

Star Ocean: The First Departure Universe Walkthrough

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- Star Ocean: First Departure
Universe Mode Guide v1.01

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1.) INTRODUCTION

This is a guide to completing the Universe difficulty mode in Star Ocean: First Departure. Universe is the highest difficulty mode - parts of the game will be downright brutal - but we will be abusing all possible early equipment and leveling tricks in order to even the odds.

"But I thought there *were* no other difficulty modes!" - you are basically right. The Universe and Galaxy difficulty modes were dummed out of this game, probably because the original Star Ocean for the SNES didn't have them. However, because this game was built using the engine from Star Ocean: The Second Story, the code and data for the difficulties remains in the game. The developers dummed them out simply by making them impossible to select anywhere in the menus. Section 3 of this guide ("Accessing Universe Mode") explains how to start a New Game on the Universe or Galaxy difficulty (it DOES NOT require custom firmware or anything like that).

Throughout this guide, I will assume that you have completed the game on its normal difficulty setting, Earth mode, and that you know the game well. For example, I will not explain the Skills or Item Creations systems - you should already be familiar with these if you are attempting Universe mode. I will also "fast-forward" through sections of the game that I feel I don't need to completely explain. Also, spoilers abound.

Finally, it should be noted that completing Galaxy mode is by no means a prerequisite to playing Universe mode. If you have completed the game at least once, feel free to make the plunge. Of course, you are free to play Galaxy mode if you wish, and this walkthrough should be useful to you no matter what difficulty you are on.

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 3.) ACCESSING UNIVERSE MODE

There are two methods to unlocking the Galaxy and Universe difficulties.

* Method 1: Loading from "unlocked" save files.

This method DOES NOT require custom firmware - all regular PSP users can play Universe mode using this method (as well as custom firmware users).

I (and potentially others) have created special save files that have these difficulties unlocked. Loading from these files is essentially equivalent to starting a New Game, but you'll be on the difficulty of your choosing. You can download the unlocked save files that I created either at GameFAQs (under the "Saves" tab for Star Ocean: First Departure) or at my website (<http://devilsjockstrap.wikidot.com>).

If these saves aren't working for you, then make sure your firmware (whether it be official or custom) is up to date.

* Method 2: Custom firmware and CWCheat.

If you have custom firmware on your PSP, you can use CWCheat to set the difficulty of your game (if you don't know what I'm talking about, then use Method 1 - acquiring custom firmware and CWCheat is beyond the scope of this guide). Copy/paste this code into your cheat.db file:

```
_C0 Difficulty Toggle
_L 0x6022774C 0x0000000X
_L 0x00000001 0x0000004F
```

Replace the "X" with "2" for Universe mode, "1" for Galaxy, or "0" to switch back to Earth difficulty. Turning this code on switches your current save's difficulty setting, and the setting remains until you use the code to change it again. So, you can turn the code on once, then save your game, then turn the codes off and never worry about them again (this is how I created the "unlocked" save files mentioned above).

4.) GENERAL TIPS

The following are some general tips for your Universe mode game.

- * Escape Formation is generally the best in the beginning of the game. This will keep your casters safely away from combat, keep your warriors close together so that they will attack/flank the same enemy, and of course, allow you to escape easier. Later in the game you will face enemies with area attacks, so you'll need to change your Formation to something more spread out.
- * I recommend setting your Camera Position to Normal so that you can better keep track of the entire battlefield - not just what your leader is doing. I trust that you've completed this game at least once, so you should not have difficulty keeping track of what's happening with all four of your party members amidst the chaos of battle.
- * The Purity Skill is an excellent source of early-game money. Don't feel bad about "wasting" Skill Points in this Skill - especially on characters you don't intend to use anyway. By the time you reach Van y Ille City, "wasted" Skill Points will be moot, since you'll be able to easily max out.
- * The Feint Combat Skill is much more useful in this difficulty than it is in Earth mode. Get used to enemies parrying your attacks constantly; sometimes more than 50% of your attacks will be parried. This largely stops being a problem once you put Skill levels into Feint.
- * Besides Feint, offensive Combat Skills are not as good as defensive ones.

We will be abusing Item Creation to obtain incredible weapons early in the game, but our armors will be the same or only slightly better. Since every monster has freakishly high Attack Power in Universe mode, the best we can do is level defensive Skills like Qigong and Sidestep.

* Early Skill Points are very, very important in Universe mode. Learn all the Talents you can as soon as you can, and make sure to go to the Purgatorium when you first get the chance, since there are free Skill Points to be had there.

* Your AI teammates will use both equipped Special Arts regularly, so make sure to only equip the Special Arts that you want the AI to use. For example, if you want Mavelle to only use the Galaxy Special Art, equip Galaxy to one of her slots and the leave the other slot blank.

5.) ROAK WALKTHROUGH

The very beginning may be the hardest part of the game, so prepare yourself for some frustration. I will explain the early item and level tricks as soon as they become available, but before then, the game requires patience.

Good luck!

5.1) KRATUS

Make sure to grab the BLACKBERRIES inside the Defense Force HQ, the FLARE BOMB and RESURRECTION ELIXIR from outside the Defense Force HQ, the TALISMAN outside of the Weapon Shop to the west, and the BLUEBERRIES in Millie's House. Equip the Talisman on Roddick. You'll need the Flare Bomb for the upcoming boss battle.

After grabbing these items, complete the patrol. The fastest way to complete the patrol is to talk to Sheena and Sheena's Mom outside of Millie's House, then talk to Martoth inside Millie's House. Then return to Defense Force HQ.

Time to prepare for some of the hardest battles in the game. Under Tactics->Formation, set your Formation to Escape. Under Settings, set your Camera Position to Normal. Most of the battle is now already won.

--BATTLE-----

ENEMY:	Thief (x3)
HP:	120
MP:	0
STRONG VS:	Nothing
WEAK VS:	Nothing

Thanks to your Escape Formation, Roddick and Dorne are right next to each other, which will ensure that they attack the same target. Millie is positioned safely away from the fight.

Run in with Roddick and attack the nearest Thief. Dorne should be attacking the same one - if he isn't, either switch to the Thief Dorne is fighting, or switch control to Dorne and attack the same Thief as Roddick. These Thieves attack very quickly and will parry frequently, so the only reliable way of taking them down without dying is to flank them with Roddick and Dorne.

Do not be afraid to use your Blueberries or your Resurrection Elixir during this battle - if Roddick or Dorne dies, your chances of winning drop significantly.

-/BATTLE-----

After the battle, heal up and prepare for the next one. Use your Resurrection Elixir if anyone is dead, and use Millie's Heal Spell to recover Hit Points. Don't use your Blueberries outside of battle - it's better to save them for the battle, since using items is faster than casting Spells.

Head west when you're ready for the next two battles.

--BATTLE-----

ENEMY:	Thief (x3)
HP:	120
MP:	0
STRONG VS:	Nothing
WEAK VS:	Nothing

Same battle, same strategy. Note that you cannot heal between this battle and the next, so try to heal up near the end of this battle if you have to.

-/BATTLE-----

--BATTLE-----

ENEMY:	Boss Baird
HP:	520
MP:	0
STRONG VS:	Nothing
WEAK VS:	Nothing

ENEMY:	Thief (x2)
HP:	120
MP:	0
STRONG VS:	Nothing
WEAK VS:	Nothing

Attack the first (south) Thief, and Dorne should end up attacking the same one, as before. Hopefully you will defeat this Thief before Boss Baird gets near you.

As soon as Boss Baird gets close to you, use the Flare Bomb on him. Bonus if one of the Thieves is close enough to get hit with it, too. After that, focus on removing any remaining Thieves before shifting your attention to

Boss Baird. If either Roddick or Dorne becomes flanked by Boss Baird and a Thief, switch to that character and run him out of that deadly situation.

Obviously, do not be afraid to use any and/or all of your healing items.

-/BATTLE-----

This boss has a chance of dropping an item called Fanfic X, which sells for a large amount of Fol... but if you don't get it, don't worry about it. Soon we will be able to obtain as much Fol as we want anyway, so the Fanfic X isn't worth going through the hell of those first three fights again. If you got it, consider it a small bonus, then move on.

After the scene, return to the Defense Force HQ for another scene. After THAT scene, exit and reenter the village, then talk to the Captain for yet another scene.

After all those crazy scenes, head toward Coule. Run from every encounter.

5.2) COULE

At Coule, make sure to grab the NECKLACE in the east Home on the second level, and the BLUEBERRIES at the north end of town. Equip the Necklace to Roddick.

Enter the house east of the Blueberries and you'll trigger the scene with Millie's dad. You'll end up back at Kratus.

Level up outside of Kratus until Roddick hits level 6. Use Millie's Heal Spell between battles, and use the bed in Roddick's House to completely heal for free when you need to. Make sure to save after every battle, because you will get frequent Game Overs out here.

It may be tempting to remove Dorne from the team in order to increase the amount of EXP for Roddick and Millie, but don't do it - you'll need Dorne's help later (actually, Millie's EXP is wasted here, too, since she always joins you at the same level later in the game).

After reaching level 6 with Roddick, return to Coule. Make sure to grab the 200 FOL in the Home where Martoth is, then head up to Mt. Meteorx.

5.3) MT. METORX

Though you are strong enough to win the battles up here, you do not have the resources to make it all the way through. Run from every battle until you encounter the Fellworms.

--BATTLE-----

ENEMY:	Fellworm (x2)
HP:	400
MP:	0

STRONG VS: Earth
WEAK VS: Wind

Just use the same tactic you've been using against the Thieves. Have Roddick and Dorne flank one Fellworm, smack it apart, and then move on to the other one.

~/BATTLE-----

Continue running from random encounters until you reach the screen with the healing pool. Heal up before you approach it, because you're going to get attacked.

--BATTLE-----

ENEMY: Fellworm (x2)
HP: 400
MP: 0
STRONG VS: Earth
WEAK VS: Wind

Same battle, same strategy.

~/BATTLE-----

Feel free to power up near the healing pool, if you wish, just don't get yourself killed, or you'll have to do the mountain all over again. When ready, continue up the mountain until you trigger the scene.

FAST-FORWARD:

- * Complete the entire Calnus plot sequence.
- * Get some clothes for Ilia at Kraat.

5.4) KRAAT / HAUTE / MT. METORX

Don't miss the BLUEBERRIES in the southeast, the RESURRECTION ELIXIR in the northeast Home, and the 420 FOL at the inn. You're going to need all the money you can get to purchase Skill Sets.

Head north to Haute, and run from every battle along the way. At Haute, grab the SWEET SYRUP at the south end of town and the RESURRECTION ELIXIR in the northeast Home.

Purchase the Sense 1 Skill Set. The other Skill Sets are available at Portmith, so you shouldn't waste your money on them now (especially since we need to save money for Sense 2). Of course, I don't have to remind you not to spend any of your Skill Points until you get Determination.

Talk to Badam in the east Item Shop. Accept the job from him when he offers it, then go talk to the peddler at the southeast entrance to the town.

Attempt to buy the weapon he offers you, then watch a scene.

Cyuss is about to join you - you may want to save your game now so that you can reload if Cyuss comes with the Taste or Design Sense Talents (in order to maximize the amount of early Skill Points Cyuss can get, you will want him to join you without these Talents, since you will be able to learn them once you reach Portmith). When you're ready to get Cyuss, return to Badam's Item Shop. Cyuss joins you, and you get a LONGSWORD. Equip all of Cyuss's armor to Roddick.

Proceed up Mt. Metorx, running away from every battle. Unless you're suicidal, ignore the Abandoned Mine.

When you reach the healing pool, you may elect to level up here, although the Game Over potential is high. If you do choose to power up, I recommend making Cyuss your leader - his attack power is much greater than Roddick's, and you will be able to utilize him more effectively than the AI will.

Don't miss the ROSE HIP on the screen after the healing pool.

Complete the mountain and head to Portmith.

SIDEBAR 5.A) A NOTE ON CYUSS

As you know, Cyuss is an optional character. For Universe mode, and in general, I usually recommend NOT keeping Cyuss and getting Ashlay instead. Here are the reasons:

- * Roddick cannot learn the Wyrn King Secret Fighting Technique unless Ashlay is in your party. This technique contains Roddick's best Special Art, Redwyrn Thundersurge.
- * Mavelle will not join you unless you have either Ashlay or Ioshua (or both, or neither Ashlay, Ioshua, nor Cyuss). Basically, if you have Cyuss, then you are forced to take the useless Ioshua (one of the worst characters in the game) if you want Mavelle (the best character in the game).
- * Ditching Cyuss allows you to spend all of his Skill Points on Purity, netting you 100,000 Fol in the early game, where it will be extremely handy.

Of course, ultimately, the choice is yours.

5.5) PORTMITH / SKILL TRAINING

We are now going to take the first step toward getting awesome items early. It's time to learn some Talents and get a smattering of Skill Points. You will require the following:

- * Sense 1 (purchased from Haute)
- * 1920 Fol (it will be easier if you have more than this)
- * 86 Skill Points (on any character)

If you don't have enough Fol or Skill Points, don't worry - just start the process described below and the problem may take care of itself.

Purchase the Sense 2 Skill Set, then level up the Determination Skill to level 4 (80 Skill Points) with all three characters (if you don't plan on keeping Cyuss, this process is STILL worth doing with him... in fact, do him first). If you can't get Determination to level 4, then get it as high as you can.

Next, take a look at your characters' Talents. Note which characters DO NOT have the following Talents:

- * Taste
- * Design Sense
- * Animal Instinct (Note: Ilia cannot learn Animal Instinct)

Our goal is to learn these Talents with each of your characters. First, purchase the Skill Sets that you'll need to unlock the relevant Specialties.

- * Taste: Cooking (Knife, Recipe, Keen Eye)-> Knowledge & Technical
- * Design Sense: Art (Sketching, Aesthetics) -> Technical
- * Animal Instinct: Scouting (Danger Radar) -> ---

Next, put 1 level into each of the prerequisite Skills for the desired Specialty / Talent. For example, if Roddick doesn't have Taste, then you want to unlock Cooking; put 1 level into Knife, Recipe, and Keen Eye. Each of the above six Skills will cost only 1 Skill Point to level if you got Determination to level 4, but if you didn't, just buy the ones that already cost 1 Point. Failing that, go outside and gain a level.

Now that you have the Specialties unlocked, you will need to purchase the ingredients necessary to practice them. Purchase Magic Clay for 300 Fol, and Vegetables for 20 Fol. Then head outside, save your game, and start using your Specialty and reloading your game constantly until you unlock your Talents. Don't spend the Skill Points yet - we'll spend them on specific Skills in the next section.

Note, if you do not intend to keep Cyuss, then you should run this process on him first, so that you can then dump all of his Skill Points into Purity, as described above. Level 10 Purity (which is not difficult to reach after unlocking these Talents) will net you 100,000 Fol! If you intend to ditch Cyuss, just level Determination to 4, then dump the rest of his Points into Purity as soon as you can (this is the most mathematically optimal method). With Determination at level 4, Purity level 10 will cost 285 Skill Points.

Once you have unlocked these three Talents on all three characters (except Animal Instinct on Ilia), and gained as much money as you can / want through Purity, it's time to move on to the next step - obtaining awesome weapons.

5.6) PORTMITH / ITEM CREATION

This is Phase 2 of the ownage. By the end of this section, you'll have a weapon (or weapons) that increase your Attack Power tenfold.

Raise one character's Art Specialty to level 7. The most cost-effective way to do this is to level Sketching to 8 and Aesthetics to 6. Whether you wait until Determination is maxed out is up to you, but I recommend against it - wasting a few Skill Points now in order to avoid having to power up for several levels is worth it, especially since your Skills will be maxed out by level 100 anyway. Just save before allocating your Skill Points, then buy as much Determination as you can afford while still having enough to raise Sketching to level 8 and Aesthetics to level 6. (Of course, you are free to level your Art Specialty higher than 7 if you want a higher success rate.)

Now, buy as much Magic Clay as you can (though no more than 10 is fine). Save your game, then start performing the Art Specialty on the Magic Clay. Your goal is to create a GOODIE BOX. If you go through all your Magic Clay without creating the Goodie Box, reload your game. Once you succeed in creating the Goodie Box, save your game.

Use the Goodie Box. Three random items will be added to your inventory. Check to see what you got - if you didn't get one of the following items, reload your save and use the Goodie Box again:

- * Sword of Marvels = 700 Attack Power for Roddick.
- * Cestus of Poison = 800 Attack Power for Ilia.
- * Fanfic ;) = Sell for 250,000 (or more) Fol.

This process is extremely tedious, but worth it. You only need to get one of the weapons, but if you feel like it, you can go for both.

Should you receive Fanfic ;), go ahead and keep it, but then create another Goodie Box and keep trying for one of those weapons. You're better off holding onto the Fanfic ;) for now and selling it for more Fol later when you have the Group Appraising Super Specialty. That is, unless you need cash right now.

If you have the patience, you can create more Goodie Boxes and get all sorts of good stuff for your characters, but the single uber weapon is sufficient. (You could also use the Goodie Box as a money-making engine, but there is a far more efficient money-making trick that we'll be doing later anyway.)

Long story short: you now have a weapon far too powerful for the early game. Equip the Sword of Marvels to Roddick and/or the Cestus of Poison to Ilia (if you got the Cestus of Poison and NOT the Sword of Marvels, then you may want to make Ilia your leader). Step outside and fight a few battles... It feels good to be the one kicking ass for a change. (If you do not intend to keep Cyuss, you may now safely move him to an inactive party slot.)

FAST-FORWARD:

- * Purchase a Pickaxe (if you can't afford it, fight a few battles outside for the money you need).
- * Use Scouting to "Avoid enemies", and keep it this way for the rest of the game (except for powering up and such). Make sure to set it with a character that has Animal Instinct.
- * Complete the delivery quest (visit the east Weapon Shop in Portmith, then return to Badam in Haute) - this is necessary if you want to get the Bunny Whistle in the future (you probably do).
- * Decide whether to keep Cyuss or not (I recommend giving him the boot).

- * Return to Portmith.
- * Purchase some Blueberries and Aquaberries and/or Antidotes.
- * Purchase armor for your characters.
- * Start the Velkhent Pirate quest (talk to the sailors at the northwest docks).

 5.7) VELKHENT PIRATES' HIDEOUT

You may have awesome weapons now, but that doesn't mean you can take this place lightly. Monsters will still hit you incredibly hard, so be careful.

Take the right path first, and acquire the ANTIDOTE, BLUEBERRIES, and RESURRECTION ELIXIR. Return to the entrance.

I recommend fighting near the entrance until level 15. You can return to Portmith and sleep at the inn whenever you need healing.

Once you're level 15, take the left path (from the entrance), and head north when you reach the ice patch. Go down the stairs, then go northeast when you reach the fork. Go north into the room at the ice patch to acquire a LAVENDER, a SAPPHIRE, and BLUEBERRIES. Go east at the ice patch for BLACKBERRIES, then return to the fork.

This time head south at the fork. Follow the path until you reach a switch and a treasure box with a NECKLACE inside. Pull the switch, then go back one screen and enter the south door. Follow the path down the stairs and save at the Save Point.

Go north, then east at the ice patch for a RESURRECTION ELIXIR. Go back one screen and enter the door north of the ice patch for a battle.

--BATTLE-----

ENEMY: Velkhent
 HP: 5,000
 MP: 0
 STRONG VS: Nothing
 WEAK VS: Earth, Water, Fire, Wind, Light, Dark

ENEMY: Robber Axman
 HP: 1,080
 MP: 0
 STRONG VS: Fire
 WEAK VS: Water

ENEMY: Bushwhacker
 HP: 400
 MP: 0
 STRONG VS: Nothing
 WEAK VS: Nothing

Take out the Robber Axman and Bushwhacker first - each should go down fast. Then focus your attention on Velkhent. You should be fine as long as you don't hesitate to heal with Blueberries when you need to.

-/BATTLE-----

Equip the Flint, return to the Save Point and save, then return all the way to the first ice patch (near the entrance to this place). This time, go west. Use your Flint to destroy the north wall for a RESURRECTION ELIXIR.

Return to the ice patch and go north and down the stairs, then destroy the east wall. Go southeast at the fork, then north at the next fork (DO NOT destroy the walls here!). Grab the SWEET SYRUP and SACRIFICIAL DOLL, then go back one screen south, then back one screen west. This time, take the west path at the fork.

Grab the BLUEBERRIES, then exit this screen south and go down the stairs. Follow the long path all the way to the end (ignore the door on the wall on the way) and destroy the wall at the end for SWEET SYRUP. Go back one screen and enter the door you had passed. Grab the RESURRECTION ELIXIR, and continue west.

Take the southeast path for a MAGIC CANVAS, then take the west path for a Save Point and a door. Prepare for a boss fight, save your game, then enter that door.

--BATTLE-----

ENEMY: Velkhent Chief
HP: 10,000
MP: 0
STRONG VS: Nothing
WEAK VS: Earth, Water, Fire, Wind, Light, Dark

ENEMY: Velkhent
HP: 5,000
MP: 0
STRONG VS: Nothing
WEAK VS: Earth, Water, Fire, Wind, Light, Dark

Take out the minion first, so that you don't get flanked. Then, flank the Velkhent Chief and just spam your favorite attacks until he is defeated.

-/BATTLE-----

After he's toast, head up the stairs to the west for a RUBY and a RAINBOW DIAMOND. Free Pericci from her cell, then get out of here.

FAST-FORWARD:

- * At Portmith, make sure to pick up the OCARINA at the docks (even if you don't intend to recruit Pericci, you might change your mind later).
- * Sail to Autanim.
- * If you don't have Cyuss, Phia will offer to join your team here. Accept. Remove all of her equipment and move her out of the active party.
- * Purchase whatever Skill Sets you don't have.
- * Learn two Talents with Phia, then spend all her Skill Points on Purity for 100,000 Fol (the "wasted" Skill Points are of no consequence if you plan on recruiting her for real - by the time she joins, you'll be able to

easily max everyone's Skills anyway).

* Head southwest to Tatroi. Phia will leave you here.

5.8) TATROI / CRAFTING

Steal a RESURRECTION ELIXIR from the roof of the Skill Guild, and AQUABERRIES from the Home north of there. Then enter the Skill Guild and purchase any Skill Sets you don't have.

You now have access to the Writing, Crafting, and Familiar Specialties, which will allow you to unlock the Composition, Originality, Nimble Fingers, and Love of Animals Talents. Ilia cannot learn Originality, and Cyuss cannot learn Nimble Fingers, but other than that, you're good to go.

Purchase some Iron and Pet Food, and use Crafting and Familiar to unlock a potential 300 Skill Points on Roddick and 200 on Ilia (and 200 on Cyuss, if you have him). You cannot purchase Fountain Pens yet, so we can't use Writing to unlock Composition until later.

Use these Skill Points to max out Determination, then focus on getting Roddick's Crafting Specialty to at least level 8. Just alternate between Mineralogy, Eye for Detail, and Aesthetics, purchasing whichever is the least expensive each time in order to get to level 8 as efficiently as possible. You can go for level 9, if you wish, but level 10 is overkill - don't waste the Skill Points, because we'll need them later.

Here's the fun part. Save your game, then use Roddick's Crafting to turn your Ruby into a Berserker Ring and your Rainbow Diamond into a Ring of Might. This will probably require a lot of reloading, but the results will be epic. The Berserker Ring puts your character into Berserk at all times, which doubles Attack Power. The Ring of Might doubles your Attack Power and doubles the elemental damage you take (a worthy trade). Equip these both to your leader. If you have the cash, I recommend buying two more Rubies to create Berserker Rings for the rest of your party.

The next big goal we have for our Skill Points is maxing out Train and Customization. These won't come for a little while, so for now, dump your Skill Points into Resilience, then feel free to spend a few Skill Points on Combat Skills, like Godspeed.

FAST-FORWARD:

- * Recruit Ashlay (see Sidebar 5.B) if you wish (recommended).
- * If you don't recruit Ashlay, head to Astral City by whatever means you wish.
- * Complete all the scenes in Astral City (there are no useful items to acquire in the city). If you have Cyuss, Phia will join your team here. Remove all of her equipment and move her out of the active party.
- * Learn two Talents with Phia, then spend all her Skill Points on Purity for 100,000 Fol (the "wasted" Skill Points are of no consequence if you plan on recruiting her for real - by the time she joins, you'll be able to easily max everyone's Skills anyway).
- * Complete the Astral Caves (the Pickaxe you purchased in Portmith is handy here). Phia will leave you afterward.
- * Accept the Purgatorium quest when it is offered.

SIDEBAR 5.B) RECRUITING ASHLAY

Feel free to ignore this section if you do not intend to recruit Ashlay. I highly recommend it, though, since recruiting Ashlay allows Roddick to learn his best Special Art, and it allows Mavelle (the best character) to join the team. As I warned you before, if you have Cyuss, then you cannot get Ashlay, so go ahead and skip this part.

Head north to the arena. Go to the back seats and speak with Ashlay, then sign Roddick up to fight in the arena. If you don't have the Sword of Marvels, just give Roddick the Berserker Ring and the Ring of Might, and you'll do fine. Clear the lowest rank with Roddick, and don't bother with the rest of the arena (we don't want to gain too many levels until we get the Enlightenment Super Specialty - then we'll return to clear this place).

After you've cleared one arena rank with Roddick, head to the Tatroi docks. After the scene, tell Ashlay that you would be honored to have him join you, and he will. You will end up in Astral.

As soon as you get the chance to (sometime in Astral), level Ashlay's Determination to level 4, then unlock all the Specialties needed to learn all the Talents you can (Ashlay cannot learn Design Sense or Nimble Fingers). Then, I recommend dumping the rest of his Skill Points into Purity and benching him - he isn't good enough for a spot in your final four, and benching him now allows Roddick and Ilia to gain more EXP. If you do wish to use him (or you have more money than you know what to do with already), then go ahead and treat his Skill Points as normal (max Determination, then Resilience).

Now that you've recruited Ashlay, complete the fast-forward steps previous to this sidebar.

5.9) PURGATORIUM

Your first visit to the Purgatorium is completely optional, but the reason we're here is for the 350 Skill Points, and so that we can level Ioshua's Purity Skill for some free money (also, if you have Cyuss, then, you will need to recruit Ioshua here in order to get Mavelle). In theory, it's more optimal to wait until you have all 8 characters before getting these 350 Skill Points, but by the time you have 8 characters you should be able to get to level 100 and max out all your Skills easily anyhow. The 350 Skill Points will help us a lot more at this part of the game.

Enter the main entrance (the not-hidden one) first. Go north into the room with five exits. Go west for ATHELAS, then back into the main room. Go through the northeast door, then into the north door. Pull the switch, then return to the main room.

Go through the northwest door. Examine the altar for 50 SKILL POINTS, then leave the Purgatorium. Head along the mountains to the right and enter through the hidden entrance.

Ioshua will either join you here, or somewhere in the Purgatorium. I recommend taking his equipment, dumping his Skill Points into Purity, and

benching him - he is not a good character. Just use his Heal Spells from the sidelines to heal between battles. Also, feel free to teach him a Talent or two to get more Skill Points for Purity - Ioshua cannot learn Originality or Love of Animals.

After entering the hidden entrance, go through the northwest door, hit the switch, then come back and go through the northeast door. Take the first right in this hallway to score 100 SKILL POINTS (if you don't have Ioshua yet, skip these and come back for them when you get Ioshua). Return to the hallway and head through the north door.

This is the first blob room. Touch the green blob for a FROGHEAD, and touch the blue blob to teleport to this room's north exit. If you have Ioshua, skip the rest of this paragraph. Enter the first door you encounter in this hallway, and you'll get Ioshua after an easy fight. Then go back south into the hallway. Go back and get those 100 Skill Points you left behind, then return to this hallway.

Go to the end of the hallway, past first door, and enter the door at the southwest end of the hall for 100 SKILL POINTS. Return to the hallway and enter the north door. Then proceed north through the next door.

This is the second blob room. Go through the door on the left and follow the path all the way to the end to find a switch. Pull that switch, then return to the blob room. Touch the northwest green blob for a RESURRECTION ELIXIR, and the east green blob for a RING OF RESISTANCE. Go through the door on the right and hit the switch, then return and touch the blue blob to proceed to the next room. Save at the Save Point and proceed through the door.

This is the third blob room. Touch one of the blue blobs for a RUNE METAL; the other blue blob takes you back to the entrance of this room (there's no way to tell one from the other - just guess). Touch the orange blob, then the right orange blob, then the left orange blob to exit this room.

In this next room, go through the door on the right for 100 SKILL POINTS. Go through the left door to completely restore your HP and MP, and then proceed through the north door.

--BATTLE-----

ENEMY:	Wolf Spirit (x4)
HP:	8,000
MP:	0
STRONG VS:	Light
WEAK VS:	Dark

This should be very easy. The only time you'll have any trouble is if they all attack one character at the same time. Try to focus on the same Wolf Spirit as your AI buddy, and if a character dies, revive them immediately. Chances are you'll win this fight before you have to face either of those scenarios.

--/BATTLE-----

After that battle, head through the north door for a scene. You will then have to decide whether to keep Ioshua or not. If you have Cyuss, then you

MUST recruit Ioshua in order to get Mavelle. If you DO NOT have Cyuss, though (which was my recommendation), then I recommend kicking Ioshua out of the team - he sucks, and we've already got what we need out of him (100,000 Fol from his Purity Skill).

FAST-FORWARD:

- * Head to Tropp, witness the fall of the Celestial Ship.
- * Sail from Tropp to Portmith.
- * Examine the Celestial Ship, just north of Kraat.
- * Return to Portmith.
- * Sail from Portmith to Tropp.
- * Sail from Tropp to Eckdart.

5.10) ECKDART

Unless you have Ashlay and Ioshua, Millie will join you here. Add her to your active party. She starts with enough Skill Points to max out Determination, so go ahead and do that. Next, learn whatever Talents you can with her, then max out Resilience. Hold on to the rest of her Skill Points; you'll be using them shortly. Also, Roddick can use Crafting on a Green Beryl to create her a Faerie Ring (as well as Chains of Might for other characters).

If Millie does not join you here, then you'll have to use Ioshua, Ronyx, or Mavelle for your Alchemy character. In that case, Replace each instance of "Millie" in the next two sections with "Ioshua", "Ronyx", or "Mavelle" as needed.

Purchase the Sense 3 and Technical 3 Skill Sets. You now have access to the Music, Train, and Customization Specialties, and can use Music to unlock the Rhythm Sense and Listening Talents. Your priority is to get Roddick's and Millie's Customization to level 9. If you have Cyuss, you should get his Customization to level 9 as well. After that, maxing Millie's Alchemy (a Specialty you cannot access yet) is the next thing to shoot for. Just preemptively raise her Mineralogy and Technology levels, and she'll have Alchemy as soon as you unlock Faeriology.

For the characters who are NOT in your active party, max out ESP. This Skill adds a random item to your inventory each time you gain a level in it; it's another Skill like Purity that's better off purchased with throwaway characters. You will also eventually want one character to be exactly level 8 in Music and with the Listening Talent; bonus if it's a character who isn't in your active party. I will explain the reason for this later.

Purchase at least 1 level in the Skill Effort for each character, and turn on the Train Specialty for each character. After getting Train with more than one character, the Enlightenment Super Specialty will open up - turn this on as well.

Also, purchase a Keen Kitchen Knife, a Silver Trumpet (use Group Appraising to lower the price), and as many instruments as you can before you leave this town.

If Ioshua is in your team, he will tell you about an optional sidequest as you leave the village - you might as well do it (see Sidebar 5.C).

Otherwise, head for Ionis (Section 5.11).

SIDEBAR 5.C) MT. ECKDART

If Ioshua is in your team, the Mt. Eckdart sidequest becomes available to you when you leave Eckdart. From Eckdart, go behind the mountains on the north side - you'll see a trail poking out. Follow that trail to get to Mt. Eckdart.

Follow the only path until you reach a cabin. Watch a scene, and when you are asked for a response, select "Let's take them out" to begin the quest (or choose "... " to deny the quest, but if you were going to deny the quest, then why did you come here?). From now on, whenever you talk to Foster you can heal completely.

Head outside, and proceed northwest. Save at the Save Point. Your goal is to slay all the monsters that are wandering around out here - just walk into a monster to engage. They are all easy, so I'm not going to bother providing battle strategies. Start by attacking the Gerels on this screen. Once they are slain, check the sparkle in the grass for a LAVENDER.

Take the east path across the bridge. Grab the ARTEMIS LEAF and slay the Gerels, then go northeast. On the next screen, exit south. Slay the Dragonflies, then grab the ROBE OF DECEPTION from the south treasure box. Exit northwest (the way you came in), and head north. Grab the WOLFSBANE and slay the Dragonflies, then continue north. Slay the Dragonflies here, then grab the ELVEN CAP from the north treasure box. Return to the Save Point.

This time, go north. Slay the Dragonflies and grab the MANDRAKE, then go east across the bridge. Slay the Gerels and grab the LAVENDER, then go back across the west bridge. Go northwest. Slay the Dragonflies and grab the ROD OF JEWELS from the west treasure box. Return to the Save Point.

Finally, take the west path. You're in an area with paths in all four directions - slay the Dragonflies and take the ROSE HIP, then take the north path. Slay the Gerels, take the FINE SHIELD, then return one screen and take the west path. Slay the Gerels, take the SPECTACLES, then go back and take the south path. Slay the Gerels, take the BLUEBERRIES, and you're done!

After slaying all the monsters, return to Foster's Cabin. Talk to Foster, and he will give you the ELVEN BOW. That's it, that's all you get. The jerk won't even let you sleep at his cabin anymore, either.

Exit this place and head to Ionis.

5.11) IONIS

When you enter Ionis, Ronyx will join your party (bench him), and Mavelle will join you as long as your party looks like one of the following:

- * Roddick, Ilia, Ashlay
- * Roddick, Ilia, Ioshua
- * Roddick, Ilia, Ashlay, Ioshua
- * Roddick, Ilia, Cyuss, Ioshua

* Roddick, Ilia

Your party should conform to one of the bullet points in the list above as long as you listened to my recommendations. If you have Cyuss and not Ioshua, despite all my warnings, then Mavelle will not join you. May God have mercy on your soul.

Add Mavelle to your active party, equip her with a Berserker Ring, and get her up to speed on Specialties and Talents. Your first priority is, like your other characters, to max out Determination and Resilience, put 1 level into Effort, then get her Customization to a high level. After that, do whatever you want.

This is the team I recommend using for the rest of the game: Roddick, Ilia, Mavelle, and Millie. In my opinion, this is the best team in the game. For the most part, I will assume this is your team, but if it isn't, it shouldn't be too difficult to adjust my battle strategies for whatever team you have.

Now that you've reached Ionis, you have access to all Item Creation Specialties. Purchase the Knowledge 3 Skill Set, and put a level into Faeriology to unlock Alchemy. Level Alchemy as high as you can with Millie, then unlock Alchemy with another character to unlock the Blacksmith Super Specialty.

Purchase a LEZARD FLASK, a bunch of SMITH'S HAMMERS, and some FOUNTAIN PENS. Fountain Pens allow you to use the Writing Specialty, which you can use to unlock the Composition Talent. If you want, go ahead and purchase the BERET (increased chance of success with Writing) also. Don't bother with the Thief's Glove - Pickpocketing isn't worth your time, and it can lower your characters' affection ratings. (If you are having trouble affording all of this, check Sidebar 5.D for the money-making trick I promised).

If you want to screw around with Machinery, I recommend using a benched character for it. Unlock a bunch of Talents on Ronyx (Orchestra makes acquiring Talents much faster) and max out his Machinery and Operation Skills. Purchase a bunch of MECHANIC'S TOOLBOXES. You can then have Ronyx use the Machinist Specialty to create a whole bunch of useful items:

- * Element Analyzer (Increases the success rate of Appraising)
- * Graphic Tool (Increases the success rate of Art)
- * Soldering Iron (Increases the success rate of Crafting)
- * Survival Kit (Increases the success rate of Survival)
- * Triangle Flask (Increases the success rate of Alchemy)
- * Word Processor (Increases the success rate of Writing and Publication)

You can use Blacksmith to create some good armor now. I recommend creating the following:

- * Damascus -> Dwarven Mail and Dwarven Guard for Roddick.
- * Rune Metal -> Robes of Deception for Mavelle and Millie.
- * Orichalcum -> Hermit's Cap for Millie.
- * Moonrock -> Dueling Suit for Ilia.
- * Mithril -> Mithril Helmet and Mithril Greaves for Roddick.

Also, it's time we create some better weapons.

For Roddick, if you don't have the Sword of Marvels, create it by combining

a Sinclair with a Star Ruby. Then, combine the Sword of Marvels with a Meteorite for a SOULEATER. The Souleater will become a liability later, due to its Earth elemental property, but for now it dominates. You may want a spare Sword of Marvels, just in case there are enemies that give you trouble with the Souleater.

For Ilia, if you don't have the Cestus of Poison, create it by combining any of Ilia's weapons with Mithril. Then, combine the Cestus of Poison with a Moonrock to create the DRAGON CLAW.

For Mavelle, combine her Raven Orb with Iron to create any elemental orb. Then, combine that orb with a Star Ruby or higher material. If you don't get the RUNE ORB, just keep combining the result with high materials (or reload your save and try again) until you get it.

For Millie, combine a Ruby Wand with a Star Ruby or higher to get Mindsoother, then combine Mindsoother with Orichalcum for a Scepter of the Bunny. Combine Scepter of the Bunny with a Diamond for ROD OF THE FEATHER.

If you are using other characters, check Sidebar 5.J, which has the formulas for each character's best main-game weapons. Most characters can create their best weapons at this point of the game.

FAST-FORWARD:

- * Head toward Van y Ille City, the city after Ionis.

SIDEBAR 5.D) LIMITLESS FOL

Once you've reached Ionis, you have access to everything you need to make massive amounts of Fol very quickly. You will need:

- * Lezard Flask - purchase this at Ionis.
- * Tons of Iron - purchase anywhere.
- * Alchemy level 10 on a character with Blessing of Mana (usually Millie).
- * Orchestra Super Specialty - two characters need Music and Art. Then, you must Compose eight songs on at least four instruments.

Activate Orchestra, then use your Alchemy character to transmute as much Iron into Philosopher's Stones as you can. Then, sell the Philosopher's Stones for 354,000 Fol each (or use Group Appraising to raise prices and sell them for even more)!

From now on, whenever you need money, just perform the procedure described in this sidebar. For the rest of the guide, I will assume that you have as much money as you need at all times.

5.12) VAN Y ILLE CITY / LABYRINTH OF CHAMPIONS

The first thing you should do here is purchase the Combat 3 Skill Set. You now have Feint, one of the most important Skills in the game. Leveling Feint (at least to level 5 or so) with Roddick is now your top-priority with your

Skill Points.

After that, head straight north through the city and talk to the king. You'll end up in the Labyrinth of Champions.

Before going into any of the doors, go back up the stairs and grab the treasure box for an EMERALD RING. Return to the Labyrinth and enter the middle door.

Take a left at the fork, then take the left door for RESURRECTION MIST. Go through the right door, follow the path, ignore the north door and continue following the path south. You'll exit a door - go east from here, and enter the door for an AMULET OF FLEXIBILITY.

Backtrack and take that north door that I told you to ignore earlier. Proceed through the next door. In this larger room, use your Pickaxe for a DIAMOND, a GREEN BERYL, and a MITHRIL. Exit north.

After saving, exit north. Solve the puzzle by hitting the switches behind the first (far-left) door, the third door, the fifth door, and the sixth door. Prepare for a battle, and proceed down the stairs.

--BATTLE-----

ENEMY: Peryton
HP: 36,800
MP: 0
STRONG VS: Water, Wind
WEAK VS: Fire

ENEMY: Wisp (x3)
HP: 3,360
MP: 120
STRONG VS: Dark
WEAK VS: Light

As usual, get rid of the minions (the Wisps) first, so that you don't get flanked. Your healer may get paralyzed, so keep an eye on your Hit Point totals.

After killing the Wisps, gang-mob Peryton and he'll be ended quickly.

-/BATTLE-----

Head west and follow the path all the way to the exit. Watch a bunch of scenes. You'll get the FOUR BEASTS SFT. If you have Ashlay, then you should max this out on Roddick and start using his Shockwave Swirl Special Art regularly until you learn Phoenix Blast - you'll need Phoenix Blast later in order to learn Roddick's best Special Art (feel free to do this even if you don't have Ashlay, of course). Also, max this out on Ilia and start using Explosive Kick so that you can unlock Tortoise Smash. If you have Cyuss, max this Skill out and start using Lightray Blade so you can unlock Dragon Surge.

You'll also get the Van Emblem; the emblem quest has begun.

SIDEBAR 5.E) EMBLEM QUEST ODDS AND ENDS

Now that the emblem quest has started, there are a bunch of things that should be done either now, or sometime during the quest:

- * Recruit the rest of your team (and get the Bunny Whistle).
Personally, I don't care who you get, since you already have the four characters I recommend using (Roddick, Ilia, Mavelle, and Millie). If you have different preferences, well, now is the time to get whoever you want. The only character I definitely recommend is Pericci, so you can get the Bunny Whistle (see Sidebar 5.H).

- * Clear the Tatroi Arena with Roddick.
This is the best place to gain levels until about level 45 or so. Also, clearing Rank C in the arena will get you the Omega SFT, which you need for Mavelle's Galaxy Special Art.
Just spam Dragon Roar (as soon as you get it post-level 29) for every battle, and try different weapons (Souleater, Sword of Strength, or Sword of Marvels) if any of the monsters give you trouble.
Once you get Omega SFT, equip the Thunder Orb Special Art to Mavelle and start using it regularly. Eventually you'll unlock the Galaxy Special Art, and true domination will begin.

- * Max out the Customization Specialty for Roddick, Cyuss (if you have him), and one of Millie/Ioshua/Erys.
You have a limited window of opportunity for creating these characters' best weapons (as opposed to the other characters, who can create their best weapons at any time), so get their Customization levels as high as possible before proceeding to the Muah Castle Treasury. See Sidebar 5.J for the weapon formulas.

- * Utilize Sidebar 5.F for some ridiculous leveling.
Feel free to do this now, or during or after the emblem quest - just make sure to do it, period. It owns.

- * Clear the Old Race Ruins northeast of Silvalant.
We don't care about any of the treasures there except the Divine Fury SFT. See Sidebar 5.G for the walkthrough on this.

- * Clear the Abandoned Mine on Mt. Metorx, I guess.
Don't do this until you are at least level 50. In fact, I recommend skipping this dungeon entirely - by the time you're strong enough to clear it, all the treasures are obsolete. If you still want to complete it though, then see Sidebar 5.I.

The individual emblems can be acquired in any order, but I chose the order that results in the least amount of backtracking. If you intend to get Pericci and the Bunny Whistle, though, you may wish to do the Muah Emblem first, since the Bunny Whistle will make overworld travel much less annoying.

The three sections regarding the emblems are printed below, after Sidebar 5.F (Ridiculous Early Leveling). The various optional quests are presented below in sidebars.

SIDEBAR 5.F) RIDICULOUS EARLY LEVELING

Believe it or not, by the time you've reached Van y Ille City, you can easily level your main team to level 100 in less than two hours. Before you attempt this, make sure you have the following:

- * Feint Combat Skill at least level 5 with Roddick.
- * Enlightenment Super Specialty - two characters need Train and Survival.
- * Ring of Insanity - Roddick can Craft this with Moonrock.
- * Dragon Roar Special Art - Roddick level 29+.
- * The Devil's Aria song - Compose this with the Silver Trumpet.
- * Exactly level 8 Music with one character who has the Listening Talent; preferably a character who is not in your main party, so that you can max all your Skills on your main four. He/she must be EXACTLY level 8 in Music - level 7, 9, or 10 is no good.

If you have reached Van y Ille City, then you should already have Enlightenment. If you haven't cleared the Tatroi arena, go ahead and do so now - clearing Rank A is also a fantastic way to level up if you aren't strong enough to win the fight ahead.

After meeting all those requirements, equip Dragon Roar on Roddick, remove his Ring of Might, and equip the Ring of Insanity on him. Make Roddick your leader, and change your allies' Strategy settings to "Stay away from enemies". Change your Formation to Linear.

When you're ready for battle, go to the world map, save your game, then have your Music character perform The Devil's Aria.

--BATTLE-----

ENEMY: Arch Phoenix
HP: 63,400
MP: 0
STRONG VS: Fire, Wind
WEAK VS: Nothing

Just spam Dragon Roar with Roddick. Your Ring of Insanity should knock the Arch Phoenix back repeatedly, stopping him from toasting Roddick or his allies. It's okay if characters die here, as long as Roddick lives - Roddick will get obscenely stronger, and then he'll be able to kill the Arch Phoenix faster, making it easier to level your other characters.

The first few times you fight him will be tough. At the beginning of the fight, you may want to switch to someone else and run toward the Arch Phoenix, just to serve as a decoy for his first attack. Once the Phoenix starts the attack, switch to Roddick and start the Dragon Roar onslaught (don't forget to set Roddick's Strategy setting to "Stay away from enemies" if you plan on doing this). You may have to revive Roddick constantly the first few times you battle this beast. Also, the Arch Phoenix seems to parry a lot less if you equip the Sword of Strength or the Sword of Marvels instead of the Souleater.

Once you've reached about level 70, you can put your Ring of Might and Souleater back on, and destroy him twice as fast.

If you just can't win, then clear Rank A at the Tatroi Arena repeatedly until level 55 or so, and get your Feint Skill as high as you can.

-/BATTLE-----

You will be amazed at how much EXP you get for this battle. You can fight this thing again and again by playing The Devil's Aria with your character who has level 8 Music. You can easily get to level 100 and max out all your Skills here, if you want (remember to turn Enlightenment off once you've maxed out your Skills).

5.13) SILVALANT CITY / SILVALANT EMBLEM

Travel to Silvalant City. Make sure to grab the COMBO LINK in the Van y Silvalant Caves on the way (actually, I don't think this item is very good. If you're going to use it, make sure to "steal" the Special Art slots from a caster, like Millie. She won't miss them).

In Silvalant, take the RESURRECTION MIST from the Home behind Santa the Dealer.

Make sure you have a Dueling Suit and enough Robes of Deception to outfit your entire party before you buy the Magical Rasp - once you buy it, you will no longer be able to create these items (unless you sell off the Magical Rasp) and you will need them later for their protection from Petrification. You may also want to create Hermit's Caps now, because they are arguably better than the helmets you will create with the Magical Rasp.

From Santa, purchase the MAGICAL RASP. You may buy tri-Emblems here, if you wish, but I don't think they are worth the time it takes to make enough money for them, even with Sidebar 5.D. The Ring of Might + Berserker Ring combo is much better than tri-Emblems anyhow.

Now that you have the Magical Rasp, you should take the time to create new, better armor for your team. See Sidebar 5.J for the list of the best armors that can be created via the Blacksmith Super Specialty.

Speak with the king of Silvalant, and you'll receive the Silvalant Emblem.

Exit the city and reenter via Private Action. Talk to Millie, then exit the city and you will receive a GOOD LUCK CHARM.

Reenter the city and sail to the next emblem, or to Van Kingdom if you have them all. Also, you may wish to do the Old Race Ruins from here (see Sidebar 5.G).

SIDEBAR 5.G) OLD RACE RUINS

(If the monsters in here own you, then check out Sidebar 5.F for some ridiculous leveling.)

To get to this place, head northeast of Silvalant. Eventually, as you hit the very northeast corner of the Silvalant continent, you'll find yourself in the cave.

From the entrance, head north two screens for a SACRIFICIAL DOLL. Return south one screen and cross the east bridge for a MEDICINE BOTTLE. Now cross the west bridge, grab the WOLFSBANE, and follow the path down the stairs.

Head south one screen, and you'll be in a room with three bridges and a Save Point. Cross the south bridge for a SWEET SYRUP, then take the east bridge. Take the southeast path for a KITTY SUIT, then go back and take the north path. Mine for a METEORITE, then head up the stairs.

Follow the path to the right, then take the path immediately southwest to get a ROUNDEL DAGGER, then go east and enter the doorway for a STEEL HELMET and an ORB OF THE VALKYRIE. Go across the south bridge and down the stairs.

Follow the path until you come out a door into a room with a north path, a west bridge, and a south path. Take the north path for a ROBE OF DECEPTION and a RESURRECTION MIST, then return. Cross the west bridge for a DWARVEN SWORD, then return and take the south path. Go down the stairs.

Immediately to your right, mine for a RAINBOW DIAMOND, then head west. Grab the STEEL HELMET, then head south and east for SILVER GREAVES. Then, go back one screen and this time take the southwest path. Mine for a MOONROCK, then take the stairs.

Mine for MITHRIL, then proceed north, then grab the STAR RUBY. Take the east path for an ELVEN CAP, then take the west path for a SACRIFICIAL DOLL and a METEORITE. What happens when you enter the north door varies depending on your party, as listed below (no matter the case, though, I recommend against entering the door):

- * If you don't have Ioshua, then entering the door results in a harmless scene. You may enter or ignore the door as you wish.
- * If you have Ioshua and not Ashlay, then going through the door and selecting the "Help Ioshua" option during the scene will result in Mavelle leaving your party (selecting "Leave it alone" will result in nothing happening).
- * If you have Ioshua and Ashlay, then going through the door and selecting the "Help Ioshua" option during the scene will result in Mavelle leaving your party and Erys joining your party (selecting "Leave it alone" will result in nothing happening).

After you have chosen to enter or ignore the door, backtrack all the way back to the Save Point.

From the Save Point, take the west path, then go down the stairs. Head southwest for SWEET SYRUP, then go back and take the northeast path. Go through the north door for a MEDICINE BOTTLE and STEEL ARMOR.

Go east from that door and follow the path all the way to the Ancient Guardian.

--BATTLE-----

ENEMY: Ancient Guardian
HP: 90,000
MP: 0
STRONG VS: Earth, Water, Fire, Wind, Light, Dark

WEAK VS: Nothing

Under NO circumstances should you EVER stand directly in front of this thing, because he has two attacks that have the potential to utterly destroy you. The first is a huge laser that he fires from his eyes that will deal continuous damage to anyone directly in front of him. The second is a slow forward charge that will lock down any characters that get caught up in it.

Believe it or not, your strategy for this fight is NOT to spam Dragon Roar. Instead, get below or above him as soon as you can, then start pounding him with regular attacks. The best place to attack from is directly behind him, but be careful, because he can turn around instantly. He doesn't have a lot of Hit Points, so as long as he doesn't annihilate you with his forward attacks, you shouldn't have too much trouble dispatching him in short order.

~/BATTLE-----

After you've killed him, grab the treasures in the four rooms: DIVINE FURY SFT, SILVER GREAVES, AIR SLICER, STEEL ARMOR, and ELVEN SLIPPERS. Then, get out of here.

5.14) ASTRAL CITY / ASTRAL EMBLEM

Head to Astral City via Tatroi (you might as well clear the Tatroi Arena while you're there, and recruit T'nique, if you want him). Go to the castle. Phia will offer to join you if you don't already have her and you have two open party slots - take her if you want her.

Talk to the king and you'll get the Astral Emblem. Pretty easy. Now head to the next emblem, or to Van Kingdom if you have them all.

5.15) PORTMITH / MUAH EMBLEM

Make sure Customization is level 10 on Roddick, Cyuss (if you have him), and one of Millie/Ioshua/Erys before you head to the castle for the Muah Emblem! If you want, you may also recruit Pericci at this time (the first part of Sidebar 5.H).

Head to Portmith. Enter the castle for a scene. You'll end up in the Muah Castle Treasury.

Enter the first door you see and grab the LUXURIOUS SWORD. Do not attempt to Customize Luxurious Swords yet - wait until you reach a Save Point just in case your Customization attempt fails. Don't exit the dungeon either, or else you'll lose the sword.

Return to the hallway and enter the next door for a LUXURIOUS ROD and LUXURIOUS ROBE. Same advice applies here - don't attempt to Customize the Luxurious Rods, and don't leave the dungeon.

Proceed down the hallway, and go through the door and down the stairs at the end of it. Go through the next door and you'll be in a hallway. In the

rooms that line this hallway, pick up the MEDICINE BOTTLE, FELINE SFT, and LUXURIOUS ARMOR. Go down the stairs at the end of the hall.

You're in a room with an east path, a west path, and a south path. Take the east path for a RESURRECTION ELIXIR, a LUXURIOUS ROD, a LUXURIOUS SWORD, and LUXURIOUS ARMOR, then return. Take the south path for the BAGUA SFT. Finally, take the west path for a LUXURIOUS ROBE and a MEDICINE BOTTLE, then go down the stairs.

Now that you are at a Save Point, you may safely Customize your two Luxurious Swords and two Luxurious Rods. Since you will lose the Luxurious equipment when you exit this dungeon, these Customizations MUST be done now.

- * For Roddick/Ashlay, combine a Luxurious Sword and Damascus for the DUELING SWORD. This is the best non-elemental weapon for Roddick/Ashlay in the game.
- * For Millie/Ioshua/Erys, combine a Luxurious Rod with Orichalcum for the ROD OF THE FEATHER, if you don't already have it (or even if you do - it doesn't hurt to have spares, since you'll lose the Luxurious Rods anyway).
- * For Cyuss, combine a Luxurious Sword with Mithril for the BLADE OF DOOM. This is the same as the Berserk Sword you should already have, but it's Dark elemental instead. It's good to have an alternate.

Once you've created that stuff successfully, save your game, then proceed through the door.

--BATTLE-----

ENEMY: Succubus
HP: 108,000
MP: 100
STRONG VS: Earth, Water, Fire, Wind, Dark
WEAK VS: Light

ENEMY: Shadow Beast (x7)
HP: 6,000
MP: 0
STRONG VS: Earth
WEAK VS: Nothing

Kill all the Shadow Beasts first, and as quickly as possible, by utilizing area attacks and attacks like Dragon Roar that can hit multiple enemies at once. If multiple Shadow Beasts surround a character, that character can end up going down pretty fast.

After the Shadow Beasts have been defeated, taking down the Succubus is a piece of cake.

-/BATTLE-----

After defeating the Succubus, proceed through the north door and grab the RING OF MENTAL POWER.

Exit this place by backtracking to the entrance. You will lose all Luxurious armors, as well as any Luxurious weapons you didn't Customize, and you will gain 20,000 FOL, 200 SKILL POINTS, a HAMMER CHARM, and the Muah Emblem.

Now head to the next emblem, or to Van Kingdom if you have them all. Or, this is a good time to detour to Kraat and recruit Pericci and do the Bunny Whistle quest, if you wish - see Sidebar 5.H.

SIDEBAR 5.H) RECRUITING PERICCI / OBTAINING THE BUNNY WHISTLE

During the emblem quest, you are able to recruit Pericci and obtain the Bunny Whistle. Doing so is completely optional, but I recommend it, since the Bunny Whistle makes travel between cities much less annoying.

In order to recruit Pericci, you must have fulfilled the following requirements:

- * You must have rescued Pericci during the Velkhent Pirate quest.
- * You must have picked up the Ocarina she dropped in Portmith.
- * You must have a free party slot open for her (obviously).

To get the Bunny Whistle, you must have fulfilled the following requirements:

- * You must have completed the Delivery quest back when you first got Cyuss.
- * You must have already received the Muah Emblem (Section 5.15).

For Pericci: Return to Kraat (south of Portmith) and enter it via Private Action. You'll see Ilia and Millie standing next to a purple cat. Talk to Millie, and she'll ask you to name the cat - select "How about Pericci". Equip the Ocarina on Roddick, then press the X Button NEAR the cat, and Roddick will begin playing the Ocarina. After the scene, Pericci will join you.

For the Bunny Whistle: Head to Portmith, and enter via Private Action. Go to the castle, watch the scene. Pericci will ask you if you hate her, select the nonsensical answer "Oh, well... Let's give it a shot", then watch the rest of the scene.

After that, return to Haute, and enter via Private Action. Speak with Pericci outside of Badam's Item Shop, then watch the scene. You will receive the BUNNY WHISTLE.

You may now return to your regularly scheduled emblem quest.

SIDEBAR 5.I) MT. METORX / ABANDONED MINE

This sidebar is included mostly for completeness - I recommend against clearing this place, because by the time you are powerful enough to do so, the treasures are obsolete. If you want to complete this place, then read on - otherwise, skip this sidebar. (If the monsters in here own you, then

check out Sidebar 5.F for some ridiculous leveling.)

From the entrance, proceed southwest, then go west at the fork. Go northwest at the next fork for DWARVEN BOOTS. Head backward one screen and this time go south. Follow the path and go east at the fork for ORICHALCUM, AQUABERRIES, and a DWARVEN HELMET. Return to the previous fork and go north.

Follow the path up to another fork, grab the RUNE METAL and MITHRIL on the west side of this room, then exit east. Get the RUNE METAL and the ORICHALCUM on the way to the fork, then take the north/northeast path for an ANKH SHIELD and a RESURRECTION ELIXIR. Return one screen to the fork, and this time take the east/southeast path, grabbing the ORICHALCUM on the wall along the way.

You'll find yourself in a room with a door to the northeast and a path to the north. Take the north path for a STEEL HELMET, then go back and through the door. Go north, then west for STEEL ARMOR and a MIND BOMB, then east for SILVER GREAVES and SWEET SYRUP. Go back to the door you came through earlier.

This time, go south. At the fork, go southwest for a DWARVEN GUARD, and continue along the path, then go east at the next fork. Take the north path for BLUEBERRIES and DWARVEN MAIL, then take the east path for a Save Point.

Save your game, then prepare to face the boss of this joint. Continue east when you're ready.

--BATTLE-----

ENEMY: Jabberwabbit
HP: 90,000
MP: 0
STRONG VS: Nothing
WEAK VS: Nothing

ENEMY: Shadow Flower (x6)
HP: 7,200
MP: 0
STRONG VS: Earth, Water
WEAK VS: Fire

Standard procedure: Kill all the Shadow Flowers quickly by using area attacks like Dragon Roar that can hit multiple enemies at once. Don't let yourself get flanked.

After the Shadow Flowers have been defeated, taking down the Jabberwabbit is easy.

-/BATTLE-----

You've earned it: Grab the CINDERELLA GLASS, EMERALD RING, DWARVEN SWORD, and ASTRAL SWORD, then get out of here.

SIDEBAR 5.J) BEST EQUIPMENT

Use Alchemy to create all the materials you need for the equipment in this sidebar. Most of this stuff can be created earlier than the emblem quest, but a few of the weapons can't be created until then - for completeness, it is all included here. Once you've obtained the Magical Rasp in Silvalant, you can create the best armors as well.

CRAFTING - Have Roddick use the Crafting Specialty for these Accessories.

- * Ruby -> Berserker Ring
- * Green Beryl -> Faerie Ring
- * Rainbow Diamond -> Ring of Might
- * Moonrock -> Ring of Insanity

BLACKSMITH - Use the Blacksmith Super Specialty for various armors. You will need the Magical Rasp.

* Armor:

- * Orichalcum -> Reflecting Plate
- * Moonrock -> Battle Suit, Kitty Armor
- * Meteorite -> Sylvan Mail
- * Rune Metal -> Cloak of the Stars

* Shield:

- * Mithril -> Mithril Shield

* Helmet:

- * Orichalcum -> Dream Crown
- * Damascus -> Dueling Helmet

* Greaves:

- * Meteorite -> Sylvan Boots

CUSTOMIZE - Use each character's Customization Specialty to create these weapons. The results are semi-random, so you'll probably have to do a bit of reloading.

* Roddick:

- * Luxurious Sword + Damascus -> Dueling Sword
Get the Luxurious Sword in the Muah Castle Treasury during the emblem quest. This item MUST be created before leaving the treasury!

* Ilia:

- * Cestus of Poison + Moonrock -> Dragon Claw
If you don't have the Cestus of Poison, you can create one by combining any of Ilia's weapons and Mithril.

* Ronyx:

- * Silver Bow + Philosopher's Stone -> Bow of Explosion
Start by combining your Shortbow with Moonrock to get the Arbalest or Crossbow. Combine that result with Mithril to get the Silver Bow.

* Millie:

- * Scepter of the Bunny + Diamond -> Rod of the Feather

* Rod of the Feather + Philosopher's Stone -> Dragonstaff
Dragonstaff is a better weapon for attack Spells than Rod of the Feather, but it's worse for healing. The choice is yours.
To get a Scepter of the Bunny, combine a Ruby Wand with a Star Ruby or higher to get Mindsoother, then combine Mindsoother with Orichalcum for a Scepter of the Bunny.

* Cyuss:

* Luxurious Sword + Mithril -> Blade of Doom

* Any mid-level sword + Orichalcum -> Berserk Sword

These two swords are identical except for their elemental property; the Blade of Doom is Dark elemental, and the Berserk Sword is Earth elemental. You'll want them both, since you will be going up against multiple elemental creatures in the future.

Get the Luxurious Sword in the Muah Castle Treasury during the emblem quest. The Blade of Doom MUST be created before leaving the treasury!

* Ashlay:

* Luxurious Sword + Damascus -> Dueling Sword

Same as Roddick's. In fact, you can just have Roddick create two of them.

* Ioshua:

* Scepter of the Bunny + Diamond -> Rod of the Feather

* Rod of the Feather + Philosopher's Stone -> Dragonstaff

Same as Millie. She can create hers and Ioshua's, or vice-versa.

* Mavelle:

* Any elemental orb + Star Ruby or higher material -> Rune Orb

* Any elemental orb + Star Ruby or higher material -> Orb of Darkness

First combine her Raven Orb with Iron to create any elemental orb. Then, combine that orb with a Star Ruby or higher material. If you don't get the Rune Orb, just keep combining the result with high materials (or reload your save and try again) until you get it.

The Orb of Darkness has better attack power than the Rune Orb, but it is Dark elemental, which will cause serious problems for you. You will probably want one for enemies that are weak against Dark, though.

* Phia:

* Fameface + Meteorite -> Assassin's Sickles

Fameface can be created by combining any mid-level dagger with a high material (Gladius with a Meteorite, Bloody Sword with Orichalcum, etc.). There are probably other ways to create the Assassin's Sickles as well.

Some people prefer the Bloody Sword to the Assassin's Sickles because of the HP drain effect. The HP drain is useful, but the Bloody Sword is Dark elemental, so you may end up killing yourself while fighting Dark elemental enemies. The choice is yours (the Bloody Sword can be created by combining anything with a mid or high material).

* Pericci:

* Cestus of Poison + Moonrock -> Dragon Claw

Same as Ilia.

* Welch:

* Stern Handy Stick + Moonrock -> Final Handy Stick

The Stern Handy Stick can be created by combining the Handy Stick

with a Moonrock. If you get something else, just keep attempting to combine the result with a high material.

* T'nique:

* Dragon Lance + Meteorite -> Enhanced Halberd

You can create the Dragon Lance by combining any mid-level spear with Mithril or Meteorite. Create mid-level spears by combining any of T'nique's weapons with Mithril.

* Erys:

* Scepter of the Bunny + Diamond -> Rod of the Feather

* Rod of the Feather + Philosopher's Stone -> Dragonstaff

Same as Millie/Ioshua.

5.16) VAN Y ILLE CITY

Once you have acquired the emblems from each kingdom, and done whatever else you want to do during the emblem quest, return to Van y Ille City and speak with the king of Van Kingdom. He will tell you to return to the Purgatorium.

If you have Ashlay, exit the city and re-enter via Private Action. Find Ashlay in the Weapon Shop / Skill Guild, and speak with him. When prompted, select the first option: "There's never really an end". Then, select the third option: "The power to build my character". Triggering this Private Action is necessary to get the Wyrn King SFT in the future.

FAST-FORWARD:

* Sail to Tropp in the Astral Kingdom.

* Walk to the Purgatorium.

* If you haven't been to the Purgatorium before, clear the main entrance (see Section 5.9).

5.17) PURGATORIUM

Enter through the hidden entrance (to the right along the mountains from the normal entrance). Your goal is to get to the room with the three runes. What follows is the quickest way there, ignoring all treasures, since you probably already have them. (If you want a walkthrough for this place WITH treasures, see Section 5.9, and ignore everything it says about Ioshua. After that, you can ignore the rest of this section and proceed to Section 5.18.)

From the entrance, take the right door. Head straight north to the first blob room, and touch the blue blob to proceed. In the next hallway, take the first north door, then the next door.

You are in the second blob room. If you've cleared this place before, simply touch the blue blob to proceed, then skip the rest of this paragraph. Otherwise, go through the door on the left and follow the path all the way to the end to find a switch. Pull that switch, then return to the blob room. Go through the door on the right and hit the switch, then return and touch

the blue blob to proceed.

Save at the Save Point and proceed through the door to the third blob room. Touch the orange blob, then the right orange blob, then the left orange blob to proceed. Go through the left door to completely restore your HP and MP, then proceed through the north door, then the next door, into the room with the three runes. A scene will take place.

5.18) PURGATORIUM INNER SANCTUM

After the scene with the three runes, you will be teleported to the Inner Sanctum.

From the Inner Sanctum entrance, head straight north, then down the stairs. Follow the path, grab the FLARE RING along the way, and just keep following the path until you reach a room on B3F with two northeast paths. Take the second path, and go through the gray door at the dead-end. A battle with some extremely easy monsters will commence.

After that battle, check the console on the wall to receive R-CARD. You can now open the red doors. Backtrack to the previous B3F room, and this time take the other northeast path. Enter the red door for RUNE METAL and an AQUA RING. Backtrack up the stairs to B2F.

Enter the first red door you see for ORICHALCUM and AIR SLICER, then go past the stairs into the red door on the right for ARBALEST. Go up the stairs, and follow the path all the way back to the entrance to this place.

From the entrance, this time head up the stairs on the right. Grab the SWEET SYRUP and the MANDRAKE along the path, then just keep following the path until you reach a red door. Grab the MIST INSIGNIA inside that red door, then exit that room and go down the stairs on the right.

Use the Save Point, then head north. At the junction, take the east path. Hit the three switches in this room (the three circles on the left of the screen), then exit this room the way you came in. The three gray doors are now open - enter them for B-CARD, MITHRIL, SOUR SYRUP, and ARTEMIS LEAF.

Now take the north path at the junction. Go left and down into the blue trapdoor, hit the switch at the end of the path, then exit back out of the blue trapdoor. Go right and down the stairs to B4F.

Follow the path until you reach the stairs. Grab the SOUR SYRUP at the base of the stairs, then go up the stairs and to the right for a RING OF LUNACY. Then, still up the stairs, take the left path for a FAERIE ELIXIR and a switch - hit that switch, then go back down the stairs where you got the Sour Syrup.

Take the northwest path (on the ground level), and proceed through the door at the end of it. Grab the ANGEL STATUETTE, then go through the next door. After the short scene, use the Save Point, then operate the console at the left side of this room. Apply the emblems in this order:

- * Land of searing heat -> Astral Emblem
- * Land of the falling leaves -> Van Emblem
- * Land of the frozen wastes -> Silvalant Emblem
- * Land of lush greenery -> Muah Emblem

After the long scene, you'll end up at Van y Ille City.

FAST-FORWARD:

- * If you have Ashlay and haven't yet triggered his Private Action here, do it now (see Section 5.16).
- * Go to Silvalant City.
- * If you have Ashlay, see Sidebar 5.K for the WyrM King SFT.
- * Sail to the Deserted Island.

SIDEBAR 5.K) WYRM KING SFT

If you have Ashlay and you've completed his Private Action at Van y Ille City (Section 5.16), then make sure to enter Silvalant City via Private Action when you get there. Ashlay will ask to see you at the castle.

(If this PA does not occur, then your Affection Rating with Ashlay isn't high enough. To raise it, try using the Publishing Super Specialty to have Roddick write a book, then use that book on Ashlay. Also, put Roddick and Ashlay in the same party for a while. You can come back and do this PA later if you can't trigger it now).

Meet Ashlay at the castle Inner Courtyard on the first floor. He will teach you the WYRM KING SFT. Max it out as soon as possible. Then, equip the Phoenix Blast Special Art to Roddick, and start using it regularly from now on until he learns RedwyrM Thundersurge, his best Special Art (if you don't have Phoenix Blast, start using Shockwave Swirl and eventually you'll learn it).

5.19) DESERTED ISLAND

Upon arriving at the Deserted Island, you'll watch a short scene, and then you'll be in the Demon World. Head north for a boss fight, right off the bat.

--BATTLE-----

ENEMY: Del Argosy
 HP: 114,000
 MP: 0
 STRONG VS: Nothing
 WEAK VS: Nothing

More Dragon Roar spam fodder.

-/BATTLE-----

After the scene, another battle!

--BATTLE-----

ENEMY: Arachmene
HP: 69,900
MP: 200
STRONG VS: Water
WEAK VS: Fire

Even easier than the previous battle.

-/BATTLE-----

During the next couple scenes, you will receive two FORCE SWORDS. If you've been keeping up on your item creation, you should already have better weapons. Use Roddick's Customization to combine a Force Sword with a Philosopher's Stone to get SILVANCE. Feel free to create one for Ashlay as well, if you want to (Cyuss can't create anything good from the Force Sword). Silvance is generally not as good as the Dueling Sword, because of its elemental properties, but it will come in handy if you plan on taking down Gabriella.

Now it's time to finish up anything that remains unfinished on Planet Roak (Sidebar 5.L), then storm the Demon World.

FAST-FORWARD:

- * Check Sidebar 5.L and make sure you have done everything you intend to before leaving for the Demon World.
- * Go to Silvalant City.
- * Sail to the Deserted Island when ready.
- * Enter the portal to the Demon World.

SIDEBAR 5.L) LEAVING PLANET ROAK

After you complete this next area, you will be unable to return to Planet Roak. Here's a list of events and items you should make sure to take care of before leaving the planet:

- * Clear the Tatroi Arena with Roddick for the OMEGA SFT (then start using the Thunder Orb Special Art with Mavelle to learn Galaxy).
- * Recruit the rest of your team.
- * Clear the Old Race Ruins northeast of Silvalant for the DIVINE FURY SFT (Sidebar 5.G).
- * Obtain the WYRM KING SFT via Ashlay's Private Actions in Van y Ille City and Silvalant City (Section 5.16 and Sidebar 5.K - only if you have Ashlay in your team).

After you complete this section, you will no longer be able to return to Planet Roak.

Take the northwest path for SWEET SYRUP, then go back a screen and take the northeast path. At the fork, go east for a GREEN BERYL, then return to the fork and go north. You're at another fork - go west, and you're at yet another fork. Go north for ATHELAS, then go back, ignore the south path, and return east.

Go east, and you'll be at a fork with a northwest path and a northeast path. Go northwest for LAVENDER, then go northeast and take the first north path (the one on the right) for a FOOT INSIGNIA. Go back one screen and take the second (left) north path.

Now you are at a fork with a west path and a south path. Go west for a METAL FANG, then take the south path. At the fork, follow the northwest path, and keep going until you reach a Save Point. From the screen with the Save Point, go south for an ORICHALCUM, and west for an EMERALD RING.

Save your game, then go north, and follow the path until you have entered the Space-Time Laboratory.

From the entrance, go left, past the stairs, and follow the path all the way until it takes you to a room with two treasure boxes. Grab the ELVEN CAP and AMULET OF FREEDOM, then exit the room and go up the stairs that are immediately outside the door. Exit this screen left and follow the path to the RAINBOW DIAMOND. Return to the entrance.

This time, go up the stairs on the right. Follow the path all the way to the MEDICINE BOTTLE, then go down the stairs on the left. Exit this screen left, then follow the long path all the way to the STAR RUBY treasure box. After grabbing that, step over the broken pod at the northeast, then go up the stairs. Follow the path all the way to the room with a MEDICINE BOTTLE and a KITTY HAIRBAND. Return to the stairs that you came down from after grabbing the first Medicine Bottle mentioned in this paragraph.

This time, take the ground-level exit (don't take the stairs) on the right. When you encounter a north door, enter it for MITHRIL and a ROBE OF DECEPTION. Exit south, and walk straight south from the door and you'll end up on the hidden path at the south end of the screen. Follow this path until it reaches a junction with a southwest path and a northeast path.

Go southwest, and follow the path all the way to the room with a STAR NECKLACE inside. Exit this room and go up the stairs. Follow the path until you reach a room with two boxes - a LONG SPEAR and a RING OF INSANITY. Return to the junction and take the northeast path.

This screen splits into three paths - two northwest exits, and an east exit. Exit the room via the northwest stairs for a CINDERELLA GLASS, then go back and take the east exit. Follow the path until you reach another junction with a northwest path and a southwest path (and there's a treasure box on the right side of the screen).

Go southwest, and follow the path to a room with two boxes - a STAR GUARD, and the RAVENOUS FIEND Spell. Exit that room, go up the stairs, and follow the path for an ORICHALCUM. Return to the juncture and go northwest this time.

Save at the Save Point. Proceed northwest, then continue straight west for a HAMMER CHARM. Go back one screen and examine the blue computer terminals.

--BATTLE-----

ENEMY: Dark Eye (x2)
HP: 99,600
MP: 140
STRONG VS: Fire, Wind, Dark
WEAK VS: Nothing

ENEMY: Death Charona (x2)
HP: 30,800
MP: 280
STRONG VS: Nothing
WEAK VS: Nothing

Go for the Death Charonas first, as they will go down faster and are basically the minions of this battle.

The Dark Eyes can turn you to stone, so try not to get up close to them if you can help it. Of course, the ever-reliable Dragon Roar works just as well in this fight as it does in most others. Keep an eye on Millie (or whoever your healer is) and make sure to cure her if she gets turned to stone.

-/BATTLE-----

You should probably go back and save after you finish that battle.

Head north from the blue computer terminals. Take the west path for a FAERIE RING and an ELEMENTAL BLADE, then go east. At the next fork, go southeast for a TEDIOUS HANDY STICK and ELVEN SLIPPERS, then go southwest.

Note that this is the absolute point of no return for Planet Roak - once you enter the next door, you can never return.

Follow the path until you reach a large north door, then enter it.

--BATTLE-----

ENEMY: Asmodeus
HP: 114,000
MP: 999
STRONG VS: Nothing
WEAK VS: Nothing

Just go ape, like you always do. Asmodeus can hit pretty hard and fast, but he usually chooses not to, for some reason. Dragon Roar + the rest of your team going crazy should be enough to defeat him before he becomes threatening.

-/BATTLE-----

After defeating this fool, you will watch a whole bunch of scenes. When you regain control, you will be on Planet Fargett.

6.) FARGETT WALKTHROUGH

If you regret leaving Roak, it's not too late - when you get the chance, simply save over a different slot (or just reset the game).

6.1) PLANET FARGETT / SAFE HOUSE

Head east for a scene. Afterward, Millie and two other characters will be removed from your team, and you'll find yourself at a Safe House.

You can buy tons of items here, as well as any Skill Sets you may have missed, so go ahead and do that now.

Feel free to level up outside the Safe House (the trick in Sidebar 5.F is still valid here), but you'll probably want Millie back before you do any hardcore leveling (unless you don't use her - then go ahead and knock yourself out).

When you're ready, exit this place and travel southwest to your next destination.

6.2) ARMY CAMP

From the entrance, activate the two blue switches, then go through the left door. Grab the RESURRECTION MIST at the end of the path, then return to the entrance. Go through the other door, then follow the path until you reach the hall with five doors.

Take the northeast door, then follow the path all the way to a MITHRIL. Return to the hall. Take the southeast door for a green switch and a MEDICINE BOTTLE, then take the southwest door for a green switch and a LAVENDER. After hitting both green switches, the north door will open - go through it.

Head to the east side of this room, and you're done here. You'll end up at the Safe House.

Purchase any items you need, then head north to the Bio-lab.

6.3) REVORSE TOWER

This dungeon is far larger than anything you've been through earlier in the game. As such, I will be separating each paragraph based on each floor transition, so that it's easier to keep track of where you are. This will result in longer paragraphs, but it will allow you to check any paragraph to

see what floor you're supposed to be on.

Enter the Bio-lab, watch a scene, then descend the ladder at the left side of the screen. You're in the Underground Tunnel. Follow the tunnel until you reach the ladder at the end of it - ascend that ladder, and you'll be in Reverse Tower B1F.

B1F: Go south and follow the path until you reach a teleportation pod. Step on it, and it'll transport you to 1F.

1F: Go west, and skip the first north door in the next hall. Grab the box behind the next north door for the DEMON'S GATE Spell, then go through the west door. After the scene, continue west, skip the first north door, and grab the STAR GUARD from the second north door and the ASSAULT BOMB from the west door. Now enter the first north door in this hall. Hit the northwest door for MITHRIL GREAVES, then proceed through the northeast door to the hall with five doors. Go through the northwest door for a SOUR SYRUP and the north door for a MEDICINE BOTTLE. Go through the northeast door, skip the next door, then go through the next door after that for a MITHRIL SHIELD. Return to the hall with five doors and take the southeast door, then step onto the transport pod to 2F.

2F: Exit the pod room west, then follow the path until you reach a hall with four doors. Grab the RAINBOW DIAMOND behind the first north door, then get the METEOR SWARM Spell behind the east door, then enter the second north door. Grab the ELVEN SLIPPERS from the first door on your right, and IRON from the next door, then continue through the next door into the room with three doors. Continue west, then get the ARTEMIS LEAF from the next door, and the HERMIT'S CAP from the door after that, then exit this hall south. Take the transport pod to 3F.

3F: Exit the pod room east, grab the MEDICINE BOTTLE from the first north room, skip the next door and exit east. Follow the path to the transport pod to 4F.

4F: Go east and follow the path until you reach the Save Point. Save, then proceed west into a hall with four doors. Grab the MITHRIL HELMET from behind the first north door, then grab the ORICHALCUM from the west door. Enter the second north door. Get the DEFENSE BOMB from the first door on your left, and skip the next door. Exit that hall east, then proceed to the next transport pod.

3F: Exit the pod room south. Grab the SOUR SYRUP from behind the west door, then go east. The next door contains MITHRIL MESH, then the next door has RESURRECTION MIST, then exit this hall south. Hit the transport pod to 4F.

4F: Exit the pod room west. Follow the path to the curved hall with three doors. Check the last door for MITHRIL, then enter the door previous to that one for the transport pod to 5F.

5F: Exit the pod room southwest. Go south and get the SYLVAN MAIL at the end of the path, then return. Proceed up the curved hall, grab the SPECTACLES from the next door, then exit this hall west. Check the north door for a BERSERK SWORD, then continue west. Grab the ROSE HIP and SOUR SYRUP from the two doors in this curved hall, then exit south. Hit the transport pod to 6F.

6F: Exit east. Grab the ARTEMIS LEAF and REFRESHING SYRUP from the side doors in the next curved hall, then exit that hall east. Check the north

door for ELVEN SLIPPERS, then continue east. Grab the RESURRECTION MIST and DREAM CROWN from this curved hall, then exit south. Get the SOUR SYRUP from the east door, ignore the west door, and exit through the northwest door. Take the next transport pod.

5F: Exit this room east. Follow the only path all the way to the transporter to 6F.

6F: Exit south. Follow the only path to the transporter to 7F.

7F: Notice the music change. You are on the final floor. To the south is a shortcut out of here if you need to leave to power up or purchase items (if you take that exit, you will be able to come back in through the short cut, so don't worry about losing any progress).

When ready, head north. Save at the final Save Point. Your save icon will turn blue - this indicates that the Cave of the Seven Stars has been unlocked (after beating the game, reload your save and see Section 7 for tackling this dungeon).

Make sure your Formation is something that keeps your characters spread apart from each other (NOT Escape), turn off the Train Specialty and the Enlightenment Super Specialty, then head north for the final battle.

--BATTLE-----

ENEMY: Jie Reverse
HP: 111,000
MP: 999
STRONG VS: Earth, Water, Fire, Wind, Light, Dark
WEAK VS: Nothing

If you aren't level 90 yet, then this will be difficult. Jie Reverse likes to open up with attacks that will hit your entire team, or at least two or three at a time. These attacks have a very high probability of hitting everyone for 9,999 - the only survivors will be those whose Guts trigger to keep them alive at 1 Hit Point. If you are being dominated fast and early, you may consider setting your healer's Strategy setting to "Don't do anything" (so you can manually control all the healing) and removing your Rings of Might to improve your elemental resistance.

Once you've figured out how to survive his attacks, it's only a matter of using Dragon Roar repeatedly to keep him stunned, and having your other characters beat on him mercilessly from flanking positions, if possible. Since your characters will be dieing all over the place, you may find yourself constantly switching characters and manually controlling all of them.

Don't be afraid to use any or all of your items, since you won't be saving your game after these battles anyway (you'll start the post-game content from the save BEFORE this battle, so you'll still have all your items).

-/BATTLE-----

--BATTLE-----

ENEMY: Neo Reverse

HP: 189,000
MP: 999
STRONG VS: Earth, Water, Fire, Wind, Light, Dark
WEAK VS: Nothing

The main difference between this battle and his previous form is this form's new melee attack - it has remarkable reach. Dragon Roar is still just as good from the front, as long as you keep your distance, but your melee attacks should all be launched from behind. Keep your healer alive and your Hit Points up, because every now and then Neo Reverse will unleash a complete and utter annihilation called "Seraphic Storm" upon your entire team that you can only hope to survive.

If you find the previous strategy isn't working, then try to stay behind him with Roddick and repeatedly hit him with your regular attacks. You may end up keeping him stun-locked and preventing him from using his big area attack.

Once again, use any/all items necessary to win.

-/BATTLE-----

Enjoy the ending... then tackle the post-game content! See Section 7 for the Cave of the Seven Stars Walkthrough.

And yes, there really is no escape from the final "FIN" screen - you must reset the game.

7.) POST-GAME WALKTHROUGH

There are two aspects to the post-game: The Cave of the Seven Stars, and Gabriella. The following sections will walk you through the Cave of the Seven Stars and the bosses within, then the battle with Gabriella. Even though Gabriella can be fought at any point in the game, it is recommended that you fight her last, since she is the most powerful enemy in the game.

Note that you must save at the final Save Point to unlock the Cave of the Seven Stars. Your save file's icon will turn blue to indicate that the post-game content has been unlocked.

7.1) ORACLE ROOM

From the final Save Point, head south three screens, then step onto the small transport pod to Reverse Tower B1F. Go east to the room with four exits. Head south to go to the Oracle Room (north exits to Planet Fargett, and east just starts Reverse Tower over again).

You can buy tons of items from the guy on the right, so stock up on everything usable. Make sure you have at least one JEWEL OF THE FROG, since you'll be using those to escape the dungeon. Make sure you've always got one on you - never enter the dungeon without one.

You can speak with the developers of the original Star Ocean for Super Famicom behind the doors along the north wall, if you wish (except the far-left door, which leads into the Cave of the Seven Stars - don't take this door until you're ready).

If your Oracle Specialty is level 10 (level 10 ESP, Purity, and Piety), then you can get a MAGIC JAR behind the far-right door. Go ahead and equip it on a benched character - it produces random items and adds them to your inventory from time to time. Unfortunately, it also pauses to alert you of this every time it happens - if it starts annoying you (like it did me), go ahead and remove the Magic Jar.

The south stairs lead into the Labyrinth of Champions underneath Van y Ille Castle. Unfortunately, you cannot use this to return to Planet Roak, since going back up the stairs returns you to the Oracle Room. You can use this place, however, to heal up by fighting the wimpy enemies and recovering via Stamina at the end of the battles.

Once you have purchased a Jewel of the Frog and any other items you want, head through the far-left door, then save at the Save Point. Note that there are NO SAVE POINTS in the Cave of the Seven Stars beyond this point, so I recommend using the Jewel of the Frog to return to the Oracle room after every 10 floors or so to save your game and resupply.

7.2) CAVE OF THE SEVEN STARS / B1F - B10F

You will find that the monsters in here are more than a cut above the riff-raff you've been fighting up until this point. They also drop ridiculous amounts of EXP - enough to make the Arch Phoenix obsolete. I recommend fighting near the save point until level 100 if you aren't already there.

B1F: Proceed down the stairs to B2F.

B2F: Proceed down the stairs to B3F.

B3F: Proceed down the stairs to B4F.

B4F: To solve the puzzle on this floor, close the treasure boxes behind all of the doors (except the far-left door - that box is already closed). After you have closed them all, the south door will open - take that door to B5F.

B5F: Take the east path for a RING OF MIGHT - an accessory that should be old news to you now. Then, take the south path and go down the stairs to B6F.

B6F: Go east, then through the north door, then through the next north door for the BACKSTAB Skill. Max it out on everyone. Exit this room, head west, and enter the next door for a STAR GUARD. Continue west, then go down the stairs to B7F.

B7F: Proceed down the stairs to B8F.

B8F: Proceed down the stairs to B9F.

B9F: To solve the puzzle on this floor, use Tactics->Replace to put your female characters ahead of your male characters in the party slots. For

example, if you have five female characters, put four in your party and the fifth in the top bench slot. The south door will open; go through it, then change your party back to what you had before. Proceed down the stairs to B10F.

B10F: Go south, and follow the path to get a MINDHEALER. If you are using Rod of the Feather, replace it with Mindhealer. If you are using Dragonstaff, then keep the Dragonstaff.

Take the east path near the stairs you came down from. Go through the door and down the stairs to B11F. Grab the STAR RUBY, GOLD RING, and DRAGON BLADE (Phia's best weapon), then return to B10F. Exit through the door, then continue southeast. Proceed down the stairs to B11F.

7.3) CAVE OF THE SEVEN STARS / B11F - B20F

The enemies are stronger once you hit B11F - I recommend at least level 110 to navigate these floors safely. If you get into trouble, use a Jewel of the Frog to teleport back to the Oracle Room and save your progress, then simply run from every battle on your way back here (if you do this, make sure to turn the Train Specialty off on all your characters until you get back to B11F).

B11F: Proceed down the stairs to B12F.

B12F: Go east, then through the north door, then through the next north door for the BOW OF LIGHTNING (same as the Bow of Explosion, except it's Wind elemental). Exit this room, head west, and enter the next door for a DAMASCUS. Continue west, then go down the stairs to B13F.

B13F: Proceed down the stairs to B14F.

B14F: To solve the puzzle on this floor, press the X Button on the statues to rotate them so that the female statues on the left and the male statues on the right are looking across at each other. After you have done this, the south door will open - take that door to B15F.

B15F: Now the pain begins. B15F is the first of a few floors in this place that have invisible doors in the walls (I don't know which game designer thought this was a good idea, but I hope he has since learned his lesson).

Go south through the first wall. If Ioshua or Erys is in your team, there will be a treasure box here - open it for the EXTINCTION Spell.

Go through the west wall. This part is SO annoying: you must exit this room west, just slightly north of where you entered it (still in the black space south from the actual room). In other words, enter this place from the east, hold left, and just move up SLIGHTLY while holding left. If done correctly, you'll notice the camera move left - keep holding until you arrive in the next room.

Go west again, through a section of wall that is visible this time. Go south down the stairs to B16F. Loot the DAMASCUS, RING OF HEALING, HOLY ORB (Mavelle's most powerful weapon, but beware the Light elemental property), and XTRA KNUCKLES (Pericci's best weapon), then go up the stairs to return to B15F.

Go east, then in the next room go through the south wall into the black south of the room, then go east. You'll be in another room with stairs at the south end - take them to B16F.

B16F: Go east for a STAR RUBY, then backtrack one screen and head south. Take the south stairs to B17F.

B17F: Proceed down the stairs to B18F.

B18F: Go south, and follow the path to get a RAINBOW DIAMOND. Backtrack one screen and take the east path. If you want to fight an optional battle, enter the north door.

--BATTLE-----

ENEMY: Demonic Eye (x2)
HP: 109,500
MP: 260
STRONG VS: Fire, Wind, Dark
WEAK VS: Nothing

At the start of this battle, all your characters will be reduced to 1 Hit Point - use an item to restore HP to all your characters quickly.

These guys have a ton of Hit Points, but not a whole lot of fire power, so don't worry too much about this fight. Like most evil eye creatures, these Demonic Eyes can turn you to stone and are good at parrying your attacks. Use ranged attacks like Dragon Roar, and keep an eye on your healer - make sure to cure your healer if she/he is turned to stone.

-/BATTLE-----

After that, proceed southeast, then south to B19F.

B19F: To solve the puzzle on this floor, open the treasure box behind the far-left door, then close the treasure box in the door to the right of that one. After you have done this, the south door will open - take that door to B20F.

B20F: Another floor with invisible passages. Go east through the wall at the south side of this room, then go south into the wall on the east side of the next room. While you are in the black just south of the room, go west. If done correctly, you'll come out into a room with a treasure box - grab the KAISER KNUCKLES (Ilia's best weapon) inside. Return to the stairs.

This time go west into the next room, then south and down the stairs to B21F. Loot the ORICHALCUM, FAERIE RING, and STAR LANCE (T'nique's most powerful weapon, but beware the Earth elemental property), then go up the stairs to return to B20F.

Go west one screen, grab the RING OF INFINITY, then go back into the black area south of this room and go west to the next room. You'll be in another room with stairs at the south end - take them to B21F.

Once you've reached B21F, the monsters once again become more powerful, but the amount of EXP they drop is absolutely obscene. You could easily level up to 150 on these floors if you wanted to. If you're having trouble, or you're just afraid of losing the items and levels you've accrued so far, go ahead and Jewel of the Frog / Save / Run back, if you want. Another option is to turn off Train on all your characters, so that they will be fighting at full power (and Enlightenment, although you probably should have turned that off long ago) - the EXP here is still really good without Train.

B21F: Proceed down the stairs to B22F.

B22F: Proceed down the stairs to B23F.

B23F: Proceed down the stairs to B24F.

B24F: To solve the puzzle on this floor, press the X Button on the middle two treasure boxes. After you have done so, the south door will open - take that door to B25F.

B25F: This is the third and last of the floors with invisible passages in the walls. Go south through the wall, then west through the wall at the northwest corner of this room, then west two more times (in the third room, you'll see a treasure box to the north - you can't get it yet, so just head straight west). You'll come out in a room with stairs to the south - take them to B26F. Loot the MITHRIL, RING OF WISDOM, MURASAMA (Ashlay's best weapon), and CYUSS SPECIAL (Cyuss's best weapon), then return to B25F.

Exit this room northeast for a VIOLENT HANDY STICK (Welch's best weapon), then return. Backtrack to the room just south of the stairs to B24F.

This time, exit this room west from the southwest corner. Continue straight west until you reach another room with stairs at the south end. Proceed down the stairs to B26F.

B26F: Proceed down the stairs to B27F.

B27F: Head east for the AURORA BLADE (Roddick's most powerful weapon, but beware the Light elemental property), then go back one screen and head south to B28F.

B28F: Go south, then west and follow the path. You can see the stairs to B29F - there are two optional battles on this floor, but if you want to skip them, go ahead and take the stairs and skip to the B29F section below.

If you want to fight the battles, read on. East of where you stand are two doors - behind each is a battle. In fact, behind each is the same battle with the two Demonic Eyes that you fought (or skipped) back on B18F.

--BATTLE-----

ENEMY: Demonic Eye (x2)
HP: 109,500
MP: 260
STRONG VS: Fire, Wind, Dark
WEAK VS: Nothing

Same battle, same strategy as B18F.

--/BATTLE-----

Once you've defeated or skipped these fools, head west and down the stairs to B29F.

B29F: To solve the puzzle on this floor, press the X Button on the northeast male statue to rotate it once. After you have done this, the south door will open - take that door to B30F.

B30F: This is the final floor. Before you head north one screen, make sure you are ready to fight the boss of this place. Turn off the Train Specialty, and heal up all the way. Equip armors that protect you from Petrification (Sylvan Mail, Dueling Suit, Robe of Deception, Amulet of Flexibility), and equip whatever powerful Dark elemental weapons you may have (Silvance, Orb of Darkness).

If you have any doubts, you should probably leave this place and save and/or level up. It would suck to die and lose a ton of progress.

Proceed north when ready.

--BATTLE-----

ENEMY: Resphina
HP: 70,600
MP: 480
STRONG VS: Nothing
WEAK VS: Dark

ENEMY: Bandit King (x2)
HP: 235,500
MP: 0
STRONG VS: Nothing
WEAK VS: Nothing

Go for Resphina first - she is easily the most deadly of the three, and she'll go down faster due to having less Hit Points anyway. If you don't have protection from Petrification, you'll need to cure characters from petrify constantly. Your healer is your first priority, and your second is whoever has the best ranged attacks (usually this is Roddick with Dragon Roar or Redwyrn Thundersurge). If you are dieing constantly, you'll need to prioritize your resurrection magic and items in the same way. Bring back characters who are already close to Resphina, just so that they can get a couple hits in before they are killed again.

Once Resphina is dead, use area attacks and/or attacks that hit multiple times to take out both Bandit Kings at once (Dragon Roar / Redwyrn Thundersurge, Galaxy, Tortoise Smash, etc). This battle is FAR easier once you've taken Resphina out, so go ahead and pause and breathe a sigh of relief.

If you need to heal up, you can just run around the battlefield, staying away from the two Bandit Kings, while you wait for your magic or item counters to recharge (that is, you can do this to heal AFTER you have killed Resphina. If you try this while she's still alive, it WILL NOT work).

Use any or all of your healing items if necessary; the only other fight you need to worry about is Gabriella, and you can resupply at the Oracle Room before challenging her anyway. Also, it's better to use your items now and live than to save them and die and lose a ton of progress in the Cave of the Seven Stars.

-/BATTLE-----

After that battle, grab the seven treasure boxes: RING OF ABSORPTION, MITHRIL, SMOOTH CRYSTAL, ARCHANGEL'S BRACELET, PHILOSOPHER'S STONE, ORICHALCUM, and RING OF FUSION. Then, use a Jewel of the Frog to get out of here.

Save your game.

If you have Welch, you can have her use Crafting on the Smooth Crystal. It will turn into a SYMBOL OF THE GODS, which you can use on Welch to have her learn her final Special Art, Nibelungaling.

All you have left is to challenge Gabriella. Check Sidebar 7.A for the strategy.

SIDEBAR 7.A) GABRIELLA

Gabriella is the most powerful boss in this game. Even on Earth difficulty, she can defeat a level 255 party within seconds. For this reason, your levels matter less than your equipment and your strategy (although higher levels certainly can't hurt).

Gabriella can be summoned at any time during the game, but I recommend fighting her as the absolute last thing you do. All you need to summon her is a character with level 10 Music and the Listening Talent, and you need The Devil's Aria song composed. Playing the song summons Gabriella.

The equipment you'll need is similar to the Resphina / Bandit King battle from the end of the Cave of the Seven Stars. You'll want Petrification protection (Sylvan Mail, Dueling Suit, Robe of Deception, Amulet of Flexibility), and Dark elemental attacks (Silvance, Orb of Darkness). Also, you can get away with removing your Berserker Rings for other accessories, if you like, since you are guaranteed to go Berserk frequently during this battle. Ring of Absorption is a good option for a melee character.

If you don't have enough armors to put Petrification protection on all party members, then sell your Magical Rasp and create them.

Your party should consist of characters who have the most powerful Special Arts that can hit multiple times. I prefer Roddick (Dragon Roar / Redwyrn Thundersurge), Ilia (Tortoise Smash), and Mavelle (Galaxy) or Cyuss (Dragon Surge). Equip ONLY the Special Arts that you want the AI to be using (for example, equip Galaxy on Mavelle and leave her other slot blank).

Your party will also need a healer. I prefer Millie or Erys, because Ioshua totally sucks. If you have Erys, she has good attack magic as well; you can turn off all her Spells except Explosion, change her Strategy accordingly, then manually switch to her whenever you need to heal.

Once you are ready, turn off Train and Enlightenment, then have someone with level 10 Music perform The Devil's Aria to summon Gabriella.

--BATTLE-----

ENEMY: Gabriella
HP: 217,000
MP: 999
STRONG VS: Nothing
WEAK VS: Dark

Start the battle by immediately using either an Assault Bomb, or some sort of buffing item, such as a Revival Card or a Mirror of Knowledge if you are using attack Spells. Then, begin spamming Dragon Roar / Redwyrn Thundersurge constantly until Roddick or your healer dies. Roddick's attacks should keep Gabriella busy while your other characters get into position and start dominating.

Gabriella will begin by sending waves of doom at your party, and she will basically never stop. These waves will hit you multiple times for 9,999, so it's best to try to manually avoid them with whatever character you are controlling at the time. Hopefully you will survive with Guts when you are hit by one of these. Normally these waves would also turn you to stone, but I trust that you have Petrification protection.

If Gabriella starts zipping around the battlefield at incredible speed, then you should take advantage of this moment to heal up. You can also use another buffing card or an Assault Bomb during this opportunity. Use any or all of your healing items if necessary; there is no better purpose for them than defeating Gabriella.

Finally, don't be afraid to use your regular attacks against her if you are low on Magic Points. If Gabriella is tangled up in someone's attack (like Mavelle's Galaxy) you can switch to another character near her and just start pounding away with regular hits. The combination of the Special Art from one character and the regular strikes from another seems to stun her pretty well, allowing your third fighter character to charge in and your healer to work her magic.

-/BATTLE-----

After you've defeated her... well, there's nothing, really. You've just defeated the most difficult boss in the game on the hardest difficulty. Assuming you've also completed the Cave of the Seven Stars and completed the main-game, you're basically done. Go play something else.

8.) THE END

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Thanks go out to TOSE and Square Enix for making this game. Oh yeah, if you post my guide on your web page or anything, please don't modify it. Yeah, that's life.

