

= Alisia Dragoon =

Alisia Dragoon (Japanese : ????????? , Hepburn : Arishia Doragon) is a 1992 platform game developed by Game Arts for the Sega Genesis . The player controls Alisia , a young woman who is on a quest to avenge her father and save the world . She can fire lightning from her hands and summon four faithful beasts to aid her .

The game was released outside of Japan by Sega , who packaged the heroine as a rugged gladiator instead of the dainty @-@ looking sorceress she originally was . Due to the lack of publicity for the game internationally , Alisia Dragoon did not make a big impact on the video game market , despite the critical acclaim it received .

= = Gameplay = =

In Alisia Dragoon , the player controls the female protagonist , Alisia , in her quest to save the world by defeating the evil forces that killed her father . The game consists of eight levels of side @-@ scrolling environments ; Alisia has to jump across gaps and kill the enemies that stand in her way . Each stage is completed by defeating the boss at the end .

Alisia attacks by shooting streaks of lightning from her hands . The attack automatically targets enemies in range but gets weaker with each volley as Alisia 's power is depleted . Her power recharges when she stops attacking ; when fully charged , it allows her to unleash a smart @-@ bomb @-@ like attack , hitting every enemy on the screen . The energy system introduces an element of strategy , encouraging the player to manage Alisia 's power to have her able to defend herself at critical moments .

Helping Alisia in her quest are her pet monsters . These creatures fly around the heroine on their own , attacking her foes , and blocking enemy attacks from hitting her . There are four pets , each with its own type of attack . The Dragon Frye spits fireballs , and the Boomerang Lizard hurls boomerangs . The Thunder Raven emits a thunder blast that affects enemies across the screen , and the Ball O ' Fire burns enemies on contact . Only one pet can fight alongside Alisia in her quest , but the player can select any of the four (or none) as the active companion at any time .

Over the course of the game , Alisia and her monsters can improve their abilities by collecting power @-@ ups . These enhancement items are placed throughout the first seven stages , mostly in hidden locations . The various power @-@ ups can heal Alisia and her monsters , increase their maximum life bars , improve their attacks , or grant invulnerability for a certain time . Life bars are lost by taking damage from enemy attacks and traps . When Alisia 's pets lose all their life bars , they are removed from play and cannot be brought back until a " Revive " power @-@ up is collected . If Alisia loses all her life bars , she can restart the level by expending a continue . The game ends if all the continues have been used . Alisia Dragoon has no features for saving the player 's progress . After the game is completed , a screen is shown , charting the overall performance of the player based on the number of kills , the power level of Alisia 's attack , and the frequency the pet monsters are used .

= = Plot = =

Similar to most action games on the Sega Genesis , the plot in Alisia Dragoon is simple and short . The game goes straight into the action , tasking Alisia to kill everything in sight . After defeating the final boss , the player is treated to a cinematic cutscene of Alisia 's triumphant return to her home .

For the Japanese release , much of the back @-@ story was described in the manual . Alisia is the daughter of a sorcerer who has imprisoned the main villain , Baldour , in a cocoon and sent it into outer space . Her father is in turn tortured to death by Baldour 's followers . When the villain crashes back to the planet and begins to awaken , Alisia sets out to defeat him and his followers . The American and European versions of the game promoted a different back @-@ story , with Alisia as a gladiator who champions the cause of the people with her four pet companions . Her task is to eradicate the evil monsters and the source of their production , a " silver star " that has crashed to

Earth .

= = Development = =

In 1992 , Japanese animation studio Gainax was in a collaboration with Game Arts , the makers of the Lunar role @-@ playing games , to produce an action video game . Gainax 's video game product line tended to target a niche crowd who generally preferred dating simulations and anime @-@ based adventure games . Alisia Dragoon is a departure from this tradition . The animation studio handled the artistic end of the production , writing the story and creating the artwork that would be used for the design of the game 's environments and characters . Several of its founders had worked on Hayao Miyazaki 's animated films , and the influences of Miyazaki 's 1984 science fiction animated film Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind were evident in certain levels of the game . Similarly , due to the predominance of mixing science fiction with fantasy themes in the Japanese animation circles at that time , Alisia Dragoon featured high @-@ tech spaceships and robots alongside mythical zombies and dragons . The composition of the soundtrack was delegated to Mecano Associates , who had produced the music for other works from Game Arts , such as the action games Fire Hawk : Thexder 2 and Silpheed . Game Arts , however , did most of the work in producing Alisia Dragoon , adapting the artwork into environments and creatures that can be rendered by the console hardware , and writing them as lines of software code .

= = Reception = =

Due to a small customer base in Japan , Alisia Dragoon sold few copies on its release (April 24 , 1992) ; the console it was made for , the Sega Mega Drive , was not a popular device in Japan , selling 3 ? 3 @. @ 5 million units (10 % of all Mega Drives / Genesis sold around the world) . The game was published earlier by Sega for North America and Europe , on March 30 . However , it was a subdued release ; Sega did not place major advertisements for the game in the media . To localize the contents for the Western market , the video game publisher made several cosmetic changes to Alisia Dragoon . Instead of a big @-@ eyed heroine drawn in typical anime styling , Alisia was portrayed as a golden bikini @-@ wearing female barbarian on the box covers outside Japan . The Western version of Alisia was likened to the scantily clad females in artist Boris Vallejo 's work .

Westerners were more enthusiastic toward the game than were the Japanese , although there were a few negative appraisals . GamePro magazine opined Alisia Dragoon 's responsive controls , coupled with the hectic action and handsome graphics , made the game highly desirable for owners of the Genesis console . The Lessers of Dragon magazine were equally impressed with the gameplay , praising Alisia Dragoon for its " solid arcade action " that satisfied their " need for fast reflexes " . Mean Machines 's Julian Rignall praised the game for its pet monsters design , calling the management of the pets in the game an encouragement toward tactics . His fellow reviewer , Richard Leadbetter , wrote the game was visually attractive with " beautiful sprites " and " amazing backdrops " . He found the gameplay challenging , being forced to conserve energy as the game " [threw] everything but the kitchen sink at [him] " . Rignall agreed with Leadbetter on the game 's difficulty , which along with the secret rooms and power @-@ ups to be discovered made Alisia Dragoon an excellent action platform game that had long @-@ lasting appeal . Of the hundreds of Genesis games , Mega magazine rated Alisia Dragoon among the top 100 games , calling it " [probably] the best dragon @-@ based platform game around . " Despite the positive sentiments , sales of the game outside Japan were weak .

Sixteen years after the game 's release , Todd Ciolek of Anime News Network reviewed Alisia Dragoon and repeated much of the same sentiments as the Mean Machines reviewers . Noting Gainax 's catalog of games , he noted that Alisia Dragoon was very different from the rest ; instead of targeting hardcore fans of anime and focusing on exploitive themes , the game 's appeal was for everyone . In light of this , Ciolek called Alisia Dragoon " the best video game Gainax ever touched " and " a spectacular ride in its own right " .

Alisia Dragoon has been recognized retrospectively as a relatively early video game to challenge a gender bias prevalent in the industry at the time . In the early 1990s , the video game market was skewed toward the young male demographic , and games often portrayed women as " damsels in distress " , submissive and requiring rescue by the male protagonists . Along with contemporary games like Streets of Rage or Wurm : Journey to the Center of the Earth , Alisia Dragoon featured a female leading character who can defend herself without the help of a male hero .