

Maken X FAQ/Walkthrough

by jtkauff

Updated on Sep 20, 2000

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[maken] X

faq.walkthrough by jt.kauffman
game by atlas

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001,intro.

-Maken X- is the first game by Atlus for the Sega Dreamcast, and what a game it is. Start with a first-person shooter, remove the main character's gun, replace it with a living sword named Deus Ex Machina, add adventure game qualities, throw in some of the most over-the-top characters you've ever seen, and make the main character a 16-year old girl who can BrainJack other people, possessing their bodies; that, my friends, is the basic premise behind Maken X.

Long awaited in Japan, the game was released in Japan in late November to excellent reviews and strong sales. Maken X will make it's way Stateside (and Canadaside as well) sometime in 2000 (barring total world destruction, that is) thanks to Sega.

This document will get you going with the title, as well as give you an in-progress walkthrough for the game's various levels. What it won't give you, currently, at least, is any sort of story information; my Japanese is limited, so I only have a vague idea of what's going on... As always, this is a work-in-progress (very much-so, in some areas), and should be viewed as such.

Finally, a short note about the document as it stands. Upon starting the Lisbon section, I began to have computer power problems (as in, it wasn't getting any). Thus, the sections beyond (and including) Lisbon are only partial, as I'm working off of notes and memory instead of writing as I play the game. I'm releasing the FAQ early because of this (as the problem is intermittent, I don't want to risk an almost finished FAQ trapped on my computer). There are major formatting changes in store (the walkthrough stage order will make more sense in later releases),

and some of the stages may have the wrong 'skip X many sections for X stage' info at the end. This is all things that I'll change soon. In essence, this initial release is a public beta, in a way, and should be seen as such...

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002,getting.started.

::controls::

Normally control in an action-adventure game such as Maken X is not very hard to figure out. However, due to the fact that the Dreamcast controller is not as versatile as the N64 controller in terms of layout, and doesn't offer the keyboard-and-mouse control of PC first-person games, getting the most out of the control for the game is a little hard at first. This section will explain the controls, as well as the various systems used in the game, such as targeting.

untargeted controls:

D-pad;lf;rt; move cursor left or right
analogue;up; move forwards
analogue;dn; move backwards (backpedal)
 (when being attacked, and not attacking) block
analogue;lf; turn left
analogue;rt; turn right
A button; jump
B button; cancel
X button; (press) attack
 (hold) charge EX meter, (release) EX attack
Y button; (press*) lock onto target
L trigger; (hold) look
R trigger; (hold) strafe
 (hold, within enemy range*) lock onto target
Start; pause

*selectable in the options menu.

controls while target is locked on:

D-pad;lf;rt; move cursor left or right
analogue;up; close in (move forward)
analogue;dn; move away
 (when being attacked, and not attacking) block
analogue;lf; circle left
analogue;rt; circle right
A button; (near enemy) jump over enemy
 (far from enemy) jump backwards
B button; cancel
X button; (press) attack
 (hold) charge EX meter, (release) EX attack
Y button; (press*) release target
L trigger; (hold) look
R trigger; (hold*) continue targeting, (release) stop targeting
Start; pause

*selectable in the options menu.

world map controls:

d-pad; no use
analogue; moves cursor
A button; accepts
B button; cancels

naming screen controls:

d-pad;lf;rt; moves cursor in name box left or right
analogue; moves cursor
A button; accepts
B button; backspace, cancel
X button; change alphabets (hiragana, katakana, English, kanji)
start; move cursor to end

::targeting::

First seen by the video game world in The Legend of Zelda: The Ocarina of Time as Z-Targeting, Maken X uses either the X button or the R trigger to lock onto a nearby enemy, allowing you to counter it's moves and focus your attacks on it alone. While not a necessity for play, learning the targeting system will greatly improve your survival chances.

First off, there are two ways of targeting: using the X button, which is a lock on/off system, or using the R trigger, which will keep the target active as long as you hold the trigger for. You can only have one of the two buttons as the targeting button; this can be changed in the options menu, using the top option, Lock On Type (hint: look for the roman letters R and X). The X button is the default, although I personally find it harder to use.

You can only target enemies that are within a certain range. When they come within the pre-determined range (they tend to be about 1/3 a screen tall for the normal human-sized enemies when they become targetable), three triangles will appear around them. This means that you can now target them. Press/hold the button that you selected, and the triangles will be joined with other on-screen displays, including a red and orange lifeline, which will obviously decrease as you hit them.

Once you have targeted an enemy, the controls change slightly. First, everything is centered around that enemy. This means that moving the analogue stick left will make your character circle around the enemy to the left instead of turning left, and moving the stick up will make you move towards the enemy. Similarly, when you jump, the camera stays on the enemy, making your character look down. Probably the most important part of the changed controls is moving the analogue stick back - instead of backpedalling, your character will jump backwards quickly, allowing you to dodge most close-range attacks if timed properly.

It's a good idea to use the first few levels of the game to get used to the targeting system, and what everything does. The first time that you really need to use the system doesn't come until stage four, but when you do get to that point, it's ridiculously hard if you don't know how to target properly.

::jacking::

The most important system in Maken X is easily the BrainJack (BJ) system. As the main character is a normal 16-year old girl, she tends to be a bit weak by herself. However, by using the BrainJack system, you can possess the bodies of your defeated enemies. Sounds like fun, eh?

Every enemy that you can BrainJack has a BJ Rank (aka. BJlevel). This level is the minimum that Kei must be at BrainJack them. Ranks are displayed at the top of the screen near the rotating spheres, and is shown using a simple gauge. Whenever you defeat an enemy, a semi-transparent sphere appears. This sphere is called an Image. The more Images that you grab (they do disappear after a time, so grab 'em quick), the more the gauge fills up. When it's all the way full, you raise one BJ Rank. The maximum BJ rank is 8.

There is one other type of Image listed in the book. It's not found after defeating an enemy, but scattered throughout the level as the other items, such as the life-refill capsules are. In the walkthrough, I refer to these Images as FlatImages, as they are paper-thin, as opposed to the normal globe-shaped Images. I'm not sure if these FlatImages do anything past what the normal Images do. More on this as I figure it out...

::map::

Very similar to the classic NES game Strider, you are able to move around the world, visiting different locations, and being able to access more of previous areas as the game progresses. There are a few different things that can be shown on the map. First, the blue circle with the four diamonds is you - you can freely move from city to city, provided there is a route there. Routes are shown in green, and are added upon the completion of pre-determined level. Cities are dark grey pyramids if completed, maroon pyramids if they're not. A city with red-to-yellow pulsating blocks around it means that it still holds a BrainJack-able character there, while a city that has a previously Jacked character there will have a floating, rotating pink diamond above it.

Pressing the A button while on a city will bring up the menu screen. As it is in English, you shouldn't have any trouble here. Move the lit knob around using the analogue stick, select with A, cancel with B. There are four knobs: Stage, Body, Data, and Info. Within Stage, Stage Start will let you enter a stage, completed or not, and BrainJack will let you BrainJack a previously Jacked identity, if there is one there (there will be an aforementioned pink diamond if there is). Within Body, Status will bring up the screen for your current BrainJack, while History will let you view view other available Jackites. Data contains Save and Load; to save, select Save, select the slot you want to save in, and select yes twice. To load, do the same. Info is basically useless if you don't know Japanese; there is info, entirely in Japanese, on People, Areas and Others that you've encountered. A nice feature, but probably over most of our heads, ne? Finally, the Maken's name (default is Machina) is at the top, while your BJrank is at the bottom, along with the Image gauge.

::titlescreen::

Upon booting the game and pressing start, you'll see three options, all in fiery English: new game (default if there is no saved game detected), load game (default if there is a saved game detected), and options.

New game will allow you to first name your Maken (default is Machina, [makiina], in katakana); after, the game will start. On the naming screen, character sets are as follows:

<hiragana> <katakana> <English> <kanji>

Load game will ask you to select a save file. Load it by selecting YES twice.

Options are as follows:

Lock On Type: <Press Y button> <Hold R trigger>
Sound: <Stereo-Speakers> <Stereo-Headphones> <Monaural>
Sound Effects: MIN<----->MAX
Background Music:MIN<----->MAX
Vibration: ON OFF (requires PuruPuru/Jump Pack)
Return to default settings
Exit

::items::

[note that these are not the official names, save for Image.]

full-life capsule: refills all of your life. pink.
main-life capsule: refills a large amount of your life. green.
partial-life capsule: refills a small amount of your life. orange.
Xer: temporarily increases power, speed.
Image, FlatImage: fills BJgauge - Images are obtained from enemies, FlatImages are items found in the levels.

note: in the walkthrough, up to amsterdam, I may mix up main- and full-life caps, as I didn't realise the difference until then... up until amsterdam, your characters should be weak enough, though, that a main-life image will normally fill their life gauge all the way up...

::notes::

;playing through a level a second time without advancing the story (ie. if you play through a level twice in a row), you will still have to beat all of the same sub-bosses/bosses as you did the first time.

;to re-access a previously Jacked character, you don't have to replay the stage they are at; simply go to that stage and select BrainJack from the Stage section the menu.

;on the gameover screen, the top option is 'Restart Stage', while the bottom is 'Return to World Map'

;;;

003,walkthrough.

This walkthrough is still somewhat in progress. However, it should help you get through the level quickly and without getting slashed, axed, bitten, kicked, firebombed, shrapnelled, burnt, cut, thrown off large cliffs, and otherwise hurt. At least, not that much... ;) Many times I

will take you through the level in the way that should prove easiest, although it may not be the most complete route. I try to mention all items, such as recovery capsules and FlatImages, but I may have you skip things like enemies. This is obviously just a batch of suggestions; you're welcome to do the levels however you like, and go after as many enemies as you want. I just chose to go the easier route.

There are, from what I understand, multiple endings in the game. This currently only covers one, although all of the level info should be correct, things like bosses may happen on one route that don't happen in another, so if you are suddenly facing a boss that I didn't write about, that's why. If you'd like to follow my steps, see the stage difficulties section: the stages are listed in the order that I played them. Currently, the walkthrough is organised roughly in that order, as well (although, as the next paragraph explains, this will probably change). Finally, upon finishing the game for the first time, and finishing up this section, I looked up to see the demo going through a level I had never seen. //sigh//... Yes, it looks like this needs a bit more work...

It's also worth mentioning that the organization in this section is really bad right now. I'm considering how to go about organizing (input is appreciated), but for now it is simply in the order that I played through the game (with one or two minor exceptions). Thus, if you're doing a branch at a time, prepare to skip around a lot.

:::::kanazawa:::::

This level is basically a practice arena, doesn't have any real challenges. When you start out, you'll be in a long hallway, with shuttered doors on either side. Don't try getting in them - they will shut as you approach. Head to the end of the hall, and go up the stairs.

After a few more shutters, you'll enter a larger room, see some hints in Japanese about strafing (these will pop up from time to time in this level), and be attacked by your first enemy (slasher). Target it using your Y or R button (Y is the default, R only if you changed it in the menu), and hack away. It should go down in a few hits. After it does so, it will drop a glowing, bouncing ball: it's Image. Grab it (it will increase the gauge under your BJrank a slight bit), and continue around to the right, killing another slasher, and watching a few more gates shut. You'll eventually see a main-life capsule, which is right in front of yet another shutting gate. Grab it if need be, and turn to the right, entering the passageway. Head down the passage, killing what needs to be killed, and turn right, going through the gate and up the stairs beyond it.

You'll come out in the same large room that you were in before, but up on level. Another gate will slam shut to your right, so head left. An enemy (bazooker - yes, it's a lame name, but I can't think of anything else) will be waiting for you to the left with a nice big bazooka (hence the silly name). Kill it, and for now ignore the switch that you'll be able to see. There's a full-life capsule at the end of this stretch; grab it if you need it, and go up the stairs, offing the bazooker on the way.

Once safely to the top of the stairs, you'll see another switch. This time, hit it - the elevator that took the first bazooker down will come back up. Use it to cross to the other side. You'll then pass a door on your right - go into it. Through a few gates you'll find a FlatImage -

an Image that you don't have to kill for. Get it, and backtrack, killing the slasher that will come out along the way. Once back in the main room, continue to the right. You'll have to make a short jump, but it's no big deal; if you do miss it, just head back up, hitting the switch that you first passed up to make the elevator return, so that you can cross using it. Once across the jump, another gate will close, leaving you a main-life capsule and an enterable gate to your right. Enter it. Heading down the hallway, you'll shortly come to an open room...

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;;sub-boss.fight:bazooker & slasher (x2)
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Once the gates slam shut, you'll be facing a couple of enemies that you've fought before. This isn't any big deal of a fight. Go for the slashers first, then the bazooker. There are two main-life caps in the room, one in each of the northern corners from where you enter. Grab them if need be.

After the fight, fill up your life with a cap or two if they are still available, and head through the newly opened gate. At the end of the hall there will be an open room. Entering it will trigger a gate, cutting off half of the available space. A slasher will be there, with a bazooker behind and above you, on the stairs. You'll also see your first Xer; grabbing this item will temporarily increase your stats, allowing you to do much more damage. Grab it, and go up the stairs.

There are a total of three bazookers up here. Killing them shouldn't pose a problem, as they should go down in just a few hits with the Xer. Grab the main-life cap if you need to, and head to the right from where you came up the stairs. You'll see yet another set of stairs, and a slasher. Dispatching the slasher, head downstairs, and into the other half of the room that was cut off from you.

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;;sub-boss.fight:blader (x2)
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Again, the doors will slam shut, and a rollerblading enemy (blader) will emerge from one of the three elevators. Target it and stand still, waiting for it to charge you. When it does, attack it. After three swipes make contact, this blader will die, and another will appear. Do the same for it, and the fight will end as the final elevator opens. Enter it.

Upon reaching the next floor, you'll see a full-life cap, and another slasher. Get the cap, kill the slasher, enter the door. You'll now be in a long hallway that will contain a total of five or six slashers (two at a time max, for the most part). Follow the hall, killing the slashers that you come across. Eventually, you'll see a large area off to your left through some glass. Right past that, you'll come to door. Prepare yourself for the first boss fight.

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;;boss.fight:Andre.
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Pretty easy stuff here. There is a main-life cap in each of the four corners, and Andre doesn't do all that much attacking. Target him and keep him targeted, and slash away. Don't forget about pulling back on the stick to block - it will help out...

After defeating Andre, you'll see a cinema, and you get to do your very first BrainJack - you get to jack into Andre (by selecting Yes. I'm not sure what happens if you select no...). After some more cinema, you'll be back at the map screen, with not much that you can do except save and

enter the next level...

::::rhincodon::::

Flying along, minding your own business, when suddenly, the airplane that you're on (named the 'rhincodon' - who comes up with these things?) is swarming with enemies. Damn stewardesses. Anyway, after she runs off, you'll start off in a very empty cabin (was this a solo flight, or was everyone a bad guy?), along with a slasher and a bazooker. Kill the slasher, and upon going into the second part of the cabin, another one will appear. Axe it, as well as the bazooker, and grab the partial-life capsule that is in one of the aisles. Head through the door when you're done.

Entering the second cabin, you'll find two bazookers, one slasher, and one main-life capsule. Kill (x2), kill, and grab. Go on.

Down a hallway (kill the slasher within) and up some stairs, you'll be in a glass-walled room, with a clear view of one of the smoking engines. There is a main-life cap to your right, and the next door to enter is on your left. Grab the cap, head to the door. You'll catch a glance of the stewardess entering an elevator at the end of the hall. You know what to do... Once the elevator returns, enter it, and after (of before, if you want) the bazooker inside starts picking on you, as he was perfectly happy on his own, cut him down to size. Once the elevator opens, head down the long hallway in front of you.

After going through a few doors, you'll enter the cargo bin (lots of cargo for no passengers, eh?). A couple of slashers will drop down - kill them. There is a main-life cap to your right if you need it; otherwise, head straight, and to the left, then up the boxes. A bazooker will be waiting for you - take care of him, and continue on. Jump your way up the boxes (they look like stairs), and hit the switch to the right side of the ledge that you end up on. Head onto the now-moving boxes, and ride on over to the other side, where you'll meet another slasher. Kill it. Hop on the other moving box to get around to the other half of the ledge that you were on. Head towards the wall, and jump down on a row of boxes that goes across to grab a full-life cap and a FlatImage. Grab it, then head to the wall and jump down, entering the door when you do.

Through the hallway, you'll enter another cargo bay, finally catching up with the stewardess (skater). She's a pushover. Target her, and swipe away. After she is no more, take out the two slashers that are in the area, and grab the two main-life caps if you need to.

;;brainjack:Inaba

After you're done with the skater & friends, head to the hallway, where you'll find a man in yellow slumped over (named Inaba, I believe... that's how I'll refer to him). Not an enemy, this is your first in-level BrainJack victim, if you wish. To jack him, target him and press A, then select 'Yes'. You'll soon be in his body. Beware, though, that if you BrainJack Inaba, you won't be able to get Andre back. This also makes your pod landing site change, depending on who you choose. Make your choice, and continue on. Just beyond is the escape pod, and the end of the level...

After a cinema, you'll find yourself at the TajMahal if you're still

Andre, or HongKong, if you chose Inaba. TajMahal follows immediately, while HongKong isn't covered until five sections down. I have yet to play through the Inaba route, so levels may unfold in a different order. The levels themselves should be the same, though...

:::::tajmahal,first.runthrough:::::

While the first two levels are basically training levels, the Taj Mahal is a bit trickier, although nothing that isn't easily taken care of. The key here is that the enemies with shields (squatters) aren't defeated with your weapon, but by luring them into the recessed areas of the floor.

You'll start out in a room with a single squatter. Lure him onto the recessed panel. He'll die. Get his image, and move to the next room.

Same thing, twice as many squatters (that's two, folks). See above paragraph. Upon defeating them, the doors will open and two slashers will appear. Kill 'em. Go on. (real hard, eh?).

The final time that you must do this is the trickiest, as you have to deal with dropping them through holes in the ceiling above to do so. To do this section, simply lure them up the steps (remembering that they walk in straight lines), and then toward the far left wall from where you come up the stairs, and then to the back of the room to drop them down the holes against the back wall. The other hole that you should use is the one to the far left of the stairs; the other two holes are just for decoration, and confusion. After you rid the room of the annoying little things, grab the Images that they leave, and head on.

You'll now be faced with a harrowing choice: right, or left. To help you make your decision are two slashers, one from each direction. Thanks them for their kindness with a couple good blows to the face, and then head right, as there happens to be a computer panel there. Try to access it, find out that it doesn't do anything (but keep it in mind), 180, and head up the stairs to the stage clear area.

:::::moscow,first.runthrough:::::

Moscow should be your first challenging level, but it's not that tough if you know how. After a cinema, you'll be back on the map screen, but unable to move. Save your game if you wish, and then head back to the stage. It will start with a cinema of a truck entering a gate. After the short scene, you'll find two enemies (slashers) coming toward you, and enemy (spinner) firing a large ball of fire at you. Hold down the R trigger to strafe, and strafe left to let the fireball pass you, then strafe back right into the corner, so that the spinner won't be able to see you, or fire at you. If you haven't taken time to get used to the strafing used in the game, this may be a good time to do so, as it will come in handy in this level.

After avoiding the fireball and putting yourself in the corner, target and kill the oncoming slashers. Once you rid the world of one, another will jump into the fray, until you've disposed of six total. If you're going for BrainJack levels, I'd suggest grabbing the Images after you off the first three, and then grabbing the rest after you finish the other three. If you do choose to grab them, do it quickly, then retreat

back to the corner; since you don't know where they will jump down, the corner is the safest spot.

Once you've killed all six, you can either go after the spinner, or try to avoid the spinner and head to the next section (see next paragraph for the latter). If get the spinner, jump onto the bed of the now silent truck, then to the roof, and then to the roof of the trailer next to the truck. There is a full-life capsule up here, but if you're doing decent in life, don't grab it yet. Target the spinner, and hit him if you can. Once he goes to saw-blade mode, sidestep him and wait for him to turn back to regular. When he does so, slash him for all it's worth, since he'll momentarily be still and unguarded. Repeat until dead. Grab the capsule, get back on the trailer roof if you've had to get off of it (which is probably recommended, as there isn't much room to fight up there), and jump to the ledge across from the trailer, which is to the right of where you started. Skip the next paragraph, and continue to the next area of Moscow.

If you choose to not fight the spinner, the first thing that you should do is lure him off of the trailer. Once he's down, you can easily climb onto the trailer and jump to the ledge across from it, which is to the right of where you started.

You'll now be able to go down a long passageway. Do so. A few enemies (bombers) will fly over your head - ignore them, as they're just decoration for now. When you emerge from the passage, head to the right if you need life (read next paragraph), or straight if you don't (skip next paragraph).

Heading right, you'll find another full-life capsule in an alcove. Grab it, and head back out. As you exit the small alcove, you'll be bombarded by the bombers that you saw previously - a well-timed jump should do the trick here. Turn to the right upon exiting, and continue on.

Going straight from where you started (to the right if you grabbed the life), you'll find another slasher, as well as a spinner perched on some boxes. Ignore them for now (or fight them if you really want), and keep going straight. All the way to the back of the area is an open cage - inside are a FlatImage and a full-life capsule. Grab at least the first, and the second if needed. I personally would save it, in case you get into major trouble. If you just need a little life, hold off, as there is a partial-life capsule coming up. Heading out of the cage, you'll find yet another spinner and slasher. Hug the fence and keep moving, and you should be able to avoid them easily.

Head back to where you saw the first spinner in the area, and turn to the left. There will be a slasher at the back of this isle, as well as the previously mentioned partial-life capsule. Kill the slasher, grab the capsule, and jump onto the boxes. Also, if you do want to get some more levels, and are confident in your fighting skills against the spinners, you can hunt down and kill what remains, although I personally would continue on.

Once you're on the boxes, you'll need to jump over to where the first spinner in the area appeared, and then up onto the top of the cage that the FlatImage and full-life capsule were in. Beyond that you'll see a fence that you should now be able to jump over. Do so, then turn to the left and head down the small passageway that you are now in. You'll see some bombers appear - jump over the first, and let the other two fly over your head.

You'll come out in an area that is surrounded by fences, and has a truck in it with a full-life capsule on the bed. Hug the fence on the right and follow it around until you see a switch. Take note of where it is, and then do a bit of looking around if you want - keep in mind the open door on the trailer to the left of where you came out - you'll be going in there next. Head back to the switch, hit it, and you'll see a short sequence of a door opening in the trailer that was just mentioned, with a slasher and spinner coming out. Once the sequence is over, turn around and kill the slasher that is coming at you. Grab the Image and head out, hugging the fence once more. Once you're behind the truck with the capsule on it, jump over it, grabbing said capsule if need be, and high-tail it into the trailer. Head around the corner, and through the door, and you'll be faced with the rather large boss of the level.

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;;boss.fight:firebomber
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This is a tricky boss, but not too tough if you know how. After the short cinema plays and you regain control, hold down the strafe button and head forward, avoiding any of the firebombs that he throws. Once the targeting arrows appear, target him, and keep him targeted. He will block, and if you hit him while he's beginning to strike, he'll block again. Let him open himself up so that you can clearly see his chest, and slash him hard and fast (twice or more if possible). After that, pull back on the analogue stick to block, as he will attack even if your slashes connected. Repeat this again, and again, and you should eventually finish him. Occasionally, he'll lunge past you, giving you a clear shot of his back. When he does this, go at him for all you're worth, as this will do the most damage. Stay in close, as he'll start firebombing again if untargeted him. If you get low in life, there are three full-life capsules in the area - grab them, moving in a circular manner to avoid any firebombs. Again, approaching him, hold the strafe button so that you can easily avoid any firebombs.

After defeating him, the glowing blue stage clear will open directly in front of you, and two slashers will drop down. If you have the life left, take them out. If not, don't worry about the image or the slashers; just head straight for the stage clear area, and you should be set.

Once you complete Moscow, three additional areas will open up: London to the west (next section), Istanbul to the southwest (skip the next section), and Hong Kong to the east (skip two the next sections). The Taj Mahal, to the southeast, is available again. HongKong isn't as much a full branch as the others; by going there, you'll gain access to two Jackable characters, but no additional stages will open. Of the remaining branches, London (and the stages that follow) is much, much easier; Istanbul is a branch that you might want to save for later in the game.

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:::::london:::::
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After Moscow, London is a cakewalk. You're in the Tower of London, and there are full-life capsules everywhere. Most of the enemies are dogs that run up to you and blow themselves up (kamikazepup), with the other enemy in the stage being one of the more controversial designs...

When you start the level, you'll be in an alley with a full-life capsule to your left. Two kamikazepups will charge you - take them out with one

hit each. Nothing too tough here, except if you don't target them correctly, as you have to look down to see them if they are too close... Continue on, and you'll be faced with a branch. To the left is a gate that opens to the courtyard, to the right, the Traitor's Gate, which is waterlogged and locked. Guess which way to go...

In the courtyard, you'll have three options. Turning to the left will reveal a dead end, and a full-life capsule. Turning to the right and going through the passageway will result in another dead end, this time itemless. So, turn to the right and head up the stone box onto the next level up. There's another box once you get up top, but it just leads to another full-life capsule.

Continue around this raised level, through the blasted area, axing any pups that come your way (they appear from time to time, and I believe that it's random). When you see another box, jump on it, and circle back around the way you came, but one level up. You'll come across yet another box - jump up to the top level, and kill the two kamikazepups waiting there for you. Smack dab in the middle of this top level is the switch that you need to hit. Do so, and the Traitor's Gate will open and drain. To the right and left of the switch are steps leading down to a full-life capsule each. Grab one if need be, and head back to the Gate.

Once through the Traitor's Gate, there will be yet another full-life capsule to your immediate right. Take if needed, and continue down through the passageway. Upon reaching the bottom level, you'll be faced with the second type of enemy in the level, which I have dubbed (hungmachinegun) for obvious reasons...

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;;sub-boss.fight:hungmachinegun, or  
:proof that the fourth reich isn't virile:
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Nothing too tough here, a simple lock, hack and slash will work wonders. It is amusing to see what hung will do, though, and his various attacks... Anyway, the hardest thing here is the lack of room, but if you're quick enough with the trigger, er, slashing, it should be no problem... If you can trap him in a corner and slash away, you should be totally set. Be aggressive, young BrainJacker...

After hung is no more, the gates will open, allowing you access to the rest of the dungeons, and with changed music to boot. Continue on, killing the two kamikazepups that come your way a bit further down. There will be two left turns that you can take - the one further away is simply an alcove, and contains (yet another) full-life capsule. Grab it, and head down the first branch.

There will be a pup waiting for you in the room at the end of the passage. Kill him, and take your choice: turn to the right to head for the exit, or go straight through the shut door to explore more of the level. If you're going to go right, skip the next paragraph. If not, read on...

Heading straight, you'll come across some little spiny enemies (spinners). No problems here, just keep moving forward and ignore them. They don't leave Images, so they're useless. Go through the door and head up the long set of stairs. You'll come out on the other side of the dead end that you might have seen if you went through the passage on the right near the beginning. The gate is still locked, so head down the passageway in front of you. You'll come out on the other side of the courtyard. If you want to kill some enemies for fun, head up the stairs

- you'll find a couple of hungmachineguns, as well as some full-life capsules. Other than the images that you'll receive, there's no real reason to do so. If you're not in a complete-and-utter-destruction mood, hug the right wall, as there do happen to be enemies afoot above that have machine guns strapped to their, er... Nevermind. Hug the wall, and head around the courtyard until you come to another hungmachinegun, who will come out of a gate. Kill him, and go straight for a full-life capsule, if you need it. Go through the door that the hung came out of, and head up the stairs. You'll find a locked room with a very weary looking person inside. If you try to open it, surprise! extraction error, access failed. Congratulations - you've come all this way for nothing! (save for a few Images, that is...) Head back with your head hung low... When you're in the room that you followed this branch in, turn left.

Heading down the passage, the corridor will twist and turn. You'll eventually come across a small loop, and a kamikazepup. Kill the pup, and follow the loop around to grab a full-life cap. Once you're full of energy and vigor (or at least life), head down the small passageway that you see. The passage will twist and turn some more, and eventually just become rather crooked. When this happens, you're in for a few pup attacks from the left, and then the right. After pups=dead, grab their Images, as well as the FlatImages that are in the two alcoves. And no, the passages that they came out of are too big for you, so you can't enter them... Continue down the tunnel, and you'll wrap around to another crooked passageway. Head down it, and a pup and a hung will come out near the end. Axe the both, and turn to the right to find the stage clear point.

After you leave London, a new location will open: Amsterdam, just a hop, skip, and a slash across the way to the southeast. To continue on there, skip down two sections. First, though, it's off to Istanbul...

:::::istanbul:::::

You'll find yourself at the end of a really short corridor in a really odd hospital upon arrival in Istanbul, which happens to be a really hard level. In the distance, you'll see some short things scampering across the floor. What look like rats from a distance are actually something different (spinners, not to be confused with the earlier spinners). To kill them, you have to target them. No Images will be produced, so if you don't want to fool with them, don't.

Coming out from the passage, there will be three ways to go: up the stairs, into the subroom, or through the metal shutter. The metal shutter is, well, shut, so head into the subroom for now. There will be a partial-life capsule in there, as well as a switch (that was easy to find, now wasn't it?...). Hit the switch, and the shutter will open. Of course, a switch being this easy to get to has its drawbacks - you'll be locked into the room, and four spinners will come it. Kill them all using the lock on, and the door will re-open. Now, you've got two choices you can make: up, or out... Well, up is probably the way to go, as it holds a full-life capsule and an Xer. There's more above you, but you can't get there. Grab the cap (only if you really need it, though - if you're not really hurting, leave it for later: you'll be glad you did) and the Xer, and head through the now-open gate.

Upon going through the gate, a large axe-wielding enemy (thebutcher) will crash through the wall. You're going to want to avoid him

eventually, and head to the left and down, but the first time you come across him, you might as well practice. Lock on, and attack him. When he swipes at you, block. He has two attacks - an overhead one, and a side swipe; with the latter, he can hurt you on the downswing as well as the upswing, so watch out. Either run to the left and down, or hack him to little butchery pieces (taking a side-tour back to one of the capsules, if need be...), and figure out where to go next: both lead to the steam room, but different levels. The best thing to do here is head down, even though it is harder...

Heading to the left and down, you'll come out in the steam room. Navigate your way over the gratings (you can skip a bit by jumping straight after you come out into the room), watching out for the spiners. If you fall, there's a door on the right hand side of the bottom floor that will take you to where you need to be, albeit with a bit of damage. Anyway, you'll eventually reach another corridor, which leads to the The Ward, First Basement. Head through to the first ward, and you'll be rewarded with two, yes two, thebutchers, both in a locked room! Fun, ne?

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;;sub-boss.fight:thebutcher (x2)
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It's recommended to get here while still Xing, which you can do if you skip the first thebutcher. Before the fight starts, notice the door on the left as you walk in - it's actually a door, and houses some goodies inside. Anyway, the real problem with this fight is that you can only block one butcher at a time, so even if you're fighting well and blocking one, the other will hack you to little tiny bits. You have to be real fast here, and make sure that you try to block everything possible. If you run low on life during the fight (which you probably will), head for the door mentioned earlier, which contains a full-life capsule and a FlatImage. Once the first thebutcher is dead, take out the second using traditional methods.

After thebutchers are ex-thebutchers, head straight. You'll find an elevator, and a button. Don't get in the elevator, but press the button instead. Said elevator will begin to go nuts. You can get inside it, but you'll just end up where you started, as the door only opens on one level - the one you're on. Backtracking, you'll find another thebutcher burst through the wall. Kill him, and grab the full-life cap that was behind him. Once you're back in The Ward, First Basement, you'll find yet another thebutcher. Avoid him, and head to the steam room, then back to where you encountered the first thebutcher, and go straight from there...

Going straight after killing the first thebutcher (and grabbing the partial-life capsule that is in the second niche in the wall, the one thebutcher came out of the second time), you'll come out into the steam room again, but a level up. Again, navigating across the steel gratings shouldn't be a problem - just keep an eye out for spiners. Head to the right of the screen, and through the door. Go through a small hallway, and you'll come out in a long hall: The Ward, First Floor. The door will slam shut behind you, and two rather odd enemies will appear that will probably be altered for the US release... (wrappedspikers).

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;;sub-boss.fight:wrappedspikers (x2)
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This isn't too bad of a fight. The spikers tend to attack one at a time, and will only do so when your back is turned to them. Soooo, when you hear one going nuts behind you, spin around, target it, wait until it

walks past you (hint: strafe here), and go nuts on it. Then, turn around and do the same for the other. You may have to backpedal quite a bit before you strafe so that you don't get impaled, but this is a fairly easy boss fight, all things considered. To make it even easier, try to get them going sideways across the room by running past them - two hits, they're dead. Cake.

After the wrappedspikers are dead, head straight from where you started in the room. You'll find a short, short hall, which leads to a larger room. You'll find a full-life capsule to your left, as well as two more spikers, and the elevator straight ahead. Kill the wrappedspikers if you feel the need, and grab the capsule if you're low on life. After that, head to the elevator, and stand on the roof. You'll be able to get to the second floor this way.

You'll be in a small room when you get to the second floor. Take a short breather if you want (you can kind of look at a map here...), then head into the next room. After a short passageway, you'll be back in the room that you started, but up on the catwalks that you couldn't get to. There are two more wrappedspikers, one on each side (you can only see the right one from the door), and one FlatImage, on the right. If you're worrying about your life, or lack thereof, jump over the spiker on the left and head up the stairs, bypassing the FlatImage. When you get to the top of the stairs, there will be an Xer - grab it by jumping off the edge, and then head back up to meet another thebutcher. Kill in, and continue down the passageway, and out onto the roof.

On the roof, there are at least two thebutchers, and at least one full-life cap. I didn't want to fool with it, so I hightailed it straight (avoiding thebutchers, that is), and went in the door that is immediately in front of where you came out. There are no enemies in here, so you can pause and regain your thoughts again.

After the roof, you'll be in a hallway with a bunch of unopenable doors (including a suspicious-looking blue one). At the end of the hall is an elevator. Take it up, and you'll see the stage clear point.

Once Istanbul is cleared, Athens will open up. Like always, skip two sections down to read up on it. This time, though, we're off to good old HongKong...

:::::hongkong:::::

After the hell that was Istanbul, HongKong is stupidly easy, and you get a nice surprise in the middle of it as well... Be sure that you're at a minimum of BJLevel 2 [Rank 2] when you enter this level

You start out the level on a dark, rainy street in HongKong, neon signs aglow. In the distance is a red blur. As it comes closer, you see that it is a rollerblading enemy (blader). Stand still, target it, and when it gets close enough, kill it. Don't try to rotate around it; simply wait for it to charge - anything else is a lost cause. Climb the boxes, and head over to the street parallel. You'll find another blader to dispatch, and after that, one more will appear. Get rid of it, grab the full-life capsule at the end of the street if you need to, and head down the alleyway to the left.

Run past the boxes and continue to the end of the alley. There, you'll

find a yellow, bazooka-wielding enemy (bazooker). Not much here in the way of challenge, although he can whittle away your life decently well if you let him. Take him out quickly, and backtrack to the boxes at the junction. Climb them, and you'll see three metal awnings that you can jump onto. Do so, making your way down the street, until you come to a door, which is right after the bend. Enter it.

Once inside the building, there is a dead end to the right, so head left (as if I really needed to say that...). After you turn the corner, the lights flicker, and start to go out. Immediately after that, a few familiar faces should appear: slashers. Take them out (they haven't gotten much harder), but be aware of one additional thing that they can do: disappear into the darkness. They tend to do this before attacking, as you'll see later - once you've spotted them, they stay solid. Anyway, turn the corner, where you'll run into another slasher and a bazooker. Kill them, grab their Images (you have been keeping up with your BJLevels, haven't you?), and head into the next room.

The next room will contain a partial-life capsule and a switch. Grab the cap if need be, and hit the switch. The lights will flicker on, and a slasher will appear from the darkness. Take care of it. I suppose that you can continue on without hitting the lights, but you might as well turn them on anyway. Enter the next room, where you'll find an elevator and two more slashers. Rid the world of them, and mount the elevator. While you're in the elevator, you might as well turn around so that you're facing the exit...

You'll arrive at the next floor to meet a bazooker face-to-face. Say "Hi" by promptly smashing his face to a bloody pulp. If you get too close to the nearby door and open it, a slasher will come out. Take care of him, and grab the full-life cap that is in the room, as well as hitting the light switch that is nearby. Head through the door, take out the slasher if you haven't done so already, and head up the stairs.

At the top of the stairs you'll see another full-life cap just out of reach, behind some bars. As you approach it, a bazooka-blast will take out a pane of glass on the right. Head through the newly made door, and punish the culprit, as well as his two slasher friends. Hit the lights while you're at it, then head through the door.

There will be a hall on the other side of the door, with the previously out-of-reach cap to your left. Upon approaching it, a slasher will come out of the door at the end of the hall (which you aren't able to enter, if you were wondering). Kill him, grab his Image, and the cap, if you need it. Then, 180 and head down the hall, and down the stairs. You'll come out into a large, open area. And as you do, the doors will...

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;;sub-boss.fight:bazookers (x2) & slashers (x4)
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Not anything real hard here, just a few normal enemies in the dark. As usual, take out the bazookers first, as they have ranged attacks. There will be a FlatImage out of reach (the gate shuts on it as well as behind you), but a full-life cap is in the area if you need it. Dispatch the six, and continue on with your life. Or better yet, locate the switch and hit it, which will cause all but two of the slashers to disappear (only two are on the field at a time, and no more will come past the current two), although the bazookers will still be there... The switch in question is directly across from where you start; the full-life cap is to your left, and the FlatImage, as well as the way out, are to the right.

After you hit the switch and the gate opens (only the one to the FlatImage - the other stays closed), grab the FlatImage and head up the stairs. Once you reach the top, the game will go into cinema mode, and you'll be introduced to a new character: FeiShan

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;;brainjack:FeiShan
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After speaking with her for a bit, FeiShan will let you BrainJack her; she just drops to the ground. Target her, and select 'Yes' to do so.

Once in FeiShan's body, (imo, much better than Andre's or Inaba's- her weapon is tres cool), head back down the stairs. Upon reaching the open area, you'll see a couple of slashers running through a upstairs passage, and heading down some boxes through a hole. Take care of them, then investigate and see where they came from. It's one-way for a while, until you eventually will come across a broken window and a full-life cap. Grab the cap (no reason not to - you can't get back up here to get it later), and do what any sane 16-year old possessing someone else's body would do: hurl yourself out the window.

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;;boss.fight:three of three
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For the last boss(es) in the area, this is simple. You'll face three slashers, then three bazookers, and finally three bladers. Nothing real hard at all here - you've been taking care of them throughtout the stage, so there's no reason why you should have trouble now. And to boot, there is an Xer and three, count them, three full-life caps. Off the enemies, and head to the newly opened stage clear area.

Upon clearing the area, a line will open up back to the TajMahal. That's all. Just the TajMahal. Where to next? Amsterdam, of course!

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:::::amsterdam:::::
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Heading to Amsterdam, you'll find yourself in a slightly random-seeming series of alleys. You'll find a charging kamikazepup right off the bat. Kill it, and move forward quickly - there is a hungmachinegun on a ledge that you can't reach, so you'll be pelted by bullets if you don't keep moving. The alley will fork in two; to the right is the entrance to a building, to the left, you'll find another fork, leading to a dead end (with the stage exit on the other side) and another entrance to a building. Take the first right fork, and head upstairs, ignoring the main-life cap that is inside the door.

Once upstairs, you'll see a switch. Hit it, and the fire escape outside the window will lower. Go back to the first floor, where you'll be met by a hungmachinegun. Kill it, trying to stay inside the room. Grab the cap if you need it, and head back to the streets. You'll find two more hungs waiting for you once you hit the main part of the street. Kill them, or jump over and past them, and head to the other building entrance mentioned above.

Going up a short flight of stairs, you'll be at the entrance to a room, with a full-life capsule in view. Once you set foot in the room, you'll lose control of your character for a bit, and the door will shut behind you. Turning around, you see an enemy with an extending blade-arm standing toward the back of the room (swiper). If you've got Shaja BrainJacked, this is no problem at all (I currently don't know about the

other characters; Shaja is who I used for this stage). Stay fairly close-range, wait for the swiper to attack (blocking when he does), and counter with a flurry of hits. Shaja can take about 1/3 of his life off by doing his full set of moves. Repeat this until the swiper is no more. Once he's defeated, two kamikaze pups will come out of the chimney. Get rid of them and the door will open, as well as the bars on the window. Grab the full-life cap if you're in need, and head out to the ledge.

Once back outside, you'll find a dead-end to the left, and a fire escape (the one that you triggered the stairs on) to the right. There will be a hungmachinegun at the top of the stairs. Kill him and continue on. And be sure not to fall... There will be a partial-life cap on the roof below. Grab it if you need to.

It's now time for a bit of roof jumping. From where the partial-life cap was, jump directly across to the awning that is opposite the roof you're on. Turn to the right, and continue jumping on awnings, each a bit higher than the last. You'll eventually cross to the other side of the street. Upon reaching the end of the street, you'll see another ledge across from where you are, with an open window on it. Jump over to it, and head in the window.

Dropping inside the window you'll find another partial-life capsule and another switch. Hitting the switch will open two gates from afar - the one that was stopping you from getting to the stage clear, and another one that was at the end of an alley. The gate that is in the room will open as well. Head through it, and into the alley on the other side. You'll find a barred off section to your left (where the stage clear point is viewable again, temptingly), so head right. You'll soon come across two hungmachineguns. If you want, axe them. If not, grab the full-life cap if you need (this is the one that you could see, and not get to, and head down the ladder nearby (actually, you'll jump down the hole, but close enough).

Down in the sewers, you'll come across two pups after a bit. Kill them, and continue on. Next, you'll come to an area where some bars will drop, and a swiper will appear...

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;;sub-boss.fight:swiper, pup.
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Once the battle starts, a kamikazepup will join the fray, just for kicks. Get rid of it first, then go after the swiper using the same techniques that you did before. There is a full-life cap in a niche to the left if you need it.

Continuing on after the little quarrel with the swiper and the pup, you'll curve around until you see a switch. Being the inquisitive young lady that she is, Kei-cum-whoever-she-is-at-the-current-time will want to see what happens when it is flipped. Oblige her by doing so. The water will drain, and the gate in front of you will open. Head through it (and the two that follow it), and you'll come to another area of the sewer. Keep going straight, as if you could do much else, and kill the pups that will be in your way (watching their Images disappear into the sewerwater, if it happens like it did for me). Going across the small bridge, you'll find a place to the right where it looks like you can enter the water. Unfortunately, while the water is as high as it is, you can't. Keep going straight, and get rid of the hung that is coming at you. At the end of the tunnel you'll see an out-of-reach main-life cap. Instead of pining away over it, turn around and head back to the switch that you flipped. Flip it again, and the water will transfer back to

where it originally was. Head to the other side, and you'll find that the water is now gone from it.

Once you've closed the water gate, head down the newly uncovered stairs in the half that does not have the switch in it. You'll find a couple of pups, which you can dispose of easily, as well as stairs that lead to the visible-but-previously-out-of-reach main-life cap. Grab it, and continue on.

After passing through a few gates, you'll come out on the other side of the switch. A hungmachinegun will be there to greet you. Kill him or maneauver past him, and continue around the bend, where you'll find another gate in a small branch. Enter it.

Inside, you'll be in a semi-maze-like series of tunnels. A hungmachinegun will be lurking amongst them, as will a full-life cap. Kill if need be (it'll make life easier), and start navigating through the tunnels. From the start, turn right, then left, the right, then left. You should then see a blueish light: Club Aeolus. Continuing past that will result in a dead end. Enter the club.

;;brainjack:Ramrod

Same deal as FeiShan. I reached Ramrod as FeiShan, answered 'No' to his two questions, and he slumped over, Jack-able. If you're BJrank 5, Jack him, and head out, re-tracing your steps back to the steps leading into the drain.

Heading upthe stairs, turn to the right, and head back to where you fought the hung. There will be a gate that will open to your left: go into it. You'll go through some more gates, and pass a gate that looks like it should open, but won't. In front of you at this point will be some stairs - climbing them will put you back on the street, near where you started. Head to the stage clear point.

After clearing Amsterdam, if you got Ramrod you'll see a cinema (is that a pitiful cough or what?) and three more stages will appear: Lyon and Vienna, as well as one that is currently un-routed, and thus, unaccessable, even for the name. Skip five sections for Lyon, and seven for Venice.

:::::athens:::::

This is the stage where the spiners get their revenge.

You'll start off by decending a few flights of stairs, eventually coming to a small room with a glowing floor. Jump into the room, and it will begin to decend. Eventually, you'll see spiners appear in niches in the wall. As you spot them, kill them; if you don't, they'll get into the room, and really do some damage, as you can't see them to target them. There are about 6 or 8 total before you hit the bottom. Once you're there, you'll see more spiners after you turn the corner. Avoid them, and turn left, going up the small set of stairs, and hugging the left wall.

Upon getting up the stairs, you'll see a blue face spewing fireballs at you. Turn to the right, avoiding the fireballs, and head down the passage. It's one way, and eventually comes to a room that opens upward

and downward. You'll see a mysterious-looking woman at the top of said room, who will disappear through a door. You need to just across to the ledge diagonally down from where you are. Turn immediately around, and jump across the way to the ledge across from you. If you jump all the way down, you'll be able to grab a main-life capsule. Continue through the passage, where you'll eventually see a wrappedspiker sitting in the corner, all innocent. Jet past it, and you'll run into your other friend from Istanbul - thebutcher. Continue past him (don't turn, as it's a dead end - this is just down from the ledge that you need to jump onto), pass another wrappedspiker, turning to the left, and head up the stairs. You'll see two more spiners, another wrappedspiker, and a main-life capsule. Grab the cap, ignore the rest, and keep going. Up top, you'll see that you're back at the initial blue face. Jump down, and head back to the pit.

Once you're across to the correct ledge, follow the passage. You'll see another thebutcher and another face. The passage continues to the right - head down there after avoiding or killing the thebutcher. Continue through to the next room, which contains a thebutcher and two wrapped spikers, as well as two main-life caps. Grab one of the caps if you need, and head up the stairs to the rear right of the room. At the top you'll find another blue face, and another ledge that you can't quite reach. Avoid the fireballs, and turn to the left, where you'll see a passageway. Enter it.

At the first bend in the passage you'll find another thebutcher, as well as a blue face. Sneak past/brutally maim the thebutcher, and continue down the one-way passage. You'll come across two spiners - take them out. You're now back at the tall room with the glowing floor, but a few levels up. You can see the ledge that the woman was standing at, as well as another ledge opposite of the one you're on. Jump across to it.

Going up the stairs on this new ledge, you'll come across two spiners (kill!kill!), as well as a FlatImage and a full-life cap that are out of reach. Turn to the right, and continue up the stairs. You'll come out to a place with a ledge directly across (with a wrappedspiker on it). You can also drop down to the ledge that the woman was on. I'd recommend this first, as it leads to the aforementioned FlatImage and full-life cap (turn left at the fork), as well as a door that I didn't explore (turn right). After collecting one or both of those the former, turn around and head for the door. On the other side, you'll find...

;;brainjack:Akinas

A bunch of dialogue, a couple of questions (I answered two 'no's as Ramrod), and she slumps. Jack her (BJrank 4), then head back to where you originally fell down, and this time, jump across.

After jumping across, you'll find the wrappedspiker that you could see, as well as another thebutcher. Run past/kill them, and continue up. You'll be at another ledge. Dropping down is about the only thing that you can do here. Prepare to meet another thebutcher, who will be waiting behind you. Kill it, and go over the bridge. Follow along the path (don't jump down), and you'll eventually find what you've been looking for: the stage clear point. Hit it.

Once you've cleared the level, if you got Akinas, you'll see another cinema of Kei (hmmm... more coughing... am I going to get the bad ending?). Either way, the Vatican will open. Skip down five sections to read it. First, it's off to collect a few more characters...

:::::tajmahal,second.runthrough:::::

Heading back to the Taj Mahal with FeiShan, you can access the computer panel at the end of the level that was previously access denied (see the first runthrough for the beginning of the level). I'd suggest being at BJLevel 3 for this stage.

Upon opening the panel and heading upstairs, a very cool cinema begins, where you get to meet a very interesting character.

;;boss.fight:Shaja

Shaja isn't anything that will totally blow you away. Although he has six arms, he's doesn't pack much of a punch. There are a bunch of life caps behind the pillars (two fulls and two partials); if he does too much damage, grab one. Pretty much just keep him targeted, try to block if possible, and otherwise just hack away. Afterwards, you can BrainJack him if you're at BJLevel 3 or higher.

Head back out after Jacking Shaja, and hit the stage clear; there's nothing else to do here. No new routes will open after re-clearing this level.

:::::istanbul,redux:::::

At this point, Istanbul should be reading that it has a Jackable character. Thus, head back there.

Head all the way to the end, where there was the odd-looking blue door at the end of the hall (refer to the first section on Istanbul if you don't remember). Approach it, and it should open (at this point I was using Akinas).

;;brainjack:Valenker

You'll find a character sitting on the floor, all Jackable like. No dialogue, just pure mind takeover. Valenker is a rank 1 Jack, so you won't have any problems doing so. Upon Jacking, you'll see a short scene, and a new area will open: Transylvania (skip the next five for the section info).

After Jacking, head to the exit.

:::::lyon:::::

You'll start at the entrance to a metro station. Head down the stairs, and you'll see a winged mobster-like enemy (mothster: I know, cheesy...) close the gate leading to the exit. Bastard. Anyway, turn to the left, and head back to the sign that says 'Lyon Bridge' (taking care of the mothsters if you want... You'll not be able to get past the sign, but there is a passageway to the right of it; head down the stairs, and through the door.

;;brainjack:Baderel

This is pretty commonplace now. You talk for a bit, answer a few yes/no questions (I was Akinas, and answered, as usual, two 'no's), and you'll get to Jack him. Easy, eh? Anyway, head back up the stairs, and back to the train platform.

Head down the train tracks (kids, don't try this at home... wait... If you actually have train tracks in your house, by all means, walk on them as much as you want...). There will be a cave in right after the platform; turn to the left, and you'll see a small hole. Going through the hole, you'll find a mine cart. You know what this means, don't you? Mine cart ride!

You'll slowly descend down the tracks in the mine cart. You're given the opportunity to grab some FlatImages along the way. Expect some company, though, in the form of a slasher. Off him, and at that point, you should be nearly down. Once at the bottom, there will be another mothster. Take him out, and head to the left, through the tunnel.

At the other end, you'll find another two mine carts. Thus, this time you'll have company, in the form of a firebomber in the cart back, and a slasher in your cart. Get to the bottom as fast as you can, where a mothster will join in the fun. Now things get a bit tricky logistics-wise. Unless you simply want to run for it (in which case head for the wall on the left as you come down), you need to off the moth, and lure the firebomber off of the cart. Once that's done, take care of the firebomber just like you did back in Moscow, except at this point you've got a much better character to use (more than likely)... Once that is done, head for the aforementioned left-hand side, and through the tunnel that lies there.

Once in the tunnel, you'll find another mothster. Kill him, and head down the small branch that he came out of for a full-life capsule. Upon turning around, you'll find another mothster, which you can easily kill. Head back out, and turn to the left, continuing on. You'll soon come to a large, empty room...

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;;sub-boss.fight:firebomber, slasher (x2)
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Of course, large empty rooms mean sub-boss fights, so out come the enemies to play, with the doors shutting behind them. Get rid of the slashers first, as they'll just get in the way. Keep in mind that the firebomber is nice and slow, so if you run around a bit, the slashers will keep up, while the firebomber won't: this gives you a clearer shot at the slashers. Once it's just the firebomber, take care of him in a normal style...

Finishing the sub-boss fight, the elevator that the slashers came down in will open, and you can enter it and switch it on. It will take you up to another tunnel; turn right, as it's the only way to turn. Above, you'll see a large room: enter it.

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;;sub-boss.fight:mothster (x2)
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Not much of a fight, but more a little challenge. A slasher will flip a switch, locking you in, and will promptly run away. The switch is on the other side of the room - to get there, you have to jump across four carts that come out, all while dealing with the mothsters. I'd recommend doing one at a time - it's not hard to make it across before you take them out... If you fall, there's a ramp right near where you entered - walk up it to try again. There is an Xer in the room, but save it for

now.

After killing the mothsters, flip the switch. A firebomber will emerge. Take care of it, or run past it. Grab the Xer if you feel the need. If not, wait until you're finished with him and the coast is clear. At any rate, you have to eventually get through that door, and into the tunnel beyond.

```
;;sub-boss.fight:firebomber, slasher (x2)
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In the next room, you'll face another slasher x2 then firebomber routine, with another elevator as well. Finish them off (you should know how at this point), and get in the elevator, flipping the switch.

At the next floor, you'll have another one-way passage in front of you, and eventually a main-life capsule as well. Continue out into the open, where you'll face another mothster. Ignore the switch for now, kill the mothster, and jump down to the left, where you'll see a FlatImage. Grab it, and head back, flipping the switch.

After the switch is flipped, head up to the bridge that spans the way. The cart will have begun moving, and you need to jump into it as it comes out on the other side of the bridge. A simple jump is all that is needed here, although you will have to face a firebomber while trying to jump back up on the other side. Nothing real hard, though... Once you're on the cart and are within range, jump toward the left, and run behind the firebomber, and into the tunnel on the right of the room. You can off the 'bomber if you want, but it's not a necessity.

Coming out of the aforementioned tunnel, you'll be back in the metro area. Turn to the left, and head up the stairs, flipping the switch when you make it to the top. There are some mothsters on the other side of the gate that will open, but if you're quick rounding the corner and heading up the stairs to the stage clear point, you'll be all set.

After clearing Lyon, you'll see another short cinema if you got Valenker (presumably only if you did, but I got him my first time through, so I'm not positive...), and two routes will open, albeit to locations that have already appeared. The first is to the Vatican (which, if you're doing my walkthrough straight through, should already be open) - this just makes for easier travelling. The other route is to Lisbon, the city that appeared previously, but without a route there. For the Lisbon chapter, skip the next four. Also, a character will become available in London. For that, read on...

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::::::london, redux:::::
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Remember that locked section of the tower? Head there (for more info, see the main London section).

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;;brainjack:Smith
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Access the computer terminal, and the gate will open, allowing you access to another Jackable character: Smith, member of Parliament.

After Jacking Smith, another area will open, Sicily, which leads to another character. Skip four section for the walkthrough for Sicily.

:::::vienna:::::

First off, you'll want to BrainJack to Ramrod before entering this level - if you don't, you won't be able to get past an access panel that is intergral to finishing the level.

This is not a hard level to navigate at all. You'll start off in a street (a fairly decorated one, too, but not very nicely decorated...). Head straight. You'll come to a large open square. Marching past will be two swipers. Kill them, or run past them (the latter is suggested), and head up the stairs, continuing north. Another swiper will drop down; avoid it, and head through the doorway that is just beyond. There, you'll find an access panel. If you paid attention in the paragraph before this, you'll be able to access it using Ramrod (there may be other characters that can access it as well, but I've tried and failed with FeiShan, Shaja, Akinas, and Baderel, and they all were denied access). Head through the now open door. Beyond the door is a series of short passageways - follow them, and you'll eventually come to a large theatre. A cinema will take over.

;;bos.fight:neo-Trojan Horse

Following the spoken part of the cinema, the shutters will close and the seats will rise. Margureitte will then get in her high horse and turn it on. This neo-Trojan Horse will then procede to attack you.

First off, there are five sets of seats (one is twice as long as the rest; it's at the back). The raised seats make it impossible to see across the room, so you're basically fighting in tunnels. In opposite corners of the room lie main-life capsules (two total). You start out in the middle of the room, with the neo-Trojan Horse in front of you a ways. Head forward a bit and to the right or left (it doesn't matter), taking the corridor that is formed by the seats. Circle around the seats so that you are behind the horse. Target it and attack two or three (you can do more, but this is the safest). After two or three hits, it will have started to turn around. Hightail it back around the seats. The horse moves slowly and is pretty stupid, so you can simply circle back around to it's rear and repeat. It is possible to get it so that it can't turn around easily, letting you get lots of hits in. Continue hitting and circling in a figure eight manner, and it should be dead in no time. Remember that it's more important to kill the sucker slowly and life than it is to try to kill it quickly, but die trying; take your time, and it should be all good.

;;boss.fight:Margureitte

After the neo-Horse explodes, Margureitte will attack you on foot. She's fast. Real fast. Target her and whack the hell out of her. Eventually she'll bolt. Try to follow her if you can; if not, just begin wandering around - you're bound to see her at some point. Once you've located her again and are within targeting range, do so, and repeat. The trick here is to get within targeting range. I can't offer any real good solutions, except for being fast all around. When she takes off, don't try to follow her - she's got a speed rating of ten, which is a bit more than our friend Ramrod has; she'll easily outrun you. If you didn't get them before, the main-life caps are still hanging around in the corners.

After defeating Margureitte, you'll be able to BrainJack her if you're

rank 5 or more. Do so, and head to the newly opened door, and the stage clear point.

Once you clear the stage, you'll see a short cinema, and you'll be put back on the world map. No new stage will open.

:::::vatican:::::

;;recommended.body:Marukala

It's highly recommended that you use Marukala here. There are two exits for the level: one can be reached by anyone (although the stage will remain lit on the world map screen), and one is behind a Panel of Hakke that can only be opened by Marukala. I've tried opening the panel with Smith, Akinas, Valenker, Baderel, Margureitte, Daru, and Ramrod, but to no avail.

After the initial cinema, you'll find an Xer to your right, behind some pillars. Grab it, and head through the doors. Inside, you'll be trapped as the doors all close, and facing you will be a strange scythe-wielding enemy (humancopter). These guys aren't tough as long as you remember to block. They are much more vulnerable from the back, so jumping behind them while targeting may be a good idea too. Dispatch the copter quickly, and two more will crash through the windows. If you're using Marukala, as suggested, and you're still Xing, go after one exclusively, and kill it, ignoring blows from the other. Once you're down to a single copter, take it out the same way you did for the initial one. If you're not Xing, take your time, and get in single blows at a time (although keeping your life high isn't quite as important here - just keep it high enough to survive). I prefer getting in a corner, and waiting until the copters strike; by sitting in a corner, you'll only have two directions to keep track of, and you can see about 90% of the room as well. Once the copters are dead, grab the FlatImage, and head to the Panel of Hakke (unless you're not Marukala, in which case you head for the stage clear point).

Opening the Panel of Hakke, you'll find a full-life capsule beyond. Grab it, and head into the next room. You'll find two more humancopters. Take your time here, and conserve your life as best as you can; there is another fight immediately following this that you need all the help you can get for. Once the second humancopter dies, the game will switch to cinema mode, and you'll be introduced to a new character (unless you've already beaten Lisbon, in which case the second stage clear point will open, but the stage will remain maroon on the map).

;;boss.fight:Rei.

Following a cinema, you'll be attacked. Being an angel of sorts, he'll be flying. Keeping him targeted is a good thing, so that you can follow him around. Trade blows with him, blocking when he attacks; you'll need to block very quickly here, or he'll hit you. Eventually, he'll pull back and up, and charge you. Release the target, and strafe to the side; rotating doesn't seem to work here. Lock on him again, and continue as above.

I can't say that I know what happens when you beat him, as I haven't. I got tired of trying and went to Lisbon. Once you beat Lisbon, Rei is gone, but the stage is still lit... More on this as I replay the game and actually beat him.

:::::transylvania:::::

;;recommended.body:Baderel

Upon entering Transylvania, you'll be in a short hall. Beyond the doors is a large room. You'll see two wrappedspikers as you enter. Kill them, or target one and circle around it, running up the stairs behind them. At the landing, turn to the left. There will be another spiker at the top of the stairs, with yet another at the end of the platform. Kill them, and jump over to the other side of the platform using the planks of wood; ignore the chandelier for now. On the other side, you'll find a small room containing a FlatImage and a spiker. Grab tht Image, and kill the spiker if you want. Now, head for the chandelier.

Once you jump on the chandelier, it will lower, raising a painting on the landing. Out from the painting will come two of your old friends from Istanbul, thebutcher. If you move to the side of the painting, you should be able to attack one while the other's projectiles will miss you. You can even get the first one stuck if you position yourself correctly. Once the first thebutcher is dead, go after the second. From there, continue on down the passage, and up the stairs.

Following a short passageway, you'll come to a tower. Begin your climb, knowing that there are no enemies to worry about. At the top there will be a full-life capsule. Grab it: you'll need it for the fight ahead. Continue on.

;;boss.fight:Daru

At the end of the passageway you'll enter a large, inverted room called the Bloody Study, which is inhabited by an enemy named Daru. After a bit of cinema, he will start the large clock in the center, and disappear.

You'll now find yourself in battle mode again, with a bloody rain falling. Head straight for the clock, and strike the hands that are directly in front of you (there's a yellow arrow pointing to them...). After hitting them, continue around the base of the clock - there are three more that will appear, each after you've rotated 90 degrees around (go around to the right, as that's the direction that they appear in. After you hit the last pair of hands, the clock will chime, and the rain will stop. Turning around, you'll see that Daru has re-appeared.

After he's solid again, Daru's not all that bad if you have a strong character (I used Baderel to beat him). If you aren't using someone decently strong, this will be a tough battle. Daru has two weapons: a large spike that he uses for physical attacks, and a poisonous Medusa powder for longer range attacks. The powder is rather annoying, as it will turn you to stone for a few moments (long enough for him to get in a few hits). Keep in the pools of blood (the pillars will get in the way otherwise), and try your best to circle around him; Daru has a fairly high defense, and the more hits you can get in on his back, the better. Past that, just remember to block, and keep moving around him. After a good number of hits, he'll collapse, Jackable, and the door to the stage clear point will open. Jack, and leave. Upon arriving at the world map, no new stages will open.

:::::sicily:::::

;;recommended.body:Baderel

You'll need to take Baderel here. There is a Panel of Hakke right at the start, and he's the only one that I've been able to open it with (I've also tried Daru, Valenker, Akinas, and Ramrod). After you're inside, you'll see a cinema introducing you to the head of the family here. After that is over, you'll be attacked by three of his little minions (marionettegrenades). If you don't kill them (they only take one hit), they'll blow up, hence the nickname. After all three have been taken care of, the elevator will return with one more. Kill it as well, and take the elevator up.

Once upstairs, you'll meet up with your old pals from Lyon, the mothsters. There will be one waiting at the top of the elevator shaft, and another a little bit further down. Kill them both, and continue down the stairs. At the landing you'll find that there is another one firing at you - take care of him, and continue along the corridor. You'll eventually come to door, which you need to go through, of course.

On the other side of the door is a large wine storage facility, and another mothster. Off him, and continue down to the end of the row of wine barrels; the last barrel won't have a lid on either end, and will allow you to pass through. On the other side are two more mothsters, which can be easily taken care of. After they're dead, you can pick up two FlatImages that reside in a couple of the barrels in this row. Once gotten, go down to the last barrel on the left side - it too is passable.

In the last row of wine barrels you'll find another mothster, as well as some boxes that you can use to climb to the top of the barrels. Doing so will allow you to cross a plank to the other row of barrels, and then access, via some stairs, a platform that circles the perimeter of the area. Once on said platform, two mothsters will attack. Dispose of them, and circle around to the door, grabbing the full-life cap on the way. Enter the door...

;;boss.fight:Marukala

Inside the door, you'll see a large room with a platform in the center, surrounded by a bubbling red liquid. On the center of the platform is Marukala, the family head that you saw at the start of the level. He will attack. Marukala believes in walking harshly and carrying a big axe. He has a couple of moves with the axe, including a spin swing and an overhead attack. These are blockable (I believe - I occasionally had trouble doing so, but it might have been poor reflexes due to the lateness of the hour). After he does one of the two above moves and you block it, get some whacks in with your weapon. Marukala will also do a jump attack that produces a shockwave that will fling you off of the platform. When this happens (as it is almost certain to), circle around the platform, waiting for it to come down (as it does every so often). While you're waiting to be able to get back up, Marukala will fling marionettegrenades down at you. Continually circling should help you spot them as he does so. Once the platform lowers, jump back up, and repeat the moves above. Note that you may have to take care of some marionettes first...

After Marukala slumps over unconscious, Jack him (I believe his rank requirement is 6, although I'm not positive). The stage clear point will open across from him. Head for it.

No new stages will open after Sicily.

:::::lisbon:::::

;;recommended.body:Marukala

Lisbon is challenging, but shouldn't be that in the end. I'd recommend either a high-speed character, such as Margureitte, or a high-power character, like Marukala (I used the latter). A high life rating is a good thing too. I'd not recommend one of the more balanced characters, like Baderel.

The first trapped fight (mainly against skaters) will consist of three skaters one at a time, three skaters together, and then two skaters and one firebomber. Keep this in mind, and preserve your life. After you're done, head back the way you came and jump down off the suspended road to get the full-life cap that is floating near it.

There is no Jack in Lisbon. Completing Lisbon will open a path to Mecca, but will make the Vatican boss, Rei, disappear.

Past that, this version of the walkthrough will not really cover Lisbon. Look for more coverage in the next version.

:::::mecca:::::

;;recommended.body:Baderel

Following a short intro cinema, you'll be at the start of a long series of passages. Head down them, and eventually you'll see one of the ceiling decorations descend, revealing an enemy inside (fireballer). Target it and rush it, swinging your weapon as fast as you can. If your character is quick enough (Baderel works fine, but slower people like Marukala do not), you will continually hit the enemy before it is able to begin breathing fire. When it does start breathing fire, get out of there, as it's incredibly hard to do anything, let alone strike the enemy. Continue down the passages, and you'll enter the Arabian Maze.

The Arabian Maze isn't all that difficult if you remember two things: all of the doors are one way (they are greyed out if you can't enter them), and you are able to run past the enemies. I wouldn't suggest trying to take out every single fireballer, but you're welcome to if you want. Although I don't have a full walkthrough of the section right now, I do know that your first target is a red-carpeted room (turning left coming into it, take the door on the far right to continue, I believe). Beyond the red room is more maze, though. You should find a few life caps along the way. After reaching the end of the Arabian Maze, you'll come across a short cinema, and a boss.

;;boss fight: Yusuf

Yusuf really isn't that bad, if you know his tricks. When the fight begins, you'll just want to trade blows with him, blocking his attacks, then countering, and repeating. Eventually, he will raise his, erm, body?clothes? and attack using his extra body parts beneath. When he does this, keep him targeted, and get to one of his sides. He'll be attacking to the front and back, and rotating as he does so. If you're

at his side, you'll be safe as long as you rotate with him. Continue rotating and hacking until he reverts back to his previous attacks.

Once Yusuf is dead, you'll be able to Jack him if you're BJ rank is 7 or 8 (8 is the max). Do so, and continue to the stage clear point. Back on the map screen, a route clear across the ocean will open: Washington.

:::::washington:::::

;;recommended.body:Yusuf

It's recommended that you are maxed out in BJrank with an 8 upon entering Washington. The Jackable character in this stage requires an 8, and it's well, well worth it (his lowest stat is an 8, if this is any indication).

Upon entering Washington, you'll start in the White House, of all places. The stage starts with a cinema, however, so you won't get to explore or cause any havoc :(At any rate, once the cinema is over, you'll be at the start of a corridor. Head down it, and enter the door.

On the other side of the door, you'll find a doughnut-shaped room. Head either way; being doughnut-shaped, both routes lead to the next door. If you imagine entering the room at the 6 o'clock position, the door is at 12 o'clock. Along the way you'll encounter a large robot (bigmetalrobot): for now, simply run past it, avoiding it's barrage of missiles should it open up and attack. It's worth noting that there are two bigmetalrobots in the room, but you'll more than likely only see one.

Entering the door will put you in another corridor, and entering the door at the end of it will put you in another doughnut-shaped room. This time there are a total of three bigmetalrobots, and two switches that you must flip to access the door. Again, entering at 6 o'clock, the switches are in small rooms at 3 & 9 o'clock. Flip them, avoiding the rain of missiles, and head to the next room.

Upon rounding the bend, you'll encounter two more bigmetalrobots at the end of a hall. There are three small rooms off this hall, each with an item. The first room on the left contains an Xer, the room on the right has a FlatImage (should you not be at BJrank 8 yet), and the room on the far left, near the end of the hall, sports a full-life cap. Grab the Xer, run down the hall, and hit the full-life cap. After that, run out and hug the far wall. This should get you past both of the robots safely. Enter the upcoming door.

You'll now enter the huge elevator. It will begin to spiral up, and after a bit, will stall. When it does this, a bigmetalrobot will fall down into the elevator somewhere; circle around until you see it. Now, target it, block as it spins its arms around, block again when it does the rapid punches up and down, then jump over it as it begins to open. Hit it from the back, and they'll go down easily (two or three hits with Yusuf). This shouldn't be hard at all, as long as you make sure to be behind them when they open. Continuing to be in front will cause you to be pummelled with missiles. Trying to jump over them before they open is a lost cause too, as they will simply turn around (which they don't do if they are firing missiles). If you're quick at dispatching the robots, you'll only have to fight four before the elevator reaches the top (Level 3). Speed is a factor here, as the elevator slowly descends as you

fight the robot; before I figured out how to take care of them, I fought at least five one run through the level... Once you reach the top, enter the now open door, and enter the Special Ring, where a cinema will take over.

Before getting into the Special Ring and its opponent, it's worth mentioning that there are two gates (these are where the robots come out of), and they show up on the map. However, they're currently unreachable. It may be that there is something inside, and our semi-angelic friend Rei can reach them. I'm not sure, though, as I don't have Rei yet...

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;;boss.fight:William
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After an, erm, interesting cinema, the boss, William, starts out fighting exactly like the bigmetalrobots, but has more life. Simply use the same strategies that you did in the elevator, and you'll be fine. Using Yusuf, he'll go down in two rounds of blows. This, however, isn't the end: he has one more form. In his second iteration, the fight gets harder, but the strategies are very similar. Continually block until he attacks. Some of his attacks won't let you hit him (as he is always guarding too), but if he charges in any way, sidestep or jump away, and attack him, as he'll open up for a bit. The boundaries of the arena are electrified, and will stun you if you hit them, but they'll do the same for him. This is a great chance to get some really good hits in on him. Past that, just watch how he moves, and react accordingly. This is a hard fight if you make it so; otherwise, it's actually rather pleasant.

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:::::the.forbidden.city:::::
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;;recommended.body:William
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Starting out in the Forbidden City, you'll be in a short hallway that leads to a courtyard. Moving forward a bit will start a short cinema, where you'll be introduced to a new enemy (firetailedragon). After regaining control, simply target the dragon and hack away; they pose no real threat if you're playing with William (and after seeing Billy's stats, who wouldn't be playing with him?). They can be annoying when they jump over you, making you lose the lock on them, but this isn't any real big deal... After defeating the dragon, two spinners will appear; dispatch of them, at which time one more will appear. Kill it and enter the door, which is now open.

The next courtyard will be very similar: two spinners, a firetailedragon, a main-life cap, with the door to the next area shut. Killing them will cause it to open: do so. The courtyard after that sports three firetails (one at a time) and a full life cap.

Following the third courtyard, you'll enter a room with a very familiar face (who I will not reveal for spoiler purposes). After a short dialogue, a fight will ensue.

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;;sub-boss.fight:[familiar.face]
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This is an absolutely simple fight, and should last all of about 5 second. Target, strike, repeat. Done. If you need, though, there is a main-life capsule in the room. You shouldn't need it, though... I do have a feeling that this fight has something to do with the whole multiple endings part... Anyway, after the fight is over, enter open

door.

You'll now be in hallway leading to a rather large amount of stairs. Head down, killing the spinners on the second, fourth, and sixth landings. You may take some damage here due to the close quarters and the fireballs that they launch prior to you reaching them, so try to keep your life as high as you can. Enter the door when you get to the bottom.

In the next room, well, you expected a room like this eventually, didn't you? (I mean, look at the character designs...). At any rate, there are two firebombers along the way to kill, or run past. Jumping into the arena-like structure, another firebomber will attack, bringing a spinner along for the ride. You can't run past here, at least right away, so either continually circle the perimeter (the enemies are stupid and probably won't hit you) or kill the spinner first, as he should go down much easier, and then concentrate on the firebomber. You'll hear a noise when the floating platform has lined up, allowing you to go on. Continuing on from there, you'll come to another arena, this time with a firebomber and firetailedragon; same deal here, where you have to wait for the next path to open, although the perimeter circle does work again.

After killing or running past the above enemies, you'll come to yet another arena. This one has a spinner and a firetail, but the spinner is out of reach. Do the perimeter circle, or kill the firetail and stand under where the spinner is perched so that he can't hit you with his fireballs. When the next path opens, run for it.

The next arena is strange, as there are no enemies. Just wait for a bit, then head to the gate, grabbing the two main-life caps that are on either side of it (which do very little for William, sadly...). When you're ready, enter the gate.

After a bit of progress, you'll encounter more arena fun, this time with two firetails (and in a different type of arena). This one requires you to kill them before the next path opens (no perimeter circle here, sadly). Do them one at a time, and they shouldn't be much of a problem. Once they are dead and the gate lowers, move on.

The next small section sports a well-appreciated full-life cap. Grab it and head through the door. Once on the other side, you've got to be wondering: is this someplace important? Nah, couldn't be... Head up to the un-important looking structure and walk into the light.

You'll be treated to a cinema introducing a very cool-looking character. And what a coincidence: look at his sword! It's a [omitted for spoiler purposes]. After the cinema, to no one's surprise, he attacks.

```
;;sub-boss.fight:majin
```

For being so dark and oninous looking, the majin (not his official name) ends up being a pushover. He has a lot of life (a single head-on swipe with Williams' version of the Maken does a half of a block), but if you guard, and attack when his guard is down (ie. right after he attacks you, for the most part), you should be fine. He will occasionally thrust past you, in which case you should attack his back for all it's worth (it'll be a really long fight if you don't get a couple of good hits in...). If he starts releasing rings of fire that crawl along the ground, simply jump over them. After a bit, he should bite the dust. Not

all of him dies, though...

```
;;boss.fight:shin.majin
```

Oh my. For the first half of this fight being a pushover, this form isn't. First thing to do is get rid of the orbs that are surrounding the area. Do so by standing under them, looking at them (hold the L trigger and pull the stick down), and executing a well-timed swing, right as they fire at you. If you time it correctly, the sphere should 'die', and drop out of sight. Note that all of the spheres fire at the same time, and at regular intervals, so if you get the timing down, you can swing right as they're firing. Repeat for all six of the spheres, and the shin.majin (not it's official name) should drop to your level.

The shin.majin packs quite a punch if you let it. You can't hurt it right away, so don't even try. Target it, and circle around, jump around, stay back: whatever you have to do so that it doesn't hit you. It will first try to strike you with it's head. After tiring of that, it will begin firing all kinds of balls of energy at you, which you should be able to rotate around. Once it's done with that, close in, and when the large sphere that it is clutching begins flashing, wail on it for all it's worth (with William, only go through two sets of attacks, as that's all the time you'll have). Right after it's done flashing, it will swipe at you, so get ready to block. Following that, it may roll into a ball. Dodge/jump over it, and get ready to strike, as it will flash after that. With a bit of timing, and some luck as well, you'll soon defeat it. Sit back, and watch it die.

```
;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;
```

004, characters.

```
::jackable::
```

This should be, more or less, a complete list of the playable characters. I may be missing some (I'm guessing that Rei is playable, but I missed him my first time through), but for the order that I did the stages, I believe this list is complete (save for Rei).

note: original Japanese is listed in romaji in (parentheses) after the name or extra. Some are not listed due to containing kanji. These will be added later.

```
;;list.bodies  
body:Kei  
body:Andre  
body:Inaba  
body:Valenker  
body:Smith  
body:FeiShan  
body:Shaja  
body:Ramrod  
body:Akinas  
body:Baderel  
body:Margureitte
```


- 1;must have jacked Inaba in Rhincodon
- 2;only Jackable by FeiShan
- 3;appears after Amsterdam is cleared, but isn't accessible

::stage.difficulties::

In Maken X, much like in classics such as Strider and Bionic Commando, you can pick your destination. Some cities you will have to runthrough multiple times, as certain areas are inaccessible to you at the start. Different stages also offer different difficulty levels; although London and Istanbul become available at the same time, they differ greatly in difficulty. That's what this section is for; I've done my bet to rank the stages in difficulty, from 0 (simple) to 8 (expert). As I have yet to finish the game, many of the stages may fluxuate in ratings through various faq releases; what seems hard to me now is probably nothing compared to the later stages... Also, this is the order that I went through the game, so if you're doing the levels in a different order, the difficulty may be slightly more or slightly less.

:stage:	:run:	:diff,:	:notes:
Kanazawa	only	0	
Rhindocon	only	1	
TajMahal	first	2	
Moscow	only	5	can be tricky for new players
London	first	3	
Istanbul	first	7	
HongKong	only	2	
TajMahal	second	3	
Amsterdam	only	3	
Athens	only	5	
Istanbul	second	2	
Lyon	only	4	
London	second	0	
Vienna	only	4	
Vatican	only	7	
Lisbon	only	6	
Transylvania	only	6	
Mecca	only	6	arabian maze can be a pain
Washington	only	6	
The Forbidden City	only	8	

::endings::

There are multiple endings in Maken X. I am gathering that there is one for each character. I recieved William's, as that is who I beat it with. More will be added to this section as I find out about it.

There is no option to save a game that has been completed and go through the game a second time on the same save file.

;;

006,misc.

::enemies::

given name	levels found	notes
slasher	[kanazawa, rhincodon, tajmahal, moscow, hongkong, lyon]	
bazooker	[kanazawa, rhincodon, hongkong]	
blader	[kanazawa, hongkong]	
skater	[rhincodon, lisbon]	
spinner	[moscow, the.forbidden.city]	
bomber	[moscow, lisbon]	
firebomber	[moscow, lyon, lisbon, the.forbidden.city]	[boss]
squatter	[tajmahal]	
kamikazepup	[london, amsterdam]	
lungmachinegun	[london, amsterdam]	[sub-boss]
spiner	[london, istanbul, athens]	
thebutcher	[istanbul, athens, transylvania]	[sub-boss]
wrappedspiker	[istanbul, athens] transylvania]	[sub-boss]
swiper	[amsterdam, vienna]	
mothster	[lyon, sicily]	
humancopter	[vatican]	
marionettegrenades	[sicily]	
fireballers	[mecca]	
bigmetalrobots	[washington]	
firetaildragon	[the.forbidden.city]	

::random::

;the title is pronounced in the normal Japanese fashion; it is mah-ken, not may-ken.

;the title maken translates roughly to demon sword, or possibly magic sword. It is, obviously, a Japanese word. [ma means demon, magic, witch, etc., while ken means sword, blade, or strangely enough, the hands on a watch/clock.]

;there are a few misspellings in the game, including Transilvania, and Hight. I've noticed at least one grammatical error in the small amount of English text, as well (in the extraction sequences, "An extraction was finished.")

;in Lyon, there are signs that strongly resemble the London Underground signs. Lyon is in France...

;going through the entire game, playing all the stages and Jacking all of the characters, along with some error time (getting through harder stages and re-exploring stages) should take about 15 hours.

::release.info::

Title: Maken X
 Publisher: Atlus [Japan], Sega [NorthAmerica]
 Developer: Atlus Research and Development 1
 Platform: Sega Dreamcast
 Format: 1 NTSC-J GD-ROM
 Release: 25.11.1999 [Japan], 2000 [N.A.]
 Genre: First Person Action-Adventure
 Retail: 6800yen [Japan]
 Prod#: T-14401M
 UPC: 4 984995 170015

Copyright: Atlus 1999
Compatible: Visual Memory [save, 10 blocks], PuruPuru [Jump] Pack,
VGA Box
Includes: Maken X game disc, 32 page full-colour instruction manual,
spine card, point sheet (360 pts.), all in a regular
jewel case with a clear tray.

::artifacts::

This section will briefly cover any Maken X items that are not directly
game related (ie. music cds, merchandising, etc.)

Item: Maken X Official Guide Book
By: Atlus x Famitsu
Publisher: JKVoice
Release: early December 1999 (unreleased by Dec.9)
Price: 1300yen
Format:
Pages:
Territory: Japan
ISBN:
UPC:

Item: Maken X Original Soundtracks
Publisher: Atlus Label
Release: 23.12.1999
Price: 3000yen
Format: 2 compact discs
Tracks:
Territory: Japan
UPC:

Item: misc. Japanese Dreamcast magazines
Issues: Nov. 1999-Jan. 2000 issues
Notes: Many of the Japanese DC magazines ran lengthy features on
Maken X, including maps and enemy info. I'm not going to
try and compile a full list, though; this info is here
merely in case people are looking to track down maps
before the guidebook is released

::megaten/maken::

Some gamers may be familiar with Atlus' Megami Tensei series of games
(known as the Revelations series in North America). With games on nearly
all of the major platforms, the Megaten series, as it's also known, has
grown to be one of the largest series in the video game world, as well
as one of the most stylised. The series ranges from main-line titles
such as Megami Tensei 1 & 2 (Famicom) and Shin Megami Tensei 1 & 2
(Super Famicom), to the many gaidens (side stories), which include the
NAmerican-released Persona (PSX), as well as DevilsSummoner (SSaturn),
Soul Hackers (SS/PSX), and the Last Bible (GB/GBC, released as The Demon
Slayer in N.A.). All of the titles have one thing in common: demons. You
can talk with them, recruit them, fight them, and otherwise have fun
with them. While the Western idea of demons is quite dim, the Megaten
demons range from the good, pure of heart type to the utterly evil.

So why am I mentioning all of this? Well, Maken X is often lumped into the wide selection of Megaten Gaidens, mainly due to it's striking similarity graphic design. To make things even more complex, the game is done by Atlus' Research and Development 1 team, which is known for SoulHackers and Persona 2, amongst others. As far as I can tell, this placement of Maken in the Megaten series is an errornous one. While Maken X is of Megaten quality, it one main few thing that all of the Megaten games have: namely, demons. While many people consider the Third/Fourth Reich to be demons (and for good reason), they lack the normal Megaten demon qualities; they are just humans, after all, and not heavenly/hellish bodies. Combined with the lack of the words Megami Tensei from all of the packaging, I think it's fairly certain that Maken X is simply a game that looks like it could be Megaten. Of course, after writing this, I paged through the Megaten art book 'Digital Devil Story' and found Maken X artwork within. Does this mean that it is a Megaten game?...

But will Megaten fans like it? I believe so. I'm not the hugest Megaten fan, but I've always loved the designs used in the game; Maken takes these design styles, multiplies their strangeness factor by ten, and presents them in a very true-to-life (er, art) manner. Anyone that has been disappointed in the lack of graphical quality that the in-game Megaten games had (although they are all excellent for their time, they simply can't compete with the original artwork) will find Maken X to be a dream come true. Although the gameplay in Maken is much more action based, the first-person perspective remains, but with the north/west/south/east 3D of the Megaten series is replaced by full 360-degree, no rails roaming of Maken. The game also is one of the best action entries of the year, in my opinion, and is well worth the purchase if you are still debating.

;;

007,outro.

::version::

[dd,mm,yy,ver.:size]

10,12,99,ver.0.92:118k

first public release. walkthrough finished [save two partially completed level sections], artifacts, endings sections added. still needs major re-formatting in the walkthrough section.

09,12,99,pre.5:105k

prerelease beta, first planned public release, but unreleased. walkthrough continued [vatican, mecca;partial], format beginning to finalise (although it has not been implemented yet). notes added to intro regarding release, and personal computer status.

08,12,99,pre.4:85k

prerelease version continued. walkthrough continued [vienna, transylvania, sicily] fiddled with format more, did some cleaning, fixing.

07,12,99,pre.3:74k

prerelease version continued. walkthrough continued [amsterdam, athens, istanbul 2, lyon, london 2], stage flow, more misc. added. format slightly altered.

06,12,99,pre.2:47k

prerelease version continued. walkthrough continued [tajmahal 1/2,

istanbul, hongkong]. characters, stage info, enemies, misc., getting started, more added. format slightly altered.

05,12,99,pre.1:32k

prerelease version started. walkthrough started [moscow, london]. controls, intro added. initial format set.

::credit::

Mr. Convenient himself, Ben Judd, for recommending this game to me.

The little bookstore in Sendai for having the game used a week after it's release for 3480 yen, and giving me a point card that reduced the price to a mere 2280 yen... Sugoi, ne?

::legal::

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game by:

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[prh entertainment]

[atlus]

[research and development 1]

since 05,12,99,
shibatamachi, miyagiken, [japan].