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be passed around among crew members. If I were in charge of a real rescue mission to Karis, and if my best machine gunner were taken out of action, I would pass the machine gun along to someone else, even if the person were not fully qualified. After all, how much training does it really take to kill crabs with a machine gun?

But that's not the way things happen on Karis. If your machine gunner is gone, and all you have left is the soldier with the super squirtgun, in she goes.

The roster of soldiers features a picture of each, along with his or her level of energy ("rested" or "dead"), weapon (if any), and area of expertise. If a soldier is destroyed by the aliens, the soldier's picture in the roster changes to a small pile of bones.

Although there is allegedly only one life support suit, it is somehow returned to service after the soldier wearing it bites the dust. How does the unit get back to the spacecraft? That part of the game was never made clear.

By pressing the f1 key, your soldiers can be teleported back to the ship when things get too hairy on Karis. The authors recommend sending an expendable soldier, a woman with no weapons, to scout the territory. Is it significant that the soldiers unambiguously identified as women (both privates) are the ones with the automatic H₂O dispenser and the ones with no weapons? There are aspects of this game that only an unregenerate sexist could love.

The challenge of high-speed action and unpredictability in Force 7 will keep the player coming back for more.

But if you can ignore that point, the game is truly first-rate. On Karis you must enter the power station (this is accomplished simply by teleporting to the planet). Choose your soldier and press the fire button. If you want to return to the ship, press f1 and you can change troopers or escape from a tricky situation. When you've chosen the right soldier for the job at hand, press the fire button to teleport back inside the power station.

A box at the bottom of the screen keeps you constantly informed of the health and energy level of the soldier, the number of humans rescued on the current level, the number remaining to be rescued, a score based on the number of aliens destroyed, and the number of rounds, grenades, and flames remaining in the soldier's private arsenal.

Pay particular attention to the soldier's health level. It's not possible to improve a soldier's health during the course of the game. Food and rest will only reduce fatigue. Health is a one-way street. Once it goes down, it stays down. The two things most likely to degrade your soldiers' health are physical contact with an alien and coming too close to an acid hole.

Within the power station, there are six different levels, each made up of rooms and hallways. Scattered throughout the various levels are battle units, food, ammunition, and black boxes.

Battle units are tiny steamrollers designed to turn the aliens into crabcakes, but they can only be driven by the two soldiers qualified to do so, and they last only a matter of seconds. Driving over a termite queen with the battle unit is one of the few ways to destroy her.

Food and rest are occasionally needed by soldiers when their fatigue level becomes dangerously high. To rest, simply find a convenient spot (such as in a magazine), and cease movement. Sleep comes almost instantly. For some reason the aliens cannot penetrate a stockpile of weapons. I suspect they're repelled by the smell of saltpeter and cordite.

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