

Tucked inside his spacecraft, gliding through a dark, icy and lifeless immensity, corporal Jonlan thinks again to the last look he gave to his comrades while leaving from the Zanklé Rebel outpost, towards a mission as vital for the cause of the Rebels as dangerous for his own life. He had volunteered himself for carrying it out. Some of the best Rebel secret agents had paid with the extreme sacrifice in order to gain the necessary information, and this weighed on him, the veteran of many battles, like a heavy burden.

Jonlan's destination: Apulija-13, a small rocky planet in the constellation of Cancer, hosting a base where sinister military experiments are being conducted by Omni Corporation. A menace to the Rebels, that's for sure, but also an unprecedented opportunity to definitely turn the tide of the conflict to their side. By infiltrating inside the base pretending to be an Omni inspector, Jonlan's task is to steal the plans of the fearsome mass destruction weapons the evil conglomerate is working at, and at the same time to sabotage the base beyond repair by placing an explosive charge in the power generator.

Time passes... Apulija-13 is near. Bringing abruptly his attention back to the present, Jonlan tunes in the base radio frequencies in order to ask for the authorization to land, but the command console's loudspeakers only emit static noise. Nothing comes up on the video screens. Jonlan tries other frequencies, but to no avail... until, for just a handful of seconds, some strange, rapidly moving shapes make their appearance on the smooth, cold surface of the display. A shout is heard:

"They're here... here they come... aaaarrghhhh..."

Gunshots, more cries. Then the signal breaks.

The Rebel leader hesitates. Although many times he already escaped a seeming unavoidable end, he wonders whether, under such uncertain circumstances, it would be wise to carry on with his mission..

His doubts are swept away by a powerful bio-psionic energy blast, coming from an unknown part of the Omni base, hitting the spacecraft with a terrible force. The automatic landing procedure does not start. Jonlan deactivates the autopilot and overrides it with the manual controls, but the spacecraft's nanoreactor has been damaged and the engines are losing thrust. The small planet's surface comes nearer...

The corporal puts his feet on the dusty ground of Apulija-13. He has managed to arrive there alive, but his ship cannot take off without a new nanoreactor. Walking through the airstrip, towards the base entrance – which doors are wide open, while the red lights flash in a frantic way – he can perceive in the distance, among the craters scattered on the horizon, grotesque forms with a vague human appearance menacingly moving... towards him.

THE GAME

Jonlan has made an emergency landing on Apulija-13, so he can undertake his mission. He won't however be able to take off if he does not find a spare nanoreactor for his spacecraft. Unfortunately the base has been attacked by some Alien unknown entity. Some of the personnel has been killed, while others, contaminated by horrible germs brought by the assailants, roam aimlessly attacking any entity they consider to be unfriendly. Even non-human beings could be found by proceeding deeper inside the base.

Therefore Jonlan must:

- steal the data disk, probably placed in the laboratory, containing the plans on the experimental weapons currently being researched by Omni;
- place the time bomb he is carrying in the chamber hosting the core of the energy generator which provides power to the base;
- find a spare nanoreactor for the anti-matter propelled engine of his spacecraft.

According to information gathered by the Rebels, the base is divided in two sections along the west-east axis. West are the entrance, the radio and surveillance center, the visitors' area, the infirmary and the armory, while in the eastern part the laboratory, generator, workshop, store, meeting rooms and living quarters can be found. Not all parts of the base will be immediately accessible. It will be necessary to find some keycards to open the respective doors, which will however automatically close when Jonlan leaves the room.

During the Alien attack, the generator has been badly damaged – nuclear fuel has leaked – and the resulting instability means that when the bomb will explode, the whole base will be destroyed. Jonlan will then have to reach the spacecraft before the countdown started after placing the bomb in the correct location ends.

The main character starts the game with 3 lives, 50 health units and 99 bullets for the weapons he can carry. Contact with enemies, flames or radioactive fuel for the generator will make health decrease, and if it reaches zero, a life will be lost. To restore health and bullets to their maximum values it is possible to gain access to the medical equipment and the ammunition reserves respectively – the former can be found in the infirmary, the latter in the armory.

The game will immediately end if Jonlan does not leave Apulija-13 after the end of the countdown, or if he tries to pick up again the bomb after having primed it – an internal security mechanism will make it set off at once if someone will attempt to remove it. If he instead will manage to reach his spacecraft before the explosion, carrying the data disk and the nanoreactor with him, the mission will be accomplished!

...or not?

THE OBJECTS



MP-50 SUBMACHINE GUN

Jonlan begins his mission with this simple, limited range weapon, which is always in his possession (it is not part of the inventory).



MG-5000 RIFLE

An assault rifle with a considerable range, but no more powerful than the MP-50.



AG-73 RIFLE

This weapon is less accurate than the previous one and as a consequence its range is shorter, but it compensates for that with a superior stopping power, able to overcome even the hardest enemies.



EAST WING KEYCARD

Grants access to the east wing of the base.



INFIRMARY KEYCARD

Grants access to the infirmary.



ARMORY KEYCARD

Grants access to the armory.



LABORATORY KEYCARD

Grants access to the laboratory.



COMMANDER'S KEYCARD

Grants access to the base commander's living quarter.



ANTI-RAD SHIELD

Allows those who wear it to avoid radioactive contamination damage.



TIME BOMB

To be placed in the chamber housing the energy generator core. Jonlan carries it at the beginning of the game.



DATA DISK

Contains the plans of the weapons being developed at the base. Required to successfully end the game.



NANO REACTOR

Component of the spacecraft's engines circuitry. Required to successfully end the game.

To pick up an object Jonlan must touch it, then the COLLECT key must be pressed. Objects can be managed by pressing the INVENTORY key: the game will be paused and on the screen the list of the objects being carried will appear. To drop an object, select it from the list using the UP and DOWN keys, then press FIRE. Jonlan can carry a maximum of three objects at a time.

Not all objects will be initially visible; some are hidden and will have to be found. In order to search for an object, position Jonlan close to a piece of the scenery and press COLLECT. If an object is found and picked up, you will hear a short sound.

CONTROLS

Default keys are:

Q	left
W	right
O	up
K	down
P	fire
SPACE	collect
X	open inventory/pause

Keys are selectable and fully redefinable whenever you press '1' in the menu screen, while pressing '2' will enable the Kempston joystick option; '3' will select Sinclair joystick (port 1). When choosing a joystick, you will be asked to define two keys for the COLLECT and INVENTORY/PAUSE functions respectively.

Pressing '5' will start the game.

128K VERSION

When loaded under 128 BASIC, the game plays a tune at the menu screen and has three sound effects more than the 48K one.

HINTS

- Most of the time it is possible (and preferable) to avoid the enemies, rather than attacking them.
- It is not necessary to perform the actions required to complete the game all at once.
- In the best tradition of survival horror games, we haven't told you everything...

DEVELOPER'S NOTES

This is my second Spectrum game, "born" on the basis of the experience of AGD gained with *Lost In My Spectrum*. Having improved my ability to use this authoring tool, I wanted to try creating a title which could better reflect a video game idea of my own – a mix of action, adventure and strategy set in the universe of what I consider to be the best Spectrum game ever, *Laser Squad*.

In contrast with the light and cheerful mood of *Lost In My Spectrum*, *Apulija-13* is an example of survival horror, a genre I followed in its main features – a character unwillingly facing an obscure and terrifying situation, where everything seems to go the wrong way, planning his moves, without recklessly engaging in combat. The limitation of health and ammunition replenishment to the infirmary and armory is therefore to be understood as a way of forcing the player to be careful.

The main challenge *Apulija-13* offered me was the "building" of a miniature world which had to look convincing, at least as far as it could be done on a Spectrum and with AGD. I tried to differentiate all the base sections so that the player could immediately perceive their function. In addition to that, by depicting the commander's room almost as wide as four common living quarters, I wanted to give a clue about the way Omni Corp., in my personal vision, represents a model of society where inequality between the few who command and the many who obey actually translates itself as privileges which are to exclusive advantage of the former.

Anyway, it was great fun for me creating *Apulija-13* and I wish it will be as fun to play, if not even more!

Messina, December 2012

Alessandro Grussu