle

Darkness

The most compelling horror games induce physiological and instinctual reactions from the player. To make this possible, SIREN carefully depicts that which we humans fear most - the darkness. None of us can hide from our fear of the dark. We set out not only to depict actual physical darkness, but to create an atmosphere of gloom, panic, and anxiety that will conjure up an imagined darkness to blacken the player's very mind.

Ambient Effects

The game imagery, which is markedly Japanese in flavour, includes fog and mist descending from mountains, trees swaying in the winds, and gradual environment shifts. Special visuals are used to show the effects of rain and mist on the entire environment, which is made to appear wet and cold. Just making out the movement of a person, or the writhing of a monster, this unclear setting is enough to trigger one's fear instincts.

Character Creation / Background

The character motion and gestures were captured from live actors. The minute work done on the movements, expressions, and sounds injects life and emotion into the modelling of the characters in the story. The background graphics are stunningly realistic, thanks to the coverage of abandoned towns and mines across Japan that were visited and photographed solely for this purpose.

A multiple character drama set in a Japanese ghost town

A tale of the remaining few and their struggle to survive.

The story of SIREN is not told from the perspective of a single main character. The plot unfolds from multiple perspectives; different characters, in their fight for survival, make different choices, and think different things.

The three characters that are introduced here are central to the tale, but none of them are sole main characters. The tale takes place in the village of Hanyuda, a place where every person has a story. The characters, who exceed over 20 in number include people who are just passing through, as well as residents of the village. The mystery of the village gradually unfolds as you play through the stories of various characters.

The Setting

The Village of Hanyuda

Hanyuda is an inland village secluded in the mountains in Misumi county in an unnamed prefecture. This village of 5,500 people lies in a triangular basin, surrounded by mountains on all three sides. The impoverished town exists quietly by itself, in fact it seems to have cut itself off from the outside world. Even now, folklore accounts, which perhaps grew out of the town's strange origins and tendency towards self-isolation, tell of the village's occult tendencies, suggesting that it was a secluded town for members of a fanatical sect.

One night, when the rain fell gently under a crescent moon, a strange howl, almost like that of a siren, echoed across the land and the village along with its inhabitants disappeared. In its place, one could only find strange, scattered ruins and every drop of water, be it sea or river, had turned as red as blood.

The villagers, nearly overcome by fear and confusion, learn of the dreadful law that rules their destinies: "When you hear the strange scream from the sea, one person amongst those whose bodies have already begun to transfigure, will cease to be human..."

The Story

One by one, people disappear, lured by an eerie call, only to return the next day no longer human. The remaining humans are driven to the brink of madness, their own doubts begin to overcome them, and their numbers continue to diminish.

Those who have become something else gradually lose their human appearance. They form communities, and begin to live like humans. As if to replace them.

The few remaining humans begin a hopeless battle for survival.

The Dead

The monsters that appear in this story are called the Dead. The villagers, trapped in the crazed village, are overcome by a raging thirst. Eventually, they drink the blood-red water, and begin the slow transformation into the Dead.

Midnight 00:00

Those pushed over the edge are lured by the sound of the sirens heard from the distance across the red sea. They disappear into the blood-red, and return the next day, transformed into the Dead.

They differ from humans not only in their appearance they are now immortal.

What chance do the remaining humans have against such a foe? Most of the survivors are just ordinary people. Even if they found weapons, what good would it do? Could they take on evil single-handedly, like a hero in a video game?

Fighting the Immortal

View Capture

While the residents of Hanyuda Village struggle in their fight against the Dead, they plan their escape from the village. But the Dead, no matter how many times they are defeated, rise up again and again to threaten the survivors.

In this world humans are not heroes but frail beings. For them, fighting is strictly a last resort and even then, it may not save them from danger. Think about it. If you spotted one of the Dead down the street, would you choose to fight? Definitely not. You'd probably do anything you could to stop them seeing you.

This is where the unique SIREN "view capture" system comes in to play. This enables you

to capture the views of others, allowing you to view things from their perspective. This can help you escape the onslaughts of the Dead since a captured view will allow you to get a clear look at things.

- Capture the views of nearby humans and the Dead.
- Check to see whether the Dead block an escape route.
- Capture the views of the Dead who are in pursuit of you in order to determine their location and proximity.
- Capture the views of humans and the Dead to gain information.

These are just some examples of the things that are possible with the “view capture” ability.

What is “view capture”?

The Dead, despite their lack of verbal communication, are hard at work building a community. The Dead communicate information by sharing their views with each other. For the Dead, “view capture” is a standard mode of communication.

The Dead only exchange basic images but humans with their heightened intelligence, are able to use “view capture” to develop strategies for survival. You may be wondering why humans are able to use the Dead’s unique communication ability ... ?

The answer is simple: the humans in this village have already drunk the red water and are slowly becoming members of the Dead themselves. Even as they use this ability to survive, their very control of “view capture” proves that they are fast losing their humanity. For the people in this most desperate of situations, their very possession of this ability is laced with irony.

NOTE: When the player selects “View Capture” in the game, blue and green crosses can be seen. The crosses indicate all bodies within range of the person’s view; a blue cross

indicates yourself, while green crosses indicate other people in your party. This allows you to determine, to a certain extent, whether you are in danger of being spotted by one of the Dead. Of course, that is only the case when there is still some buffer of distance between you. If you capture the view of, say, one of the Dead directly behind you, you will be treated to a rather miserable display of helplessness.

Distract and Escape

While “view capture” acts as a radar, escaping under the cover of a distraction is a more direct method of evading danger. For example, you can set off an alarm to attract the attention of the Dead, or shout to cause the Dead to merge on one spot, and then escape in the meantime. Take full advantage of the auditory perception of the Dead to avoid unnecessary encounters. A combination of distractions and “view capture” will allow for effective escape from their evil clutches.

For more information on SCEE titles, please visit our website

www.forbidden-siren.com

or contact your local PR Manager

Developer: SCEJ **Genre:** Survival Horror Evolved **No. of Players:** 1 **Platform:** PlayStation®2

Peripherals: Analog Controller (DUALSHOCK®2), Memory Card (8MB) (for PlayStation®2) **Release Date:** Q1 2004

Sony Computer Entertainment Europe Ltd.

Sony Computer Entertainment Europe, based in London, is responsible for the distribution, marketing and sales of PS one and PlayStation 2 hardware and software in 102 territories across Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Oceania. By the end of June 2003, over 39 million PlayStation and PS one units had been shipped across these PAL territories and over 97 million worldwide. Between its European debut on 24 November 2000 and 6 September 2003, over 19 million PlayStation 2 units have been shipped across the PAL territories, over 60 million world-wide, making it one of the most successful

computer entertainment products in history.

PlayStation and the PlayStation logo, PS one, and PS2 are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.

Forbidden Siren is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.

More information about PlayStation products can be found at <http://www.scee.com> and