

Jagged Alliance: Narrative design

Introduction

I designed this story for the existing IP Jagged Alliance, a story-driven tactical game where you control a team of action-hero mercenaries.

Requirements: Tongue-in-cheek, fun 1990's action movie feel with roots in realism. This is a prequel to the first game and setup the first Jagged Alliance game.

Logline

In 1990, a team of diehard mercenaries fight to rescue a nuclear weapons expert from a brutal weapons dealer before he reboots the cold war.

Theme

The story explores the theme: *The little man against the system*. Both heroes and villains fight a system higher than themselves.

Setup & mission

November 1990. You're retired US general John Flex, a former marine and now successful international diplomat working to mend the damages after the Cold War. You are called in for an emergency brief by your former employer, General Reitman.

A brilliant Soviet nuclear weapons technician has been kidnapped. He fled the Soviet Union after the fall of the Berlin Wall and was arrested in Costa Rica last month. The Technician is famous for constructing nuclear weapons from anything as long as he has radioactive material. The Soviets demanded his immediate extradition, and the president of Costa Rica agreed.

Costa Rican MP's placed the Technician on a private jet to Moscow, but shortly after take-off, the pilots emergency landed on island group San Hermanos in the Mexican Gulf. An arms dealer known as The Prince controls the islands. He was a leading arms merchant during the cold war, and his business transformed San Hermanos into a nest of criminals and drug cartels.

General Reitman tasks you with flying to San Hermanos and convince The Prince to let the Technician get on a plane to the US.

Story



1

Fraco Island You land in Sentina Airport, ready to work your diplomacy magic. Instead, the Prince's soldiers immediately arrested you.

2

Toli island You wake up in a cell. Your cellmate informs you about the island and the Prince's regime. He knows that the Prince holds the Technician at a secret lab and forces him to develop a nuke. After this conversation, your mission is clear:

- Find the secret lab and free the Technician.

You and your cellmate escape the prison, and the guards sound the alarm.

The Prince is the only one who knows where the secret lab is. You must find him. He stays in his palace in Angetta – too far to walk. You need to hire mercs, or you won't survive the trip across San Hermanos.

3

ESTABLISH BASE You visit a close-by fishing town, and as you engage with the locals, your list of hireable mercs grows. You meet Pops. (Murray “Pops” McGillicutty.) He owns an old shipyard with a dock. You recruit pops and use the shipyard as a base. Pop's ship grants you access to more islands.

GROW TEAM Pops help you train militia to defend the base in case of intruders while you're out. People in the village are mostly friendly but skeptical. They're poor and oppressed by the Prince's regime.

MERC STORE You call an emergency phone number you've got from your superior. A man with a Japanese accent answers: “Red Line, how may I help you?” He faxes you phone numbers and photos of hireable mercenaries, new ones, as well as mercs known by fans of the IP. A 90's fax interface serves as the store.

FUNDS If you need money, Pops advises you to visit Bushy Pointy Farm, the local pineapple ranch. You can buy it, and it'll generate money for you.

4

GARCIA ISLAND The Royals – the Prince's soldiers – hunts you and your men. Wanted posters are everywhere, and on the radio, they announce a price on your head. Can you trust the people you meet?

MORE FUNDS AND MERCS Mad Thunder Mine is a great way to make money, but here you'll meet know Jagged Alliance character Speck T. Kline. He'll join your squad if you ask but will soon betray you.

5

If you visit Tio, the capital, The Prince will bomb it before you reach it. Locals tell you that the Prince wants his hometown, Angetta, to be the new capital.

On Garcia you'll also find one of the two deceiving pilots. One is building a mansion for the money he got from The Prince to bring the Technician here. The other is hanging around in an old airport (airplane wreck), drinking away his guilt.

6

On Garcia, there are both the US base, Viper North, and the Soviet base, Krasnodar-82. Both bases have cities connected to them. Here you'll find famous Jagged Alliance mercs like Ivan and Shadow.

SAL ISLAND (NOT MANDATORY) This is a tourist island. It's neat and clean with a lovely city, boardwalks, and ice cream shops. The Royals won't attack you here. They'll keep a low profile due to the tourists whose business they don't want to lose.

It's on this island The Prince's brother resides. He's a big fan of everything occult and employs a voodoo witch, Orea, who tells him about the future. You can look up the Orea's Hut in the nearby jungle if you want. The witch will have intel on how to kill the brother since she can't stand him.

You can kill the Prince's brother and receive money to strengthen your team, or you can ignore his presence.

7

FRACO ISLAND This is the island where you started. It contains the old airport as well as the Prince's city, Angetta. The patrols are heavier here, and the risk of ambush is higher.

8

Angetta is glamorous and in complete contrast to the rest of the island. The Prince's palace rests on a hilltop overlooking the water. It's heavily guarded.

DETHRONING THE PRINCE You must breach the military security to reach The Prince's palace. If you've trained militias in the towns on Garcia, they arrive to help you. You can look up small bars etc., in the

Prince's city to gain intel. If you do that, you will learn about a secret tunnel leading into the palace.

You can also call the Red Line and hire Colonel Mohanned to join you in the final battle you have the funds.

You confront the Prince in his bedroom where his whining daughter (19) escapes. He tells you that the Technician is in the Jade Penitentiary. You can shoot the Prince – or leave him to the angry mob.

9

Jade Penitentiary is well-guarded. After breaching it, you find the Technician working with nuclear bombs in a scary environment. He's doesn't seem like a bad guy – just an exploited genius. You escort him out and make your way to the airport.

10

At Sentina Airport, you think it's all over. But then – WHOOM! Your escape plane blows up.

The Prince's daughter shows up on a pony – with a rocket launcher. You have to deal with her and the left-over loyal troops.

Once the battle is over, you locate another plane and take off.

OUTTRO In the air, you call General Reitman and tell him you accomplished the mission. You ask for your team to get paid for their efforts. General Reitman guarantees to meet all your demands as soon as the Technician is safe at his base.

Shortly after, you receive a call from the mysterious stranger from the Red Line. He reveals himself as known Jagged Alliance character, The White Asian. He switches the frequency and lets you overhear General Reitman is giving orders to his troops. As soon as you land, they are to eliminate you and your team without harming the Technician. Reitman wants the Technician to work for him. The White Asian suggests you visit his Bunker instead.

The plane turns around, and we hear the loading of guns. The story can continue where the first Jagged Alliance game begins...