

Alien: Romulus (2024)



Rain blasts away at a stalking alien. (c) 20th Century Studios

Director/co-writer Fede Alvarez's addition to the Alien space horror series starts out like a science fiction dystopia story, with orphaned Rain Carradine (Cailee Spaeny) and her android "brother" Andy (David Jonsson) working on a hellish mining colony on a planet where it is always dark, owned by the powerful corporation Weyland-Yutani. When Rain fulfills her contract, with the intention to retire, the company re-informs her that the company has changed the terms and that she still must work several more years.

The plot could have moved on to Rain inspiring fellow workers to revolt, as in such films as *Hunger Games*, but instead she joins with a group to journey to a ruined space facility they have discovered and use its resources to escape to a distant planet free from the Weyland-Yutani. Andy is necessary because he can interface with the computer system of the ruined station and secure the cryo pods needed for deep space travel. What could go wrong—after all, one of the group is Tyler ((Archie Renaux), Rain's ex-boyfriend?

Of course, we know the answer is "Plenty!"—this is the guy who has written and directed such thrillers as *Evil Dead*, *Don't Breathe*, and *The Girl in the Spider's Web*. And do matters ever get out hand, first with creatures called facehuggers attacking the humans, then the massive Xenomorph stalking

them, and finally when a facehugger latches onto the crew member who is pregnant, quickly producing a horrible hybrid creature. Lots of blood and gore for those who loved the first two films. All this because Weyland-Yutani scientists had been conducting dangerous experiments on the giant research station.

Cailee Spaeny's Rain might not quite reach the level of Sigourney Weaver's heroism—after all the latter was protecting a child, therefore exuding maternal instincts—but she does a good job of showing horror/fear being overcome by courage and inventiveness. Crafting the research space station so large makes possible lots of long thrilling chases and escapes—and gory deaths. (Like all horror stories, most of the people at the beginning are there to become victims to grisly deaths)

The words above from the Psalmist could well be Rain's, were she to be a person of faith, but as in most science fiction stories, the Christian faith has either died out or neglected as irrelevant. This is a film for those who want to be both scared and thrilled, and they will not be disappointed.

This review will be in the September issue of VP along with a set of questions for reflection and/or discussion. If you have found reviews on this site helpful, please consider purchasing a subscription or individual issue in The Store.