

TOTAL ECLIPSE



toaster? No, sorry, it's not that delicious. Plus, please, this I was just hanging around the office in my "are games you want reviewed, guy?" mode, when in the new (first) game from Inevitable came through the door and I was the first to get hold of it. 'n ha! Try getting it back now, suckler!

After *Order and Dark Side* whipped us off its galaxes far away, *Total Eclipse* brings us right back down to earth (well, I don't mean that). In fact, *Eclipse* is the setting, and you, dear reader, are an Egyptologist. I Come again? Not. Let's hit some history here.

(Deep voice with huge effect.) It is written that in the days of ancient Egypt the High Priest of Ra, the God of Sun, thought: He was a drop of golden sun, myself, but never mind, passed a cutie on his people, because our ancient documents are a little sketchy on this point. So, being a quick-thinking sort of genius, he instantly had an enormous pyramid built, and in the topmost chamber a shrine was installed to Ra, the aforementioned deity. The cutie was that if anything ever blocked the sun's rays during daylight hours, it would be destroyed.

Twelve is 3600 years later, you're just discovered that there's going to be a total eclipse of the sun in, well, two hours. If the moon is destroyed, all sorts of terrible things will happen — total nuclear war, ice age, and another series of *Chiggers*. *Playa Pos!* Yes, you've got to save the world.

How you do this is by finding your way through a vast random



maze's the room they call the windmill, and next they're right. Then down on the left-hand corner is out of your reach, and the one up at the right looks pretty blocked off too, but not yet and anything to do with it. We will give you through the middle one, like a compass to make (here here)



Answering this, this is a real choice. First though, as the left should tell you rather better — not that it needs willing, but never mind. The thing on the left of the cut is an ink — a map. On the right, who knows? But notice there's a map underneath. What could be under there?

mean of mine, check full of puzzle and treasure and the occasional dark-thrashing meander? The treasure is of course there for the digging, and the success of your mission is measured by how much you grab as well as whether you save the world or not. (It's a necessary bit, sort of.) You're equipped with your trusty notebook with loads of buttons, your wristwatch (to tell you when the world is going to blow up), a water bottle which you'll need to keep topped up (thirsty souls die in this game), and a compass, which seems a remarkably useful when you're trying to make a map. Cool. Before you, you will be trying to make a map from the first moment you load this up.

Yes, *Total Eclipse* is a mappers' paradise, more so even than *The Dark Side*. Each room has several exits, but some are high beyond reach and others blocked off. Some blocked doors can be opened with *Atkha*, which is found the place and can be easily picked up. Others need a more ingenious approach if you're to get past the block and through the door, and no, a hint doesn't usually work. Water troughs make that doubly true, while *terrotopography* are usually more because that means the sky.

As always with these games, there are a lot of toys to remember, but sometimes you get used to it. As well as just walking and turning, you can look up, look down, crouch and then stand up again, sit a U-turn and even change your idea up. Pressing F makes you rest a while — useful, that, as it helps

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calm your heart — you don't want to have a coronary, do you?

The idea in the end is to rise to the top of the pyramid through the maze. It's real easy — I've been playing this for hours and the mazes seem close. Height above the ground is measured in cubes — you start at 24, you want to get to 72. Too many times you get yourself to a decent height and then find yourself plummeting through a hole in the floor. It's often a good idea to keep an eye on things down below.

The game plays very similarly to *The Dark Side*, although with the much smaller arena you're moving through, the atmosphere is quite different. Think of *Midway* combined with *Anger Lane* and you're not far off. The controls are on push-button rather than joystick, and the graphics are, as ever, immaculate. The *FreeSpace* technique opens up huge areas of gameplaying that until now were denied us, and it's to incentive to get that the game is as clever and enjoyable as the former releases. A bit, at a palatable rate.

YS CLAPOMETER

Not another superb *FreeSpace* game from *Interplay*. These people just seem stuck ahead of the competition.



GUERRILLA WAR



A crack marine life is not an easy one. Keep things

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Swam In the jungles of a tropical island, the people grow beneath the iron rule of a cruel sponsor (green, green). The *Alman* have had to stay off because of a flat tyre, but help at hand (see there) two crack marines waiting on the beach to liberate the natives. You are of course one of these marines, so go get 'em/boy!

Unfortunately, you're going to have to battle your way through two different sections before you can liberate the island, and progress is tough, hindered as you are, by loads of loads of obstacles. Firstly you've got to fight your way past the regular soldiers, also charge at you in groups of two and three, making killing them extremely difficult. You'll find soldiers dug in behind sand bags too. Watch out for them — cos they'll pass the time by shooting at you, or chucking hand grenades in your direction, rapidly turning you into dead marine. Lovely.

It's a bit more than just a shoot 'em up though. Cos sometimes the soldiers will be loading a hostage. Taking out all the soldiers, but leaving the hostage, will result in a large bonus. Have to pity a trigger finger though, and you'll lose five hundred points. So watch out for those hostages.

The soldiers you kill will sometimes leave a weapon behind. Collect it and it'll dramatically increase your fire power, until you get killed, that is. And should those ammo be needed, just pick up an enemy

bullet or more magazines from the fallen ammo supply.

Getting past that isn't too tough, and you'll still need to tackle the standard end-of-section means. That's needs a massive 32 hits before it'll die, and on each level, you'll need differing tactics to score those hits, so getting through any level is not going to be easy.

Guerrilla War is as good a conversion as could be expected on the Spectrum. The graphics are smaller than the arcade version obviously, but are still a fair size, and are well animated. It's also extremely addictive, and will keep most players coming back for more.

But there's one gripe. *Guerrilla War* misses the megamark because of the awkward control method. You need both hands to play into for the joystick, and another for the keyboard to launch grenades. It's awkward and annoying. *Megamark* aside, however, this is an addictive little game, and with five levels to work through, will fit many a cold winter evening.

YS CLAPOMETER

A good ol' romping *Guerrilla War* through tropical forests, let down slightly by awkward control.

