

Shin Super Robot Taisen (Import) FAQ/Walkthrough

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NEO SUPER ROBOT WARS Walkthrough
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- Introduction -

Welcome to Shin Super Robot Taisen, aka Neo Super Robot Wars. This early member of the SRW family to reach the Playstation is an interesting slice of SRW history, featuring *non* super-deformed combat sequences and a few little-seen series. Also filling in a bit of background for the "SRX" world-view, this is an intriguing morsel for the serious SRW cognoscentus.

This game bifurcates into an Earth and a Space route, helping ensure that no series gets entirely short shrift. Only by playing both routes to completion can you unlock the final, tri-partite battle.

As always, this walkthrough is one (and a half?) steps removed from a full line-by-line translation of the game. I provide few strategic notes, instead attempting to fill you in on what is actually going on in the game, on the theory that the combat action is only part of the appeal. Please feel free to email me all comments/corrections, though be aware that I am dogmatic on certain names (such as the "Angel Heiro" and "Hiiro Yui").

- Commentary -

[Skip this if you want to get straight to the game...]

Neo SRW seemingly came at a point of turmoil for the SRW franchise, where writing was unstable, the preferred platform (Saturn/Dreamcast vs. Playstation) was unclear, and even the world direction was up in the air (witness SRW 4 replaced by 4S replaced by F/FF). With it's non-SD combat animations and original SRX storyline, this game appears to be an abortive first step down a similar path to what SRW eventually trod in the Alpha series.

Though the game left a wide opening for a sequel, none was ever made. The game writing makes it easy to see why: vast amounts of tedious filler in the early stages and numerous examples of insufficient motivation for many of the member series. Why is Trider, or Getter Robo or Dankuuga, even in the game? Can you say that Gundam Wing is even present given that a grand total of only four characters appear, and that the Wing Gundam is *optional*? Although this game is decently long (~60 missions in all) it feels like the plot simultaneously drags and rushed to near-incoherence all too often, culminating in one of the most non-sequitur climaxes I can remember. The inter-battle dialog is certainly more fleshed out than some of the very early games, but definitely has room for improvement.

Game-play wise, Neo SRW is a blast from the past. The engine occupies an evolutionary slot somewhere between the original Famicom mechanics and the "modern" 2-D engine used in the Complete Box and turbocharged for F/F Final. Its "classic" features include:

- Individually-upgradable weapons, one of my great pet peeves for a game that encourages you to see as many combat animations as possible. This quickly degenerates into using one (hopefully free) regular-duty P weapon, and one "big gun" for dispatching bosses or other heavies.
- Single-instance transformable mecha during Intermission. This is a very strange arrangement where you must explicitly "transform" or "combine" units to see what their different capabilities are. This is more than a mere annoyance when you see that it impacts how units sortie - if a unit is transformed to flying mode on a map precluding flying-only vehicles, it will be unsortiable. Moreover, combinable units have a separate set of equipment slots from their constituent units, so beware!
- Old-school magical mechanics. While the spell list is considerable expanded over most of the "original" chronology games, spells like "Encourage" only work on adjacent units instead of allowing arbitrary selection. The most telltale sign is that "Good Luck" confers both double money and double experience.
- Buried treasure, another one of the banes of my existence. The good news is that you usually have ample #feebz along to be sent to grab it.

In combat, this game is a competent but undistinguished extension of its predecessors. Manoverability improvements have only incremental benefits, such that the Ali Mech ("float like a...") of the game, Layzner, is only somewhat harder to hit than normal. Likewise, armor confers only incremental damage relief, compared to some SRWs where a well-armored unit ignores peons. Given that most of the big armors confer a huge manoverability/movement hit, armor items are virtually worthless.

In the final analysis, this game is probably more of interest to hard-core SRW gamers than to the casual audience. There is joy to be had watching all your main dudes get Double Motion, or watching the God Gundam or Shin Getter Robo letting loose with the heavy artillery. Seeing one of the V's (Voltes) without the other (Combattler) is novel, and it's intriguing to see the first vestiges of the SRX/Balmar/Tronium concept emerging. I'm glad I played it, but I can't say I felt as captivated as I did with most of the other games in the series.

- Resources -

This page contains among other things maps to the treasure:

<http://www.rpgdl.org/ps/nsrw.html>

This page lists how to get all the optional units/attacks:

<http://www.ogaki-tv.ne.jp/~wagahai/srw/gsk/sin/secret.htm>

- Walkthrough -

1. Nazo no Shinryakusha ("Mysterious Invaders")

The military has detected a large energy signature - far **too** large. The source becomes apparent quickly: one of the colonies around Mars just exploded. And what's worse, more colonies are under attack from beam cannonry borne by unknown flying adversaries. In short order, the entire constellation of Martian colonies is wiped out, and the commander runs off to make his report, yelling to his subordinates not to take their eyes off the unidentified enemy.

Some observers thinks to themselves that, had they but a little more time, Earth's warpower could have been organized to combat this threat. They had apparently anticipated this threat, but not a threat this threatening - is

resistance, in fact, futile? Will the enemy even accept a surrender? With so little time to choose, they have to bet on even the smallest ray of hope - and they have to buy time, enough to steal the adversaries knowledge and technology. That's the only option open for mankind, or at least one of the observers thinks.... to the other's protests, the first observer notes that the Earth will surely fight this threat, until at last mankind is utterly destroyed. These men cannot afford to let that happen, and the leader orders the other to call "him". He tells "him" that while he understands his feelings, he needs "him" to go to the Earth to help fight the Zanskull Empire.

An unidentified flying object is heading towards Earth - and this is an age when no flying object should be unidentified. The men of the Far East Earth Defense Base contact the object, which doesn't respond to their hailing. It's due north, and headed straight for Japan...

On the beach, Rilina finds a man in a space suit, rather unconscious and apparently some kind of soldier. She hastens to call an ambulance, but Hiiro regains consciousness, only to find in horror that Rilina has seen his face. Hiiro resolves to kill her, which may be a somewhat tall order ;) Rather than do it on the spot, he carjacks the ambulance and speeds off, leaving Rilina to introduce herself to... thin air.

The flying object is still approaching, and Professor Hamaguchi orders his men to their stations. He tells his men, the Voltes Team, that as they are now their defeat at the hands of the enemy is certain: only by Volting In can they win! Unfortunately, that's easier said than done, especially with the enemy approaching. Ken'ichi's mom takes things into her own hands, piloting her machine and shooting at the enemy. She sacrifices herself in short order [and what jaunty music too!], apparently to motivate her sons and their teammates to actually Volt In.

On turn 2, the Taikuu Maryuu shows up, which Hamaguchi hastily tells his team is an ally.

On turn 2.5, Jangyal is cowed by your people defeating one of his Paizangers and decides to retreat. But when you kill enough of the flying saucers, some reinforcements show up.

After the battle, Prince Heinel is rather irate that Jangyal hadn't included these mighty Earth robots in his original report. Well, Heinel seems more intrigued than anything: at least this will make his conquest somewhat interesting.

Those members of the Voltes team who just lost their mother ponder her sacrifice on their behalf. When the "cool, nihilistic" team member belittles "kid" and "fat oaf"'s use of the word "mommy" when referring to her, the "hot-blooded leader" almost gets into a fist fight until the "big-breasted ninja" pink member of the team intervenes. This is Old \$k001 sentai and no mistake. As the Voltes members go to meet the Taikuu Maryuu squad...
...Rilina sees a sister (sistah?) introduce a new transfer student joining her school: Hiiro!

2. Trider G-7 Toujou ("The Trider G-7 Appears")

Daimoji introduces himself and his team from the Far East Base. Hamaguchi has heard of them from Chief Oka, who conveniently calls up just then to offer condolences about his wife. He tells Hamaguchi that, as he knows, the military might of the world is not yet united of purpose, and will surely fall to the alien invaders in time. Oka wants to build a super robot squadron around the

Taikuu Maryuu, under his own initiative, and at least protect the Far East. Hamaguchi is happy to chip in the Voltes Team, though he cautions that they've only just begun their training and may not be of much use. Oka confides that the Gaiking and Taikuu Maryuu aren't exactly finished either, but that this isn't a time for excuses. Ken'ichi is happy to participate, especially to avenge his mother, and Daijirou and Hiko follow happily. Kazuya is damned if he'll let some aliens have their way with the world, and Megumi very much agrees. Hamaguchi then tells Oka to be sure that the Voltes Team gets plenty of practice combining. Tsuwabuki Sanshirou, Gaiking's pilot, also introduces himself, as does the condescending Top Gun pilot from America, Pete.

Zuhl has readied some Dokugagas for Jangyal's use, though he also has some idea of his own that Jangyal agrees to let him try. This results quite quickly in a distress call being sent to your people. To add a bit to your warpower, Oka quickly calls in, saying that he's just signed a treaty with Takeo General Company, who will be sending the Trider G7. It's pilot, Watta, wastes no time in making introductions when your people arrive. Despite him being a kid, he's far more experienced a pilot than either of the other two teams, so don't let him leave your ass in the dust.

The bad guys have a simple plan to lure you into a trap.

Fortunately, Daimoji isn't so simple as to fall into it. Watta's butler also reminds him that any more fighting will cost their company a lot of money. Meanwhile, Heinel is in the process of trying to berate Zuhl for the cowardly flight from battle when Zuhl says that the Dokugaga hasn't run away at all: it's trying to, yes, lead your people into a trap. Heinel is indignant that Zuhl thinks the Dokugaga could be beaten by mere humans, but Zuhl claims he's just trying to be on the safe side. Heinel finally buys into that idea, eager to see what results.

3. Koushiryoku Kenkyuujo ("Photon Power Laboratory")

Your people learn that Watta is in fact the president of his company despite being gradeschool age: and is indeed a very able pilot to boot. He also comes with wacky friends who love them some business dealings. Sakon meanwhile is tracking the enemy to Mt. Fuji, and Daimoji orders your people off in pursuit. The hope is that you can provide ammo for Trider, which turns to be quite expensive to operate.

In the forests near Mt. Fuji is the Photon Power Laboratory, and it's director Professor Yumi has just gotten some bad news: something is lurking in the woods. Wearing yellow just won't cut it any more, so he sorties Kouji for some long-awaited combat.

As more enemies emerge, Sayaka joins the battle at Kouji's side... or tries to until Kouji tells her to stay and watch.

The cavalry shows up a bit later.

Daimoji realizes that he largely owes it to Mazinger Z that his squad didn't succumb to the enemy's trap. Kouji happily figures that he could have taken out all the bad guys by himself, and quickly and happily apologizes for calling Watta a little kid. Watta notes that his father left him his invincible machine, and is happy Kouji's seen fit not to belittle it. The mere mention of Watta's father brings a tear to the butler's eye, and Kouji realizes that this "being left a robot by dad" thing puts him and Watta in the same boat. In fact Boz is about the only one whose machine wasn't somehow handed down by the family, but Kouji observes that the Borot is mainly just in the way. Boz takes

umbrage at this, but with his lackeys in tow he plans to one day build the Borot into one hell of a machine. He thinks. Anyways, Mazinger Z and Aphrodite A are to be added to your squad, since Yumi realizes that the enemy's strength is far greater than you've experienced thusfar. Kouji and Sayaka also recognize Sanshirou from his TV appearances as a pro baseball player, though he says that for now he's more like a professional defender of the Earth... well, semi-pro anyways.

Zuhl meanwhile is whimpering that even in his dreams he never imagined a robot like that near Mt. Fuji. Jangyal realizes that Mazinger may not be the only Earth robot more powerful than they expected, and counsels caution. Heinel is in no mood to hear that, and Katherine remind him that the fate of all the Boazan is riding on this. He knows this, figuring that his mistake was leaving this operation up to Zuhl, vowing to take your people down next time.

4. Riga Militia

With no rest for the weary, Junko Jenko calls in to say that her transport is under attack from the aliens. You arrive just in time to see the transport get shot down, but inside it are some unfamiliar mobile suits... and some new enemies you've not seen before.

Asimov is all but impossible to kill, but he'll flee if he realizes the rest of his men are toast.

Now Heinel is berating Jangyal for using one of Sharkin's men, but as it turns out Jangyal wasn't the one who ordered that. It was in fact Asimov himself, who calls up and apologizes for the mess. He and Sharkin are supposed to be working on plans to invade North America, and he says that he's only here because of trying to pursue some Earthlings. Heinel will tolerate Asimov's interference this once, but not again! DO YOU HEAR ME! *ahem* Anyways, Dankel then shows up, and Asimov owns up to being pissed at a little brat like Heinel having his way so much. He wants to know why they have to be subject to the orders of people like Heinel and Sharkin, and Dankel says that they have little choice but to heed the orders of Overlord Darius.

5. Ryuusei Date

The Riga Militia are grateful that you saved their butts. These are a private army formed to oppose the Zanskull Empire's tyranny in the colonies. It seems that the Zanskull have sent their Vespas to Earth under the guise of helping "protect" the planet - probably with the permission of one of the fools running the Federation military. This helps explain why Oka created your squad under his own authority. The Zanskull's Vespa have settled at the Lagern Base, and the rest of Europe seems to have fallen to the aliens in an instant: one wonders who the real bad guys are here. Anyways, these three ladies are Earth born and raised, but are trying to gather people to help the colonies and the moon. Of course, at this rate the Earth itself will fall to the aliens, and the North American Branch is of no help, with its inexperienced soldiers and inept commander. Kazuya isn't surprised that the military of the North American branch were unwilling to work with civilians, but said civilians are definitely hoping that you'll work with them. Oka permits you to go to Europe, both to gather information and to prevent the Vespa from gaining any more ground. He tells a worried Daimoji that the Far East Base can hold out a little while while you're gone.

Zuhl reports that the Taikuu Maryuu has left Japan, and figures that now's the chance to attack. He gets yelled at for voicing his opinion, but Dankel agrees. Heinel will permit Dankel to try his hand at leading the attack. Oka

is notified of the attack, but tells your dudes to keep on their course for Europe. Hamaguchi meanwhile has a new prototype machine he plans to test out that should buy enough time for Oka's reinforcements to arrive: the SRX. The trouble is not it's combat armaments, but its overenthusiastic pilots.

Hamaguchi orders Ryuusei to sortie in his R-1, telling him not to press his luck since reinforcements will arrive soon. Ryuusei has been waiting for this chance a long time, and isn't planning on not pushing his luck. His highly confident battle cry does little to inspire the staffers, but they have little choice but to leave it up to him. Dankel drily notes that this new robot looks formidable, but moves quite awkwardly. Easy pickings, right?

Reideen shows up to help on turn 3, much to Ryuusei's joy.

Once the peons are eliminated, Dankel will order the "Black Monster" unleashed. Once this thing's ass is kicked, Dankel will flee with his tail between his legs. Hamaguchi will order Ryuusei not to follow, which he reluctantly obeys.

Hamaguchi gives Ryuusei a good chewing out for pushing the still experimental R-1 so hard, threatening to ground him if he pulls any more reckless stunts. Hibiki has been sent by Oka to guard this lab in the Taikuu Maryuu's absence. Ryuusei quickly establishes himself as some kind of crazed super robot otaku, and Hamaguchi confides to Akira that as a pilot, Ryuusei is first rate....

6. Point Kasaleria

Dankel gets yelled at by Jangyal for his overconfidence, and Kazarine figures that perhaps the Boazan need to settle this themselves. Kilar can't let that slide, reminding her that his people aren't there because they want to be. If she thinks they're in the way, he'll be more than happy to withdraw. Heinel doesn't want that, and tells Kazarine to hold her tongue. Just then, a message comes in from Gottso...

The Taikuu Maryuu hears that the base is being well protected, and heads west over the Alps. There, Chronicle wants to know who is opposing the Yellow Jacketed forces of the Vespa. That would be Usso, who apparently get over the fact that it's dreadfully wrong for people from space to be on the Earth. He yells at the top of his lungs that the space colonies should be enough for the Vespa, and in some kind of blind rage charges towards the Vespa unit in some miniature fighter plane. The Vespa pilot figures Usso stands no chance against his mobile suit, and in fact Usso runs out of bullets fast. Hakushou then radios him, telling him to switch his autobalancer to V-Mode so he can combine the Hangar, Fighter, and Boots in mid-air. The first Boots get blown off course, but a spare gets launched quickly [convenient? I guess...] as well as decoys.

Daimoji won't let the military people sortie since he has to keep you from seeming to be in opposition to the Vespa. Watta says to leave it to him, since he's not from the military. Meanwhile, Marvet explains to her old friends how she got hurt when the Vespa attacked one of their secret bases. Usso was the one who saved here then.

You can't kill Chronicle before lackeys show up and pass along the order for him to retreat. This he does, though he feels that there's no way he would have lost to a loser like you.

Usso gets introduced to the crew, who initially have trouble believing in his 133t piloting skillz. Romelo was skeptical too at first, and laments that

their strategist Haku can't be here too. Daimoji tells them about his mission to come and see what's going on in this area.

7. Chronicle Gyakushuu ("Chronicle Strikes Back")

The precarious political state of Chief Oka prevents your people from doing much to oppose the Vespa here, plus there's still the aliens to worry about. Your people leave the Riga Militia to try to look after Europe, at least for now.

But lo and behold, Chronicle shows up during the farewell to mess things up. Usso is still doing his earnest best to keep up with the adult pilot chicks. Your people REALLY don't want to just sit and watch, but Watta's people tackle him before he can sortie too, warning him that he's about to commit breach of contract. Daimoji orders the Taikuu Maryuu to return to Japan at once, leaving those already sortied behind, and Pete is able to get through to Sanshirou, demanding to know who will defend Japan if not Gaiking. He tells Sanshirou that, as a professional defender of the earth, there are some things he just has to endure.

At this point you can either return with the Taikuu Maryuu, or stay in Europe. The former will keep you on Earth (see the E routes), and the latter will send you to space (the S routes).

If you stick with the Taikuu Maryuu, Daimoji is indeed worried about the aliens, but now that your people have seen what the Vespa are up, he realizes they need stopping too. That's why he left your other people in Europe, figuring that Oka will understand. Sanshirou thanks Pete for keeping him from being carried away by his emotions, which nearly touches off a fight with Yamagatake for teasing Sanshirou.

If you stay in Europe, your people don't have much time to ponder the Taikuu Maryuu's departure, and Kouji wastes no time in challenging the Yellow or Red or whatever the hell color he is guy to a duel.

Gary shows up after a couple of rounds, hoping to help Chronicle out. Chronicle warns him to be careful of these new machines that he's never seen before...

Your people try to figure out what to do next. Kouji figures that you can't just leave these beautiful women to fight on their own, though Megumi wonders what Sayaka would think if she heard that. Junko reminds her sisters that until this war is over, they're "warriors" even more than they're "women". That said, they're feeling in need of a good man, and Usso suggests that they just stop piloting then. They of course won't do that, and ask this little boy why he's piloting. He says he doesn't want to, but he's got to to protect Shakti and Marvet... which is precisely why the girls are fighting too. Anyways, back to base.

8S. Vespa to Iseijin ("Vespa and the Aliens")

Debre chews Chronicle out for getting his ass kicked by the guerillas, and doesn't want to hear about some new mecha the enemy has. Fala reigns him in though, asking Chronicle about these new machines: they were far bigger than mobile suits, and of utterly different construction. Nor were they mobile armors, though their firepower was impressive. Fala digests this, and tells him that the combat he's experienced is a valuable source of information for their army. She tells him to return to their capitol, though Debre opines

that Chronicle hasn't yet fulfilled his true mission, which is hunting down the Riga Militia. Chronicle concurs, and Fala will let him do as he wishes.

The bad guys seem to have found your base, though something seems fishy. There are aliens on the scene, fighting the Yellowjackets. Unfortunately, your people can't just sit back and watch them shoot each other down, since the base itself is taking fire. Meanwhile, the two sides can't figure why each other is on the scene fighting here. Chronicle is able to identify the alien flagship, and directs Gary to shoot at it. Asimov orders his people to shoot down these impudent Earthlings.

If you wait long enough, enemy reinforcements will appear.

Asimov returns to Sharkin, bearing the tale of fighting among the Earthlings. Both of them find this very interesting, and orders Agyarl to investigate.

8E. Gundam Fight

Dankel passes a report from Desmond to Heinel, stating that the Taikuu Maryuu is headed for Japan. Jangyal recommends attacking them before they can rendezvous with the robot at Big Bird Island Base, hastening to assure Heinel that it's not that he's afraid of the Earthlings or anything. Heinel puts him in charge of the operation, but Zuhl doesn't seem to have any war machines ready just at the moment. Dankel halts Jangyal's rage, offering to sortie some of his Sasoringers instead as a way of making up for the past failure. Heinel can't think of a better plan, and greenlights it provided Zuhl goes along too. Dankel tells Zuhl he needs no thanks, saying that it's time for these two defeated comrades to get their revenge on the humans.

Meanwhile, two mobile suits are squaring off near the Taikuu Maryuu's course. Rain is fretting about Domon leaving her stranded somewhere in the middle of nowhere, when a dapper chap with an eyepatch startles her by seemingly appearing out of nowhere and offering assistance. He will only identify himself as a free-spirited drifter from country to country, and asks what Rain is doing here. Rain asked if she's seen a guy (Domon) wandering around and inquiring about a man in a photograph, and the eye-patched man says that he has seen a pair of mobile suits nearby...

Apparently Domon has chosen Hiiro of all people to inquire about the man in his photo. Hiiro tells Domon shortly that he's in no way obligated to answer his questions, and orders Domon to get out of his way. Domon won't let Hiiro's attitude slide, and Hiiro replies that he's merely sowing the embers of the inevitable rain of fire to come. Domon then challenges Hiiro to a Gundam Fight, and the eye-patched man (the ringside announcer) calls out the traditional "Ready, GO!" before he can stop himself. Rain can't stop Domon from tangling with Hiiro, and amazingly Domon is coming out on top.

Just then the Taikuu Maryuu shows up, with Pete bossily demanding to know whose army these Gundams are from. Daimoji is more diplomatic, but Domon claims no army and Hiiro won't even answer. When asked why they're fighting, Domon says that no reason is needed to kick some stuck-up punk's ass, and insists that this isn't a brawl but a "Gundam Fight". Just then the enemy shows up, apparently unwilling to heed Domon's directive to not interfere. Hiiro, noting that their duel has been interrupted, flies off at high speed, leaving Domon to ask *Dankel* and company if they've seen the guy in his photograph. Dankel tells his forces to wipe Domon out too, and your people sortie to meet them (including Watta this time!)

Take out enough of the bad guys and Zuhl and Dankel will flee.

After the battle, Rain speaks up for the taciturn Domon, telling Daimoji that they're not from any army, but rather from the colonies on a person-finding mission. Daimoji actually takes the time to examine the photograph, but upon hearing that he can't place the face, Domon summarily takes his leave, Rain trailing behind him. Fan Li vaguely remembers that Domon is a martial arts athlete from the colonies, finally recalling the King of Hearts, titan of the Gundam Fights. Despite his apparent youth, the power of the King of Hearts is in no doubt, which has Sanshirou interested.

Zuhl and Dankel are once again in for a chewing out, but the beating of the hapless Zuhl is interrupted by news that Lu Cain has come down to Earth. All Kazarine was told is that he's landed in some place called "Osaka", not the reason. Heinel orders Jangyal and Kilar to go greet Lu Cain. Meanwhile, Hiiro has received a mission to blow up a certain factory in Kawasaki...

9S. Senshi no Kagayaki ("A Warrior's Brilliance")

A tearful Shakti welcomes Usso back as the girls muse over how they can no longer use their compromised base. Hakushou notes that they planned to abandon the place sooner or later anyway, and asks about the *former* members of the Taikuu Maryuu squad members. New orders have come in, and the entire crew is to take their mecha and head to space, requiring crossing the Alps and heading to Gibraltar. This journey across Vespa controlled territory will be accomplished by air, but first the Shrack squad members have to go about ten klicks east to pick up some new parts from secret base #2. Meanwhile, Usso's friends fill him in on the past battle. Shakti wonders if Usso will go home with her, and Katejina basically tells him to go, figuring that he surely doesn't want to fight. He says he'll consider it.

Debre is yelling at Chronicle for not fulfilling his mission to discover and destroy the guerilla base, apparently unwilling to take into account the fact that *aliens* interfered. Once again, Fala tells Debre to put a sock in it, and asks what he plans to do about the base, since in fact Chronicle at least accomplished the first half of his mission. He's having Wataly assemble a squad to strike it, and when Chronicle tries to participate Fala tells him to give himself some time off. He accedes, and she figures that the aliens are quite worrisome - she has Metche ready her Rikarl so she can sortie too. Chronicle in fact sorties anyway once Fala is gone, and Debre thinks to himself that the queen's younger brother won't have his way forever. Chronicle for his part isn't one to sit around and be made fun of.

Wataly tells his men that their primary objective is destroying the base, as well as shooting down anyone who tries to flee. Your people are more than happy to help out, and the plan is to let Romelo and the others escape during the combat. Fala orders her ship closer, trying to see through all the Minovsky Particles and figure out why some of these new machines can't or won't fly. Usso successfully docks the V Gundam, motivating Voltes V to do the same.

Fala will flee when all others are defeated.

The Victory Gundam folks marvel over the quintuple-combining Voltes V, though the Voltes pilots are well aware that they need much more practice combining. Kouji makes sure that people remember how well his super durable, super powerful Mazinger Z did too, though he in turn is reminded how much he wishes the thing could fly. Katejina then asks Usso how he feels having taken other people's lives, finding it hard to believe that a child could do what he's doing. He doesn't really know either, saying that he's mainly afraid

and confused, and that he didn't do it because he wanted to. Katejina just wants him to promise not to become a "scary person"...

9E. SRX Keikaku ("The SRX Project")

Oka agrees with Daimoji's rationale for leaving your companions behind in Europe. So that you don't become shorthanded on the Eastern front, Oka has summoned up Reideen and its pilot Akira, as well as the SRX R-1 and its pilot Ryuusei Date. Sakon, who has friends in the black projects division, has heard of this top-secret mech, and that some of its technology was in fact used in the Taikuu Maryuu. Oka sounds a bit distressed that he knows so much, but clears his thoughts and tells you all to use Big Bird Island as your base. As you prepare to move, Oka tells Daimoji that the recent wave of terrorism he's heard about seems to be targeting civilian companies with deep ties to the Federation military - and specifically ones involved in developing new weapons. Sakon figures the aliens couldn't have that much detailed information about the Earth yet, and Oka says that you'll have to be especially on your guard with so few clues to the identity of those responsible. Just then, your people are called to the Osaka area...

Aliens are visible at 12 o'clock, and it's your people's job to crush them. It turns out to be Jangyal and Kilar, who are on their way to pick up Ru Cain. Jangyal offers to take your people on while Kilar heads on ahead, deploying his forces. Ryuusei is being his usual fanboy self over fighting by Gaiking's side, and Akira suggests your people not worry too much.

Damage Jangyal enough and he'll withdraw.

Despite his peculiarities, it's clear that Ryuusei knows how to handle his machine. Sakon figures that he's precisely the sort of person the SRX Project needs, which according to what he's heard is a project to develop the "ultimate combat robot". Supposedly this involves other robots which use the same technology as the Taikuu Maryuu besides the R-1, though Pete is fairly sure the Taikuu Maryuu is still tops.

10S. Kokoro ("Heart")

Agyarl has discovered something about the Earthling's internecine fighting: the humans living in space appear to be trying to take over those living on the Earth. Sharkin decides to strike the side which is more powerful, and summons Desmond, ordering him to attack the Vespa's base. Desmond gets to it posthaste. He orders his men to attack Romelo's giant transport truck, and your people hasten to counterattack. Shakti is like "Usso, do you know what you're doing? You're gonna die if you keep this up" which is much the same thing that was said to Rocky. Katejina helpfully chimes in that if Usso is scared he doesn't have to go, saying that the adults should by rights settle this fight amongst themselves. Marvet informs her that they're fighting because they've got something to protect, and Ester caustically tells Katejina that she, with her big head filled with an outsider's thoughts, had best stay out of it. Katejina repeats that Usso is a child, but Usso says that he doesn't want her or anyone else to die. That strength of heart is his best quality, and as he sorties Katejina wonders if she's somehow wrong. Nope, just big-headed or whatever.

Katejina gets abducted mid-battle, and you have no good way to get her back.

Desmond is all but impossible to kill while still protecting the trucks. The mission is over when both of them reach the northern border of the

screen.

Your people have noticed that these aliens seem a bit different from the ones you've tangled with before, and Megumi thinks that they're like the ones who were after the Shrack Squad back when. This means there's more than one kind of enemy to fight, and more information to gather. Megumi is rather impressed that Kouji knows the old proverb about "Know Thine Enemy", and Usso wonders what's so special about something that common sense. Kouji observes that "common sense" won't save the common man, which Usso figures must make Kouji an uncommon guy.

10E. Tensai PAIROTTO Rai ("Rai, the Genius Pilot")

Pete informs you that you've almost reached Osaka. The bad guys are already there, and tangling with a single mobile suit that Ryuusei recognizes: the R-2. Its pilot is the self-proclaimed genius Rai, and Ryuusei has to hand it to him for holding on this long by himself. He blithely tells Sanshirou that everyone on the SRX team is top flight as your people get ready to sortie.

Rai is rather surprised to see Ryuusei on the scene, who tells Rai that he won't let him have all the glory. Your people sortie before this can become a full-blown argument.

The main bad guy (who has 50k HP) will flee after enough time passes.

Rai introduces himself formally after the battle, saying that the aliens have been up to abducting people. Sanshirou has been eyeing Rai, wondering if he's another weirdo like Ryuusei. Rai stiffly asks him not to liken him to Ryuusei, the shame of the SRX Team. Sanshirou tells Rai about Ryuusei's "self-proclaimed genius pilot" line, which Rai allows after a moment is pretty much true. The others realize that Rai, too, is somewhat off his rocker. Sakon finally has figured out that the aliens have kidnapped a Professor Yasunishi, several of whose books Pete has read as part of his interest in old relics. Pete fills you in that Yasunishi is the world's foremost expert in ultra-ancient relics, and is especially famous for advancing the unique notion that the Mu and Atlantean cultures were in fact founded by aliens. Of course, there's no proof that aliens came in the past, but Yasunishi's abduction by the aliens may very well mean that the Mu ruins actually exist somewhere. Well, whatever is going on, Rai has been ordered to join your squad, which leads to an exchange of "Humph!"s between him and Ryuusei. The bridge bunnies are also ogling the newcomer, but Ryuusei warns them that Rai displays no interest whatsoever in women, causing Sanshirou to tell Ryuusei to keep Rai far from his room...

11S. GADDARU-Tai ("The Gaddarl Squadron")

Usso gets the bad news that several of his friends got hauled off by the Zolos, and he's not willing to accept that those friends are dead yet. Desmond meanwhile is getting chewed out for attacking some trucks instead of the base as Heinel ordered. Heinel, furious that a few trucks could kick his forces' ass so badly, demands to know if Asimov is a Zaylan like Desmond, telling him to help pay for his comrade's failure. Desmond apologizes to Asimov, and then warns him that the Earthlings' power is far greater than they had imagined. Their own troubles, plus those of Dankel and Kilar, bear ample testimony to that... If only the four of them could combine their strength somehow - as it is, the four generals are getting humiliated piecemeal. Asimov waxes philosophical and says that there's nothing for it but to figure out how to strengthen what forces they have.

Fala learns that Chronicle has sortied by himself, and gone beyond her mens' ability to track him. She isn't worried, and brushes off the thought that Chronicle has turned traitor, dangerously advising her subordinate to do likewise. Just then, Chronicle sends a message: he's found some enemy supply trucks 20 klicks southwest of Bechien and wants reinforcements. Fala realizes These are the refugees from the base, and orders Gaddarl and his men to head to the scene.

Marvet informs Usso that there's nothing to be done about the missing people just yet - their top priority is getting to the launch site. Usso can't believe this, but Romelo points out to Usso that this is a war, and that Hakushou had already prepared to face death. Marvet assures Usso that Katejina, a civilian, will be of no interest to the Vespa and that she should be just fine. Kouji adds his two cents, pointing out that Usso doesn't even know where he would go to try to save them. He tells Usso that now is not the time for thought, but for action, what with the enemies that just showed up and all.

As your people gear up for the fight with the bicycle-riding bad guys, Desmond and Asimov show up. They're about to throw down with you when they receive a message from Sharkin: they're to cease combat and withdraw at once. Desmond doesn't want to heed this order, but he's swayed by Asimov and pulls out.

A few extra lackeys show up midway through.

Desmond wants to know why they were recalled: Sharkin says that it was Gottso's orders not to attack the Earthlings called the Vespa. Sharkin gets impatient with the questions, telling the two of them to ask Gottso himself if they want to know why not. Asimov realizes that their target is instead to be the so-called Riga Militia, the people who smacked Desmond around. Desmond protests that he was merely a little careless, which Sharkin tells him he'd better remedy by quickly taking the Riga out.

Chronicle returns to base to face the music. He explains to Fala why he wasn't present during the assault on the trucks: he found some aliens in combat with a group of guerillas, and decided to watch things a bit longer. He explains that he captured a man called Hakushou, who of course is a major player on the guerilla side. Fala gets a huge grin on her face, thanking Chronicle for capturing the supreme Riga Militia commander.

Said commander won't break easily under torture, but Fala has another use for him: guillotining him to show the other Riga what happens if they continue to oppose her. After all, Fala is from the Guillotine family line, so it's only right that that's her preferred tool of execution. The execution is to be prepared at once...

11E. Taikuu Maryuu Bougyou Meirei ("The Order to Defend the Taikuu Maryuu")

Chief Oka calls up with some bad news: Voltes V was struck by the enemy and is currently hors de combat. Oka wants it to return to Japan, and plans to send replacements: the Beast Machine Squadron. Ryuusei starts fangirling about them while Sakon realizes that more misfits are being added to the mix. As Rai tells Ryuusei to shut up, Oka tells you that Yumi has something to give Mazinger Z, and wants you to swing by the Photon Power Lab on the way back to base. The item turns out to be the Jet Scrander, which Kouji will surely love. However, the enemy doesn't leave you much time for thought...

Said enemy is Kilar, looking very menacing and very lost. He can't find Lu Cain, but he has found the Taikuu Maryuu, and figures his luck may not have completely run out. With some kind of lucky shooting he disables the Taikuu Maryuu, and your people scramble to prevent things from getting any worse. Kilar figures he'll start by hunting the small fry down first, but Ryuusei tells this "old geezer" that it is he who will be hunted. Oops, sore spot.

Kilar flees when knocked down a certain amount.

Fortunately, the damage to the Taikuu Maryuu is less severe than it looked. Looks like Yumi gets to play host to your squadron for a while until repairs are complete. Just then a minor earthquake strikes, causing Ryuusei to raise a major hue and cry. Rai tells him to grow up, and inquires if Sanshirou is as bothered by Ryuusei's outbursts as he is. Sanshirou backs away, figuring Rai is one of "those" and wanting no part of it.

12S. Senretsu SHURAKKU-Tai ("The Dazzling Shrack Squadron")

News of the impending guillotining quickly appears on TV, though Kouji actually has to be told [on behalf of the kiddies playing this game] wtf this ancient French method of execution is. The little ones are shielded from the TV, but Usso is made to watch as an example of what war is. Usso quickly loses it, blubbering about how he can't take fighting any more, only NOW trying to play the "I'm just a kid" card. Too bad for him he's a Newtype and has no choice but to fight. Marvet says that she wouldn't ask him to fight if she had his powers, and Kouji tells him that a man needs to shut his yap when it's time for action. In particular, this publicity stunt of Fala's demands swift and certain ass-whuping in return. But first, your people need to get to that launch pad.

Meanwhile, Desmond has finally caught up to your people and is determined to make you suffer. Asimov tries to keep him calm lest he dig his own grave. Your people are quickly surrounded, but before Marvet can sortie to help Usso and friends out, some unexpected reinforcements arrive: it's Oliphar and the Shrack Squadron.

Several rounds of reinforcements show up. Ignoring Desmond and Asimov is recommended.

Once the damn trucks make it to their destination, Marvet starts marveling about how much of a hunk Oliphar has become, though she instead berates him for selling oil here instead of doing something useful (whatchu talkin bout Willis!) Oliphar is as clued out as the rest of us, but the rest of the Shrack Squad, now at full strength, introduce themselves with no small amount of hitting on the guys in your people, PLUS Megumi. Wait up while I search the phone book for hotels with hourly rates in the vicinity of this launch pad you've been heading towards all this time.

Far from the red light district is Sharkin, who is preparing to lay some severe bitchslapping down on Desmond for his string of #failure against those puny humans. Asimov frantically intervenes, saying that it's all his fault and offering a plan to even the score when Desmond can't utter one word in his own defense. Sharkin, like most villains with ridiculous hats like his, buys this with the customary disclaimer that there will be no more second chances after this.

Asimov then goes on to explain this plan to Desmond: what has been their biggest obstacle if not the two mecha from the Far East? Notice that those two machines cannot *fly*, which means there should be any number of ways around

them. That leaves the combining Voltex V, and Dankel has just gotten a countermeasure to that from Heinel's servant Zuhl. This takes the form of some kind of beast warrior that Zuhl is sending, and given how much Zuhl seems to hate his comrade Heinel it seems likely that this beastie should be trustworthy...

12E. Hajimete no Chousa ("First Investigation")

Yumi is fretting about a pattern of undersea volcanic activity that seems somehow artificial to him. It's as though some massive factory is at work down there, which added to the alien attacks is pretty bad news. The Taikuu Maryuu will be grounded a bit longer, so Hikaru is asked to take the SRX pilots and go check a probable location for the alien base. Sanshirou sympathizes with Hikaru's companions, but Hikaru is all business...

Ryuusei apparently can't stand being with Rai, and Rai is wondering what the hell the professors are thinking sending a blockhead like Ryuusei on a scouting mission. Fortunately, the bad guys show up just in time to prevent an argument (^^;;;). Jangyal says that you are the moths who are about to be drawn to his flame, which Ryuusei almost handily deflects.

After a few rounds of infinite refilling lackeys, your people get sick of it all and head for the hills. Jangyal and his cohorts seem to regard this as a major victory, all except for Zuhl who anemically tries to point out that what Jangyal has done is no more than drive your folks away, if not wholesale letting them slip through his fingers. Jangyal has sent Dankel off in pursuit, heartily laughing and figuring that the days is his...

Hiroyuki meanwhile has apparently received orders to blow up the Photon Power Lab, but Rilina walks in on him, as much as dares him to shoot her, and orders him to share a dance with her at the ball that night. After a long pause, she asks if he plans to kill her since she knows too much. He reassures her that he will indeed kill her, just after tending to some business. This involves departing the ball early, much to Rilina's sorrow.

13S. Tabidachi ("Departure")

Your people haul ass trying to load all your luggage into the transport before the bad guys arrive. Most of your folks leave the loading to the Shrack girls, though Kouji tells Usso to help out and then wishes that Usso wouldn't do what he tells him to quite so easily. Megumi figures that that's why Usso is so fixated on Kouji: he's so instinctual, or "wild". Kazuya says that that could also be construed to mean "lower form of life", and Megumi yells at him for always interjecting this garbage. He quickly offers a retraction, not wanting Megumi mad at him...

Pipinieden, unexpectedly come to Earth, says hi to Chronicle and hopes to resume their under/upperclassman relations just like back in the academy. After Chronicle accedes, Pipi explains that Colonel Tashiro Vago is pissed at Major Fala for letting the guerillas keep Europe out of the Vespa's complete control. Chronicle explains how powerful forces from the Far East Base have been supporting the guerillas, and that fits with what Pipi has heard about that base's warpower. Chronicle also admits to having his ass handed to him twice by some new type of white mobile suit. Pipi likes the sound of that, and is looking forward to seeing just how well that mobile suit will stand up to his Tomliats. He tells Chronicle in no uncertain terms to rest, while his men take care of that mobile suit. He then orders his men into battle, warning them not to underestimate the difficulty of aerial combat in the

atmosphere.

Your people are all done except for loading Mazinger and Voltes, which is probably just as well since they'll be needed to fend off the bad guys. Kouji is told to get aboard the transport since he can't fly, and everyone else is to cover him.

You could put Mazinger into the transport right away, but why not take out some of the trash first? You'll eventually get to see more biker punks with beam cannons, which are in bad need of a tuneup.

Kouji seems to think there was some kind of threat [there wasn't], and Ken'ichi says that the Voltes V's combination today was thanks to his youngest brother finally getting with the program (which said brother can't refute...)

13E. Hiiro and Rilina

Trider is being called back to Tokyo by Watta's mother, but before he can leave an unidentified vehicle is spotted. Your people quickly identify it as the strange Gundam they saw before, whose allegiance is anything but clear. Sanshirou sorties in Gaiking as a precaution, and others join him as it becomes clear Hiiro is preparing to attack. Yamagatake demands to know why a fellow human is attacking the lab, and Hiiro says that he has no need to explain. As he says he'll kill anyone standing in his way, the three recon vehicles show up. Rai makes the interesting observation that this Gundam looks similar to the R-1... or rather, the R-1 looks similar to it.

However, before battle begins Rilina appears out of nowhere and tells Hiiro to stop. She tells him that he's mistaken and tells him to stop, but as he tries telling her to get out of the way an enemy mech attacks. He shields her, then starts yelling at himself and demanding to know what the hell he's thinking. VERY upset, he wipes out another of the enemy mecha as your people frantically tell Rilina to hurry inside. It seems that the recon mecha have led some bad guys back with them, and Dankel isn't planning to let this chance slide.

Of course, Dankel isn't willing to take the fall - he'll bail once his HP are low enough, leaving a bunch of dudes in his wake.

Once you mop up the bad guys, your people introduce themselves to Rilina Dorian, the daughter of the federation Deputy Foreign Minister. She tells you all that the Gundam's pilot is Hiiro Yui, a friend of hers from school. Daimoji tells her to pass along a message to him: now is not the time to be fighting amongst yourselves.

With the Taikuu Maryuu repaired, it's time to leave the Photon Power Lab, and Daimoji tells Yumi to be on the lookout lest that Gundam attack again. Rilina meanwhile will return on her own.

14S. Voltes Gattai Fukanou ("Voltes, Unable to Combine")

Debre fills Chronicle in that Fala has been ordered to return to space as a result of her guillotining. He tells Chronicle to round up what mobile suits remain and head to Arti-Gibraltar to head to space and accompany her. Chronicle protests that Gibraltar's launch facilities are neutral and prohibit all military use, but Debre tells him to ensure they'll carry their cargo, by force if necessary. After all, who but Chronicle could achieve such a feat?

Meanwhile, the aliens have been tracking the flying transport. Oliphar realizes after a pause that he can't sortie the Shrack Squad, and the Voltes team offers to go out instead. Kouji can only watch from the sidelines, wishing Mazinger could fly... As the Voltes team sorties, the aliens spring their trap: the Namazunga flies over to wreck your Ultramagnetic Generators. Voltes is in dire straights to say the very least, and your people lose touch with Voltes as they slow the transport down to try to allow an emergency landing. BAD stuff.

Voltes is now scattered all over, and the Shrack Squad has to go pick the members up while Usso fends off the bad guys.

You could throw down with the self-assured and overpowered commanders, or you can plant the Shrack Squad next to the Voltes members in turn and then get the fuzuncken out of Dizzodge.

If Asimov has a failing other than writing annoying fiction, it is going along with his fellow commander, who has intellectual powers comparable to cottage cheese. He actually buys into the "with Voltes gone, the score is all but settled" statement and agrees to withdraw for today. What's more, Sharkin in turn buys Desmond's "with Voltes V out of the way, we can wipe out the others whenever and however we want" line. At least he's willing to give Asimov credit for being his friend and doing the right things at the right time.

Ken'ichi is the first to wake up, disoriented and in considerable pain from whatever the bad guys did. He frantically asks after his other pilots, who are still out cold, though Megumi wakes up in short order. The bad news is that the Ultramagnetic Generators of all the Volt machines are toast, and they can't even move, much less combine. Ken'ichi is heartbroken, seeing as how they just got good at combining and all. Nothing for it but returning to Japan!

14E. Sono Na wa Touhou Fuhai ("His Name is Touhou Fuhai")

Daimoji tells Sakon to use your current respite from fighting fires to give the Taikuu Maryuu a thorough round of maintenance. Meanwhile, you get to meet the Dankuuga team, whose misdeeds apparently precede them. Apparently Shinobu is rather bashful around Sayaka, but he huffily blows off the trash talk from the others and agrees to help bring the Jet Scrander to Europe. But first, Ryuusei wants to know why Dankuuga is combined instead of being split into its constituent Battle Beasts. Masato meanly asks Shinobu to explain, and the others finally say that Shinobu did something careless, and they've been ordered not to separate. One for all and all for one, and more for me as a certain Cardinal would have it.

Meanwhile, Akira reports that the recon squad's brush with the bad guys suggests that their base really must be in that area. Daimoji plans to head to the scene with your full force as soon as Gaiking's repairs are complete. But first, Oka phones up to say that a bunch of unknown mobile suits are raising hell in Shinjuku. Since the Taikuu Maryuu's repairs haven't actually started yet, you can make it fine.

Your people arrive just in time to witness as astonishing sight: a dude in purple robes, apparently unarmed, takes down one of the unidentified mecha, BARE HANDED, with a single kung-fu like move. Even Rain is impressed, but Domon thinks he recognizes this man's technique, surprised and overjoyed to see this august person here. He proves that he can take down the bad guys bare-handed too, and calls out to Touhou Fuhai, aka Master Asia: Domon's teacher

and the previous King of Hearts. The two martial artists then trade a fierce (-ly affectionate) flurry of blows, and then resolve to wipe out these small fry in short order.

Once you take out a few of the bad guys, a lot more come out of the woodwork. Master Asia reckons that it'll take forever to wipe out the bad guys one at a time, and Domon enthusiastically agrees to help out with "that" technique. He summons his Gundam, and chucks a blazing Master Asia through the enemy formation in the fabled Choukyuu Haou Den-Ei-Dan strike. As Ryuusei laments that there's left for him left to do, Domon cries manly tears as he tells his master how much he's missed him. When Rain makes introductions, Master Asia is intrigued to finally meet the rumored Taikuu Maryuu squad, and Fan Li is very intrigued to finally meet the renowned Master Asia.

Domon is initially unwilling to take Daimoji up on his request to fight for the sake of mankind, saying that he's got a job he must perform. Master Asia berates him for a fool and points out that if mankind is wiped out, Domon's objective will perish too. After a pause, Domon agrees that stopping the aliens is most important, earning a kind word or two from Master Asia before he leaves on a very important errand of his own. He assures you that you'll see him again. Domon flatly turns down Ryuusei's breezy greeting, and Rain apologizes for him, saying that despite his rough appearance Domon is a very good person at his core. Rai opines that despite Ryuusei's moronic appearance his core is moronic too, and Ryuusei runs off in pursuit of the departing Rai. Sanshirou makes a point of introducing everyone else, lest the new arrivals get the wrong impression.

Meanwhile, Watta says that Trider is now able to transform as circumstances demand, all thanks to his mother's financial clout. Daimoji tells Sakon to conduct all those repairs on the Taikuu Maryuu as soon as you return to base, since there's no telling when you'll have to sortie next...

Elsewhere, Heinel wants to know who it was who tangled with your forces in Shinjuku. Dankel assures him that Asimov has no idea whose forces those are, and Jangyal counsels patience while Zuhl investigates.

15S. Gibraltar Kuuiki ("Gibraltar Airspace")

Usso is suddenly unwilling to go to space, saying that it's dangerous up there because of the fighting. Katejina points out that that's true no matter where they go, and so Usso wants to go with her. She tells him that he can't, that he's got to protect Shakti. Meanwhile, Oliphar has been unable to get the Arti-Gibraltar to even talk to him about ferrying armed vehicles to space, and they're running out of time before the transport plane arrives.

Just then, the Vespa show up and will not take "no" for an answer when it comes to permission to land. Mandela, who has been in negotiations with Chronicle, sounds rather disappointed that the Vespa are staging a coup this quickly, and Chronicle claims he had heard nothing about his commanding officer showing up so soon. Mandela warns Chronicle that any act of Vespa aggression will turn all humanity against them. It's far from clear what's going on without seeing the anime, but the negotiations quickly break down when Fala discovers the rebels and deploys her forces...

The Riga are going to be careful not to damage the rail launcher.

After a few rounds, Sayaka and Shinobu show up.

Before showing Kouji what present she brought him, or rather, his machine,

Sayaka introduces the Beast Machine squad. They're a great help in battle, but you still haven't been able to get the company to give you permission to blast off. Sayaka tells Oliphar that that won't be a problem: Oka has just sent a warship to ferry them to space. Sayaka then goes to show Kouji the completed Jet Scrander, which brings Kouji to tears with joy. He plants a happy kiss right on Sayaka's lips. Stunned, she half-yells at him and demands to know what the heck he's thinking, but it's clear that he's mostly thinking about finally being able to fly. Sayaka hastily tells him she understands how he feels, and manages to prevent him from kissing her too many more times...

15E. Goudatsu ("Theft")

Watta is back on the scene, interested to see Domon and Rain added to the party. And it's a good thing they are too, since they're the first people you've met who actually know who the Death Army are: clones created by the Devil Gundam. And *that* would be the terrifying-ass Gundam which Domon and Rain came to Earth in pursuit of. Its three Great Principles (self-replication, self-regeneration, and self-evolution) make it the summit of a Gundam ecosystem containing such luminaries as the Lumber Gundam, the Tequila Gundam, and for all I know the Boz Robot. This sounded like a good idea when its purpose was cleaning up the war-torn Earth, but ever since a certain d00d up and stole it the potential for mayhem seems unlimited. Domon shows you a picture of the d00d in question, and is quick to say that the perp, Kyouji Kasshu, is NOT to be referred to as his brother. More like his arch-enemy owing to how he killed their mother and ended up their father in cryogenic prison. Rain counters Domon's "I don't need any help to defeat it!" bravado by threatening not to speak to him ever again, and Domon agrees to become part of the party.

Just in time too, since the aliens are at it again. The Taikuu Maryuu is ready to rumble, but nobody is sure if Gaiking is battleworthy. Oh well! The good news is that the control layout hasn't changed despite all the enhancements, and you even get a bit of a movie before battle is joined. The bad guy du jour is Lu Cain, whose men are struggling to set up some nefarious device or other. He orders Kilar to buy some time, whose advanced age takes more needling from the youthful Ryuusei.

After several turns of pounding away, the bad guys' evil plan comes to fruition. Lu Cain takes off, leaving Kilar to his fate.

It turns out that what Lu Cain was after was data in the university database, which Ryuusei plays off as just minor breaking and entering. Once again Rai lambasts Ryuusei's stupidity, and when Sanshirou weakly agrees it finally comes out that Ryuusei has implied that Rai is a homo. No excuse can save Ryuusei from a severe bout of smackdown. Meanwhile, since neither Sakon nor Daimoji have any idea what the aliens are after yet, you have no choice but to return to base...

16S. RIINHOOSU Ujou ("The Lean Horse Takes Off")

Two new members introduce themselves: Aya of the SRX team, and Oliphar, captain of the Shrack Squad. They have orders for Gomez to head to space as captain of the Lean Horse. Sayaka recalls her brief time with Aya's teammate Ryuusei, apparently in a bid to make Kouji jealous (which fails). Meanwhile, the rest of the crew are trying to figure out how to get their bucket of bolts ship to actually fly. It flies, and Usso has no idea if he can fight in space since he hasn't tried yet.

People who have fought in space include Agyarl, who reports the Earthlings ascent to Sharkin. Sharkin is FURIOUS that Desmond let their prey escape, and says it's too late to follow now lest Gresco take action too. Sharkin, with more good sense than most of the bad guys, peevishly but wisely gives up.

Your people head for Saint Joseph City on the moon, to meet up with allies of the Riga Militia. Meanwhile, Kouji and the crew are having immense fun floating around in zero g, though some of them figure it's a bit beneath their dignity. The levity is broken up by a battle up ahead...

Someone named Gale is telling someone named Age to surrender, that as a comrade he doesn't want to fight him if possible. Your people arrive just as Gale gives his men the order to fire. Romelo realizes rapidly that these mecha are not of Earth origin, but strangely enough a distress call for the "Cosmic Culture Club" comes through in Japanese - these must somehow be Earthlings.

Gale will congratulate Age on fighting the good fight, planning to withdraw for today. He tells him that this is not yet over, which Age understands all too well.

During the battle Ghostelo shows up with a few more goons for you to kill.

Cue the introduction of Age (see 18E). The plan is for the CCC to head back to Earth to return the kids to their homes and to take Age to the Earth defense forces. But first, your people agree to help mend their shuttle, which is currently in no shape for travel.

Meanwhile, Tashiro gives Fala a chance to explain herself. She says that she takes responsibility for everything, and will abide by whatever the court martial decides. Tashiro says that he is the court martial, and that Fala is sentenced to being cast adrift in space. He orders Chronicle to tend to it, and testily cuts short Chronicle's protests unless he wants to get punished too. Fala tells him that she's thankful for his concern, and as required by law he loads her pod with oxygen and provisions for three days. She's glad to have avoided the guillotine herself, given her lineage, and summons her dignity as Chronicle salutes her before pushing the jettison button. Only afterwards does she break down completely.

Upon reaching the Moon, Jin Jahanam has orders for you: haul your butts over to Cairas Gree and wipe out the traitors posing as Earth defense assistants. When Masato objects that your broken down battleship is nowhere near up to the task, he brusquely tells you that he'll send some help. It turns out that this rather abrupt guy is the head of the Riga Militia, and Usso doesn't seem entirely thrilled by him.

Cairas Gree turns out to be an enormous orbital beam cannon Zanskull is currently building. It's pretty obvious what a threat it would pose if instead of pointing outward at the aliens it were to point down at Earth. Kouji disgustedly wonders who authorized building this thing in the first place, and Junko explains that it was the top Earth brass - and that's why the Riga Militia is needed. Oliphar then finds Marvet adjusting her pilot suit: she is a MS pilot after all. He tells her he doesn't want her risking herself, and their little tete a tete is interrupted by Usso, who wonders what's going on...

16E. Sensei Kougeki ("Preemptive Strike")

Mixed news greets your people as they return to base. Voltes V itself is

repaired, but Hiko's psychological damage is taking longer to heal, making combination impossible. To fix this, your people prepare to go on maneuvers before assaulting the enemy base. You can tell that your people are getting testy when Domon is telling Ryuusei to hold his horses, and given how fast the bad guys are to interrupt your "manovers" it seems that stress relief won't be hard to come by.

The sad fact of the matter is that Jangyal's day of reckoning is not yet at hand, since he flees at less than 50% of his HP.

Despite initial appearances, the enemy does not have an infinite supply of cannon fodder. After they run out and the battle is over, Lu Cain asks Heinel what's so hard about wiping out a few impudent Earthlings, offering to procure some reinforcements from Sharkin. Heinel is able to politely decline, and as Lu Cain departs, he chuckles and cautions Heinel that Gottso is one impatient dude. After a suitably dramatic pause, Heinel starts screaming at Jangyal. Jangyal offers to commit harakiri on the spot, but Katherine hastily informs the general that such a death would be no better than a dog's. In fact, since he's so unafraid of death, he should go make your dudes afraid of death instead! Heinel likes the sound of this, and instructs Jangyal to either come back with his shield, or on it, after fighting your dudes once more. It is to be a glorious fight with the pride of the Boazan at stake.

Elsewhere, it seems that Hiiro has been busily fragging down the Far East Base. The soldiers are running scared of his Gundam, but Oka smacks his subordinates out of the way so he can appeal to Hiiro directly to stop the needless destruction. Hiiro agrees to talk to Oka if he will get into the Gundam's hand, and Oka sternly orders his men not to interfere. Oka is aware of Hiiro's past, the years of hardship under the Zanskull and his salvation by Char. He informs Hiiro that mankind is facing its direst threat in history, and begins to say that mankind must stand united, but Hiiro says he's heard all that before. Oka then cuts to the chase: he believes Char is mistaken, and Doctor J does too. THAT gets Hiiro's attention, since Doctor J is supposed to be dead. In fact, delivering Hiiro's new orders from J is why Oka came to see Hiiro: "Stop Char!" Oka realizes that Hiiro won't believe him easily, and tells him to go to the moon to see Doctor J for himself. Hiiro finally relents.

17S. Nazo no Teki Senkan ("Mysterious Enemy Battleship")

Repairs completed, the CCC prepares to depart for the last leg of their trip to earth. Age is impressed with Romelo's repair skillz, which he's sure will get them through reentry and then some. After parting ways, your people encounter something on the inbounds, with no IFF and not responding to hailing frequencies. To your horror, it appears to be an enemy mothership [That's no moon!!], and Gomez wastes no time in taking evasive action as the bad guys deploy their interceptors.

Aboard the enemy ship, Gottso is amused at your people's agitation, which Gresco figures means the Earthlings are not totally clued out to the might of the massive Helmoze. The interceptors Gresco sortied are led by Gale, who has been given a chance to erase the dishonor of letting Age escape. Your people in turn sortie to combat the incoming SPTs, trying to guard the flagship on its steady course.

Things get complicated when Age's shuttle comes back to save you, and Age runs into Cain, who figures he has no choice but to kill him now. Yet Ghostelo then sorties, claiming that Age is his prey.

Age will bail before finishing Gale off. Once your flagship makes it out of the area, your people mull the awesome power of the enemy ship - it ain't gonna be easy fighting that thing. Age's people appear to have made good their escape, but a few enemies were on their tail too. Romelo then decides to outfit the Victory Gundam with the Overhang Pack, which is akin to giving it a battleship-grade beam cannon to carry. Note that it requires quite a bit to fire it...

Gottso is willing to let Gresco off the hook for your people's escape, and to his surprise finds a capsule with a weakened Earthling floating inside. She manages to say that her name is Fala before losing consciousness, and Gottso orders her tended to.

17E. Tokkun! VORUCHESU CHIIMU ("Special Training for the Voltes Team")

Well, your people are hanging out in the Pacific Ocean near where they think the enemy base is. It would really help to have Voltes along for the final assault, but they're not ready to combine yet. Fortunately, Oka has come up with a special training regimen that should fix things up in a jiffy.

Elsewhere, Zuhl has a suggestion for Kilar to earn himself some brownie points. Seeing as how all your powerful dudes are gathering around their base, this means that your base must be unguarded! Kilar grasps this quickly enough, but wonders why Zuhl has come to him and not Sharkin. Zuhl hems and haws at this, muttering about how not all Boazanians get along that well. Kilar and Dankel seem well aware that Zuhl is a slippery little bastard, but are at least as eager to turn the tables on the humans as he is. They're even willing to bring him along as an equal, and resolve to carry out the assault without Sharkin catching on...

Practice is not going well for the Voltes team. As they prepare to take a breather, Kazuya starts to get fed up with Ken'ichi covering for little Hiko's slowness. Before a full-blown argument can start, Oka introduces Major Kami Masato, one of the members of the Getter team. Masato brooks no argument from the Voltes members and quickly marshalls them for another round of practice. If at first you don't succeed, right?

Masato realizes that things are dire, and yells at Ken'ichi not to whine about combining, but to DO it. He reminds Hiko of his mother's sacrifice, and this time Hiko finally gets his ass in gear. Kilar is rather nonplussed to see that your people can actually combine again, but it's too late to back down now...

Kilar is too dumb to run away, and even after victory Masato won't let up on the Voltes team. That's mild compared to Heinel's rage when he hears that Kilar blew it again. Jangyal of course didn't order the raid on your base, and it would seem that Kilar acted on his own. Interestingly, Zuhl owns up to giving Kilar the idea, though Jangyal decks him just for speaking up. In any event, Jangyal is now through with people circumventing his authority as military commander, but before he can punish Zuhl any further, Heinel points out that your people are on the inbounds. He orders Katherine to imprison Zuhl until after the threat is dealt with, and Zuhl fumes to himself that he'll get even for this sooner or later.

18S. Aoki Ryuusei to Natte ("Becoming the Blue Comet")

Your people receive an unexpected communique from, of all people, the Neo Jion - in particular, from Char! Gomez takes the call, asking whether the

rumors of Char's turning traitor on mankind are true. Char allows that he's aiding the aliens, but says that he hasn't sold out humanity. Romelo doesn't buy that, but Char asks your people what they think awaits at the end of this fight. After all, the aliens possess such incredible technology that they've been able to come all this way just to kick your ass - surely you don't think you can win or anything, right? Right? He figures that your foolish resistance is only going to enrage the invaders more, which is why Neo Jion jumped at the chance to help the aliens, as the one and only means to ensure a future for mankind-

Shut the hell up! shouts Amuro, who somehow joins in the conversation. This famous Newtype points out how Char loves to prate on about justice based solely on his own narrow views. He asks what value a peace founded on the sacrifice of numerous human lives could have, and challenges Char to stop treating other people's lives like toys for once. Char thinks Amuro is full of it, claiming that mankind's history shows that people are happiest when ruled by the strongest leader. He thinks Amuro is incapable of grasping the larger picture, accusing him of myopically leading people even deeper into danger and then having the gall to question his lofty perspective. Amuro fires back that capitulating to the aliens and therefore making human kill human cannot be correct. Char asks whether Amuro thinks that fighting until noone is left can really make mankind happy, and Amuro points out that mankind's defeat is not yet a foregone conclusion. Does Amuro think that mankind can beat them, then?

Kouji finally interrupts, pointing out that there's no way to know that until you try. Shinobu goes further, pissed off beyond measure at people like Char who debate outcomes without lifting a goddamn finger on their own. Char figures that there's no common ground between you, and informs you that he'll show you no mercy, which is just fine with Shinobu...

Meanwhile, Ghostelo has finally caught up with Age. ^^;;;

Take out Ghostelo and Gale will show up, telling Age that the end has come. Age can't accept that, saying it's his duty to protect the Earth. In which case, Gale figures it's the least he can do as Age's sister's fiancée to kill him with his own hand.

As Age accumulates more damage, he ends up going into V-Max mode, smacking Gale around with ease and then being all broken up over it. His mech overheats and falls silent, and your people hurry to recover it. Just in time too, since some Neo Jion dudes arrive on the scene...

More arrive next round, but so do the Lond Bel. Even Char is surprised to see the Ral Kairam here this fast, and decides that now is a decent time to sortie Gyunei and see how well he can do in actual combat.

Kill off enough of Char's lackeys and Char will decide to withdraw. Amuro asks if he's running, and Char weasels out by saying that it would be meaningless to fight Amuro in the lame MS he's in now.

After Char effects his cowardly retreat, Zechs asks why he wasn't sortied too. Char will only say that with the battle but begun there's no need to be hasty. Zechs says that he wants to be of use to the man who saved his life, but Char tells him that it was luck that saved him; Char was simply the method by which luck acted when the colony exploded. Furthermore, Zechs' desire to cooperate with Char means cooperating with the very aliens who blew up the colony, though Zechs believes that this is necessary to amass the power to eventually strike back at the aliens. That is the plan, isn't it Char? Who knows...

Colonel Bright and his crew greet the Lean Horse Jr.'s passengers. Amuro notices Aya right away, asking if she's a Newtype. Though Aya has been told that her mental powers exceed those of ordinary people, she doesn't think she's a Newtype. Seeing Amuro's hesitance, she points him to Usso, whose psychic connection with Amuro is apparent right away. Upon hearing that this boy is the Victory Gundam's pilot, Bright muses that the times once again are demanding Newtypes. The rest of the crew makes introductions and the CCC once again get ready to go to Earth, with the unconscious Age in tow.

18E. Kare no Na wa EIJI ("His Name Is Age")

Hiko now has his confidence back, and word comes quickly that your people have found the enemy base. Hayato tells the Voltes team that they needn't worry about the enemy attacking again in their absence, since they'll have their hands full fending off your guys. But as the Voltes team races to the scene, they encounter a shuttle being chased by a bunch of enemy aircraft. Aboard the shuttle, someone named Age asks his companion Roan to take the controls. Roan can't fly here in the gravity well, and Elizabeth quickly establishes contact with your people. She introduces herself as a member of the Cosmic Culture Club and asks for assistance, which Ken'ichi rapidly agrees to. The Voltes team splits up to better counter the aliens, and Megumi is straight fixing to remind them that she's a ninja.

This is less than a token challenge, but Elizabeth is grateful anyway. It seems the Triple C were chilling on a research station on Mars when Age rolled up in his shuttle to inform them of the Earth's peril. This guy, Albertro Nal Age Asuka [the third! oh wait...], is the only reason this small band of survivors made it when the alien fleet showed up and ravaged the station.

What this means is that Age is an alien, though he certainly looks no different from the Earthlings. He tells you that while there are some races with significantly different physiognomy, most do indeed look like humans. In fact, there are far more life forms in the universe than humans suspect, but according to Age the Milky Way is special: most other star clusters have far less life. This explains why there haven't been any invasions from afar until now.

It does not explain, however, how Age's father could be an Earthling, even given how said father got tossed into a deep space during an expedition to Jupiter. THAT is thanks to a "genetic equalizer" device and a woman into interspecies yiff among the "Boazan empire" folk who rescued Age's father. This sounds like pretty cool gadgetry until Age relates how it's been used by the Strong(tm) to dominate the Weak(tm) across the galaxy. The result is perpetual war between stellar monarchies striving for hegemony, which makes the invasion of the Solar System that much odder given how remote it is from the disputed territory.

It's a shame that Age's warning came too late, but that seems to be because the military is moving with unusual speed this time. Elizabeth had been planning to go to Federation HQ, but that would likely just get Age arrested as a collaborator, so the plan is for him to accompany you all instead.

19S. Big Cannon

Although official orders haven't come down yet, Amuro persuades Bright of the wisdom of attacking the Big Cannon at Cairas Gree before it's too late. That could result in court martial, but both Gomez and Bright have been prepared for that ever since assuming their commands. It actually feels oddly

reassuring to the Dankuuga squad that someone else besides them is willing to violate regulations for a good cause.

Tashiro isn't worried that the Lond Bel and Riga Militia have joined forces, figuring them both to be fringe elements. He thinks his Cairas Gree forces are invincible [dumbass], though Chronicle isn't so sure now that that white-colored newcomer plus the weird Far East-based mecha are in the mix. Tashiro thinks it's a simple matter of the lion baring its claws, and orders all his men to stop working on the Big Cannon to attack.

To Kouji's astonishment, Mucha shows up piloting the Borot, claiming that he's taken it without telling Boz, entitled by all the hard work he put in. He's not too worried about reprisals from Boz, who is unlikely to be able to follow all the way to space, and has even installed a Map Weapon!

Assorted lackeys pop out over the course of the battle, including Chronicle.

It turns out that Mucha was using the Borot for a part time job lifting cargo on Cairas Gree, which is where he came from. Bright then receives orders from Earth Defense Force HQ demanding his immediate presence in person. Will he obey?

19E. BOAZAN no Hokori ("Boazan's Pride")

Your main force is very glad to have Age and the crew join along with the Voltas squad. Unfortunately, the enemy base's location hasn't been pinpointed yet - it is somewhere near the island you're at. There's no choice but to split up and search... which is not good news to the Boazan forces in their soon-to-be-ex secret base. Jangyal promises to fend off your forces with his usual bravado, but trouble seems to be brewing already in that Dankel and Kilar are nowhere to be found. Jangyal fears they're up to something, especially after the mess Zuhl caused last time, and tells Heinel to be careful.

Meanwhile, Dankel has led Kilar outside the base, sick and tired of Heinel making a fool of them. He points out to Kilar that, whether or not it was Zuhl's idea, their previous unauthorized, failed attack is not something Heinel will let slide... which makes it all the better timing to part ways with Heinel. He figures that the base won't last long once the humans find it, especially if the two of them aren't helping defend it. And hey, the Boazan are just newcomers to the Balmar Empire anyway, unlikely to ever achieve their goal. Instead, why not throw their support behind Lu Cain, a major player in the Balmar faction with the upper hand? Kilar is liking the sound of this, beginning to look forward to getting even Emperor Darius' favor before long. Dankel is ready to summon the other two generals and report to his lord, and Kilar is sure that they'd be just as glad to be rid of the irksome Sharkin. Sounds like a plan!

Meanwhile, your dudes aren't exactly acting in unison by the time the enemy appears. Sanshirou can barely believe that Ryuusei is actually happy about the attack, but Watta tells him some people are just hot-blooded like that. Jangyal announces that, with the pride of the Boazan at stake, he's going to settle the score with you once and for all.

Once you get Jangyal down to less than 50% of his HP, Heinel demands to know where Dankel and Kilar are. Katherine still can't find them, and Heinel furiously orders her to ready his Skullook so he can sortie personally. He will brook no backtalk from her, and quickly orders Jangyal to flee while he takes over for him. Jangyal says that the only way he will yield this ground to your dudes is over his dead body, which Ryuusei is more than happy to

oblige. Jangyal is not to be easily cowed, and recovers all his HP and EN.

It is possible to kill Jangyal, which is worth shitloads of money and earns the burning enmity of Heinel. But this not advisable if you want to recruit Heinel later, so...

Get Jangyal down to under 10k HP left and he'll stage an attack on the flagship. Ken'ichi yells at him to stop and run, that the battle is already over, but Jangyal will have none of it. Rather than live with the shame of being beaten by the pitiful humans, he'd rather choose death. Heinel tries to stop him, yelling at him to remember the wishes of the other Boazan and pointing out that people can die pretty much any time they feel like it. Jangyal forces himself to comply, and Heinel thanks you all for showing a warrior's mercy, warning you sternly that the next time you meet he won't stay his hand. Your people are divided on whether Heinel is one cool dude or just a major showoff.

Just then, Master Asia shows up with a tale to tell. While he's telling it, Sakon tells the SRX pilots that Voltex brought parts with which to power up their mecha.

Elsewhere, it seems someone infiltrated Lu Cain's ship and freed a certain Earthling. The Shiki Squad was out at the time surveying a certain set of ruins. Dankel and Kilar show up then, offering to help. He is rather uneasy at the fact they left their old post without permission from their commander, warning that they could get court martialed for it. They respond that that old commander is incompetent, acting only on emotion without ever using his noggin. Given how the Earthlings are probably ringing the doorbell to Heinel's base right now, Lu Cain decides to enlist their aide...

[Things bifurcate here. If you did not counterattack Jangyal's onslaught, go to 20EB. Otherwise, go to 20EA.]

20S. Tsukimen Rakka Sakusen ("Operation to Crash on the Moon")

As he deliberates, Bright gets an unexpected transmission from someone he's never met before Chief Oka of the Federation Far East Base. He asks if Bright is planning to heed the order he just got to return, and Bright says that he doesn't see any alternative. Oka is adamant that Bright do no such thing, saying that as Bright is well aware, Staff HQ is anything but sane these days. There's no call for Bright to be punished for the whims of a few lunatics, especially since he and his men are one of the few glimmers of hope mankind has left. Bright briefly protests that disobeying would get all his men branded as traitors, but Oka firmly points out that fighting the aliens comes first. He tells Bright to leave things to him and his friends at Staff HQ, though Lean Horse Jr. itself will have to be relinquished.

Amuro is impressed with Oka, and after all the transfer is complete your people decide to go to the Moon. This will fulfill the Riga Militia's needs plus let Amuro pick up the Nu Gundam from its commissioned builders at Anaheim Electronics. Usso is a little sad to see Gomez go, but most of the rest of the crew are still with you all.

As you near the Earth, Shakti starts hearing the sound of many people crying out in anguish. Odelo then thinks that he's seeing the moon exploding, and in fact it turns out that Saint Joseph is under attack. Bright scrambles everyone to intercept... General Ashura, who commands Iron Mask to wipe out every last thing in the lunar city.

After the battle, Gresco informs Dr. Hell that Ashura blew it, which comes as little surprise to him. Fortunately, a certain experiment Dr. Hell has been working on has yielded good results, and is ready to go from prototype to production. He has Gresco send Char to find a suitable spot.

When Ashura returns, Dr. Hell castigates him(?) for failing to do a task tantamount to stealing a single moonstone. When he muses that they should have brought Brocken instead, Ashura begs for another chance. Dr. Hell reluctantly puts him in charge of building a secret base.

20E. Uragiri ("Treachery")

It seems that it was the redoubtable Master Asia who pwnzORIZED Lu Cain's ship, and the captive he freed is Professor Yasunishi, world-renowned expert on uber-ancient cultures. Yasunishi is a stunning enough beauty that even Daimoji is drooling, and it's clear enough that she's better off in your capable hands than in the clutches of the aliens who pilfered her from Osaka. Master Asia deflects Domon's question about what he was doing in an enemy *alien* spaceship in the first place with a burst of poetic bravado, though Domon is inwardly not exactly convinced.

As for why Yasunishi was kidnapped in the first place, she says the aliens seem to be interested in the ruins of the Mu culture. No item confirming the existence of this mythical people has ever come to light, but the Balmar sure seem convinced. They went so far as to digitize all of Yasunishi's research data plus her brainwaves, despite the fact that even Yasunishi herself has no clear idea of where the Mu might have dwelt.

In fact, the Balmar want Yasunishi so badly that they've sent Dankel, Kilar, and the whole crew to try to get her back. Dankel knows that further failures won't be tolerated...

On turn 2, Heinel shows up in high dudgeon, demanding to know where Dankel and Kilar have been. Dankel tells him that Lu Cain ordered them to go to his side, and that Heinel has no right to question such orders. Jangyal, demands to know when they became Lu Cain's subordinates, and Dankel, noting that Jangyal didn't bother with any honorifics, observes that Jangyal must be pretty hot shit these days. Could it be that Heinel too harbors some unseemly thoughts regarding Lu Cain, or...? Heinel cuts Dankel's sinuous words short, demanding that he spit out clearly whether or not he is willing to take Heinel's orders. Kilar, who can't bear Dankel's caution any more, tells Heinel to piss off to his face. Before Jangyal can rush over to retaliate, Zuhl pops out and blasts Jangyal to within an inch of his life. When Jangyal cries out a curse at this treachery, Zuhl says haughtily that he never once thought of himself as an ally of any of Heinel's forces, all of whom he considers beneath them. Jangyal can't muster one more snappy comeback before expiring, and Heinel figures the only response to treachery like this is death. In short order, Heinel smacks around Dankel when he tries to protect Zuhl from the wrath. At least Dankel and Kilar are smart enough to know when to retreat. Oh, and the bad guys haven't forgotten about you either.

Persuade Heinel with Voltes three times in a row. The first time, Ken'ichi can't see Heinel as an enemy and is sure that they must be able work things out somehow. The second time, he continues that your people can scarcely be expected to relish fighting after witnessing Jangyal get his sorry ass handed to him by a scumbag like Zuhl. Heinel seems to think you want him to surrender, which Ken'ichi corrects the third time. He says that depending on how talks go, he'd be more than happy to help avenge Jangyal's death. This

catches Heinel off guard, and Katherine reminds him that Lu Cain is unlikely to just hand Zuhl over - in which case, a bit of help would not go amiss. After some deliberation, Heinel decides to believe in Ken'ichi, which means that everyone staying with him will be branded traitors. Katherine is aware of this, and begs to come along.

Heinel is pretty much bumming over how unfortunate an end Jangyal came to. Kazuya is certainly eager enough to crack down on unfair folk like Zuhl, and Ken'ichi is in total agreement. This is likely to go ill for Lu Cain, who nearly has a conniption when he hears that Heinel has defected. He demands to know what Dankel and Kilar did ("Who? Us?"), and then tells them to get Sharkin's ass over here to fend off the Earthlings for him while he goes on with his "important work". Zuhl then comes over, asking to work at Lu Cain's feet and foreswearing the shameful conduct of his former commander Heinel. Lu Cain will have him, but first Zuhl is to go with Sharkin and try his hand at Heinel extermination. Zuhl can't believe his bad luck at being sent to Sharkin again, and quickly stops protesting when Lu Cain threatens to behead him on the spot...

21S. Moon Guardian

Bright agrees to meet the mayor of Saint Joseph, who is grateful beyond words that his city hasn't been destroyed like so many others on the moon. It seems, however, that the bad guys aren't out for mere slaughter, but rather for moonstones (and not even Gundarium). In which case, the enemy are likely to be back to this, the moon's greatest moonstone quarry. With immense amounts of good sense, the mayor and civic leaders have just decided to evacuate all civilians, with preparations already underway for transport to the sympathetic colonies of Side 6. He'd like your help defending the convoy, and offers to take care of all your resupply needs in return.

Elsewhere, Usso's comrades are trying to use their new guardian status to hit on some of the local chicks, Elisha and Martina. Tomarsh doesn't take too kindly to this at first, as a childhood friend of these two. When they neglect Usso, he introduces himself too, instantly drawing the girls' attention as a MS pilot.

Of course, the bad guys figure that the humans are running away with the moonstones...

[Which upgrades to the V2 you'll get later depend on whether any shuttles get shot down here.]

After the battle, your people go to a rendezvous with Jin to pick up some goods.

21E. NESSAA Hasshin ("Launch the Nessar")

Yasunishi figures that the aliens are seeking something in the Mu ruins, something important enough that it might be behind all the alien attacks to date. Master Asia, who seems to be a bad liar, is most interested in whatever this important thing is. Age says that, while Balmarians will do anything to expand their clout, the Earth is too puny and too far from other habitable planets to be a cost-effective territory.

As your people debate the romantic prospect of buried Mu treasure, Yasunishi says that the aliens seemed quite interested in the theory that the Mu ruins were sunken to the bottom of the Mariana Trench. In fact, the Shiki Squad

was out puttering around the Trench when Master Asia snuck in, having apparently found something immediately before. Time for the Taikuu Maryuu to go fishing too, with Master Asia in tow.

Age is marveling at this "ocean" that his father told him of. He finds it rather creepy, which Anna tells him is because he's at the bottom of it. The cool breezes and sounds of the surf on the beach are something he thinks he'd like to see though. Your people quickly spot a group of bad guys busy with their surveying, and decide to spy on them with the Nessar a bit. The enemy keep popping up everywhere, so the Taikuu Maryuu makes itself a target to distract attention.

Lu Cain is appalled to hear that the Taikuu Maryuu is crashing his fishing expedition. As he frantically inquires after Sharkin, Agyarl phones up to say that Sharkin has just led Desmond, Asimov and the whole posse into battle. Lu Cain wonders why they're ignoring his orders, and all Agyarl can offer is that now isn't the best time to worry about that. Lu Cain hangs up in a huff and has Zuhl called up in a hurry. Zuhl's glee at being useful quickly turns to horror when his orders are to go and pulverize the Taikuu Maryuu and the turncoat Heinel. Seeing him blanch, Lu Cain asks dangerously if this mission is too heavy for Zuhl, who stammers that the word "impossible" isn't written in his "greatest scientist in all Boazan" dictionary. He even refuses Kilar and Dankel's aide, figuring he can make do with his Skullook and some Beast Warriors he's been modding. These beasts, based on his study of Earthling tactics, are supposed to be quite formidable...

22S. ZANSUKAARU no Giwaku ("Schemes of the Zanskull")

On your way to the rendezvous, you encounter a Zanskull MS requesting aide. Bright takes no chances but does allow the pilot aboard. Her name is Rupe Shino from the Muttarma Zugan fleet. She claims her fleet was dispatched by the Zanskull to fend off the aliens from Zanskull interests on the moon. It was shortly after that that the aliens attacked the Zanskull imperial palace, and without Tashiro running the defense it fell quickly. Her fleet tried to return to the rescue, but met with an ambush and she barely made it this far. It's rather odd that none of the rest of you have heard of the Zanskull's downfall from other sources, but she claims she has no reason to lie. Bright has her imprisoned until her story can be verified, which she figures is only to be expected. Meanwhile, her mech gets modified and repainted so your people can use it.

As you proceed, a large number of asteroids appear in your path. Usso gets permission to wipe them out with his mech, and Ochiro and Tomarsh seem determined to help him as some sort of manly pissing contest. At least they have some skills, which is important since Chronicle stages an ambush, determined to take down the "white mech" once and for all. Bright orders your new "guest" brought here, and accuses her of leading you into a trap. She gets a line to Chronicle, who doesn't believe that the empire has fallen. She tells him to go check for himself, as the enemy converge from all around.

Amuro and Aya start complimenting each other on how swift they are in combat, Aya clearly interested in him as more than a fellow pilot. Chain continues glaring at the two of them from her place in hiding. At length, your people reach the White Ark to pick up new pieces for the V Gundam, as well as the Nu Gundam. PLUS Nuke and Boz, who is only barely restrained from pummeling Mucha for stealing the Borot. Rai is even here with some powerup parts for the R-3 and a message from Oka. The Earth armies are in confusion dealing with the aliens and Vespa, so there's no danger of any formal decisions being made about the Ral Kairam. The message to Bright is "knock yourself out".

There's also a peculiar footnote in a letter to Chain from Anaheim. They claim that they didn't actually do any more than install the Psychoframe, which they believe has been somehow passed to them by the Neo Jion. She wonders why October sent her this letter, and won't let on to Amuro what she's learned.

Gresco notes that Carla wasn't able to slow you down either, beginning to realize that the Earthlings are far more powerful than her bargained for.

22E. Kuroi Kagaku ("Black Science")

Zuhl is so sure of himself that he even announces himself to you. Heinel races out in fury, and Daimoji orders Pete to surface and follow him. Bunta and the Nessar are to wait somewhere where the enemy can't find him, and Daimoji makes sure to add that until he hears from the Taikuu Maryuu, he's not to do anything reckless.

Zuhl and Heinel quickly start calling each other traitor, and your people figure out pretty fast that the usually timid Zuhl must think he has something pretty fierce up his sleeve since he actually showed himself.

When you take down the first enemy, something happens that you greatly dislike: the enemy uses a Spirit Command! Naw, couldn't be, right? Yup, it's right, and is considerably annoying. Of course, Zuhl's "galactic" genius is not matched by his assistant, who rapidly starts pushing the wrong buttons. After a while of this (culminating in Tekagen), Zuhl furiously orders his subordinate not to use any more Spirit Commands, to Ryuusei's vast amusement.

Once Zuhl's sorry ass is eliminated, Heinel decides to go on a little journey, on which Katherine insists on accompanying him. Kazuya figures that the two of them will be happy together (Rain is a tad jealous), but given that Bunta is still somewhere at the bottom of the ocean, you need to hurry back fast.

23S. Amuro and Char

Gresco receives word that an interstellar spaceship has launched from the Earth, and it's not one of his. Given that the humans lack that technology... he reports this troubling news to Gottso. Gottso gives him permission to pursue and figure out whose it is, telling him that the rest of his armies can hold the fort while he's gone. After a pause, Gresco recommends to Gottso that he let Char have command in his absence. He's got three reasons for ruling the humans instead of wiping them out. One: the surface detachment has yet to find the ancient spaceship they're looking for, despite being led by Gresco's son Lu Cain - it may actually be faster to let the humans do the searching. Number two is the Spectrometal the Earthlings call moonstones - excavating all that will surely defray the costs of governing the Earth. Number three concerns the Earthlings' fighting abilities, which as Gottso already knows have vastly exceeded all expectations. With a few tweaks and some training, they could prove a powerful weapon in battle - and in fact he's already begun a few experiments along that road. Indeed, Gresco recommends turning the Earth into a perpetual factory for these formidable bioweapons, which could only strengthen Gottso's influence within the Balmar.

Gresco recommended Char in particular for his quality and disposition, and especially for the fact that Char actually grasped the futility of fighting such a technologically superior foe. Gresco is well aware that Char is

probably planning to buy time and steal that technology from the Balmar - but until that time, he's unlikely to be anything but a loyal servant. Gresco and Gottso are counting on being able to control such a predictable course of events, and Gottso agrees to Gresco's recommendation. He will pass the word to Char to show up immediately as soon as he passes Side 6.

Char meanwhile is hard at work trying to persuade some of the colony leadership to side with him in the interest of the people's safety. Verona is forced to admit that he has no counter to the enemy weapons that have already claimed one colony. If so, is there any need to even think further, Char asks. Verona won't given him an answer right away, and after Char leaves he privately fumes over the traitor's words. Meanwhile, Bright is receiving many thanks for delivering the people of Saint Joseph safely. Resupply is in fact already underway thanks to the cheerful acumen of the mayor.

Kouji gets permission to do some sightseeing, and Chain is pleasantly surprised when Amuro invites her to accompany him to the city. Meanwhile, Hathaway is chatting with Quess, who wants to know what Amuro is like. Hathaway, confused, says that Amuro is totally normal. Quess says that she's studying yoga, hoping to gain the ability to know what people are like even without talking to them - much like the fabled Newtypes can.

Hathaway then leads Quess to where Amuro is helping Chain shop for clothes. Quess immediately starts staring at Amuro, angrily telling Chain that she's in her way and to get lost at once. As the drama unfolds, Amuro quite unexpectedly runs in to... Char of all people! Char will only say cryptically that, unlike Amuro, he can't afford to be just a pilot. Amuro tackles him, and tries to impress upon him that humans aren't as weak as he thinks. Char challenges him to bring forth this hidden potential of the drooling masses on the spot. Amuro will be more than happy to once he's kicked Char's ass, but Quess interferes and calls Amuro a cheater.

Char and Quess make good their escape when the bad guys show up, and Aya tells Amuro to hurry back to the hangar while she holds the forces of evil off here. Once again, Chain proves to be useless.

After the battle, Bright tells Amuro that there's no way the Ral Kairam can sortie this quickly to follow Char. In which case, Amuro resolves to go in his Gundam, with Rai and Aya accompanying.

23E. Shikitai GOSUTERO ("The Shiki Squad Ghostelo")

Bunta has news for you: he's spotted a cave in the Trench wall that is surely the enemy hideout. Predictably, Bunta gets discovered while trying to inch closer for a better look. Gaiking is hurriedly sortied to help out. Kilar and Dankel are hoping to score brownie points with Lu Cain, but Bunta isn't going down without a fight. In fact, neither is Sanshirou, and Dankel agrees to head back to Lu Cain for reinforcements.

Said reinforcements arrive after a few turns, including Ghostelo, a dangerously insane dude who disrespects Kilar and Dankel and might just take them out by accident if they keep hanging around.

When your people finally catch up, Age recognizes the enemy SPT, one of Lu Cain's forces...

He explains that Lu Cain is of the same race as his mother, former rulers of the Balmar Empire who still enjoy a place of considerable privilege. It's standard practice for Balmar to assimilate the peoples it conquers, like

Heinel's Boazanians. Age figures that Lu Cain wants to find Mu as part of whatever his latest scheme at domination is, which is all the more reason you need to find it first...

Ghostelo is **very** upset when Dankel calls him on his braggadocio. Dankel and Kilar are not very impressed with the fabled Shiki Squad, but Geti shows up to stick up for his unit. Dankel smoothly avoids a fight by telling Geti just how much Ghostelo was boasting before having his crotch kicked by your dudes. Geti is about to massacre this disgraceful lunatic on the spot, but Lu Cain intervenes and tells Kilar and Dankel to follow him. The Shiki Squad is ordered to keep your people at bay until his investigations are done.

24S. Shin'i ("True Intentions")

The Ral Kairam gets ready to launch even as Amuro and company race after Char. They find him in short order, but Zechs says that Char is busy and that he'll be playing with your folks. Quess chimes in that Amuro is a tad too persistent, but Gyunei shoos her away from the battle about to unfold.

[But not far ENOUGH away! It is easily possible to shoot her down, though the rewards are slender.]

Char flees like the subservient bitch-ass that he aspires to be as soon as reinforcements arrive, which is shortly before said reinforcements get ass raped by Fin Funnels. Afterwards, Hiiro runs into Doctor J on the moon: it seems Oka was telling the truth all along. Hiiro has had some trouble carrying out Oka's orders, having been rescued by Char and feeling some sense of obligation. He tells Hiiro that that would be a mistake: leader Kagachi of the Zanskull was already under Char's command when he attacked the colony. All it took was a brief demonstration of the aliens' power to make Kagachi capitulate. Hiiro still seems dubious, so Doctor J tells him to go see for himself.

Amuro meanwhile is upset that Char got away, but Bright assures him he'll get more chances. He impatiently awaits Kouji, Shinobu, and friends returning to the ship, and heads off to the next waypoint.

24E. In'en no Saikai ("Fated Reunion")

As your people marvel over this huge undersea cave, Kazuya's sarcasm rapidly gets him in trouble with some of the ladies. As he halfheartedly apologizes, Master Asia keeps things moving by quoting the old proverb that you must enter a lion's den if you want to catch a lion. Said lion's den is pitch black, and Ryuusei's little ghost imitation act manages to actually scare some of the crew. He ruefully apologizes, figuring that this is a sure way to get him in trouble with a certain someone who Rai figures he'll never get.

Your people then find (astoundingly given you're 35k feet below the surface) an air pocket above. This must be tens of thousands of years old, which has Sakon all excited at the scientific prospects. You quickly discover the ruins of habitations, much like the ones found on Age's planet. This means that Yasunishi is now looking at her long-dreamt of Mu Ruins. Your people prepare to sortie to protect the investigation that must follow.

Domon wanders off on his own, without a word to the hot-blooded Ryuusei. Your people begin scrutinizing the old-fashioned buildings, only to find themselves surrounded by the bad guys. As Ghostelo promises much bloodshed upon you for his prior humiliation, Age promises to take him on himself. This

reunion looks to be pretty violent as Ghostelo uses some kind of underhanded move on Age before battle is fully joined.

Your people now have the Shiki Squad, Lu Cain's personal guards, to deal with. Meanwhile, it seems that Yasunishi has gone outside to study the ruins, and Daimoji has more than just a professional interest in seeing that she returns safely. He hurries your people out to find her.

Elsewhere, the Shiki Squad are licking their wounds and feeling lame. Since they can't exactly go back like this, their only choice is to try to attack again.

25S. MOTORADDO Kantai ("The Motolard Fleet")

Nanai informs Char that Quess can use Funnels even without a Psychoframe. In short, there's no need to "fortify" her: she's a full-blooded Newtype. Char was sure of this from the moment he met her. He tells Nanai to ready an ambush for the Lond Bel.

Gyunei discusses why he was fortified into a Newtype (or an Esper as Quess insists on calling it) with her. Based on what he saw today, he now knows that he'll never be what she is. He tells her that he wants to go out with her and study her, and she asks if he's somehow jealous of how Quess loves Char. She then runs off.

Your people are following Char towards the Zanskull Empire when the trail leads into an asteroid field. Amuro and Usso go out to investigate some mysterious lights seen in one of the large asteroids... What they find inside is horrifying: a ship in shambles, with a man whose dying words are to let him stay human and not do anything more to Side 5. You have no time to figure out what this means as the enemy attack.

Chronicle is in charge of the enemy fleet(!) and orders you to change course immediately or else he'll attack. Your people are indeed wondering how the Zanskull Empire could still exist, and summon Lupe to try to get some clarity. It turns out that Chronicle says that the empire has merely undergone some "alterations", including a total shakeup of the leadership. Bright finds all this very fishy, realizing that Lupe cannot be entirely lying. He resolves to meet Chronicle head on, which reveals Chronicle for less than the stolid military leader he wishes he was.

Char won't be so surprised to hear that the Zanskull fleet failed, though he's coy with Nanai about whether he expected Chronicle's raid to be nothing more than delaying tactics all along. Meanwhile, contact has been lost with Hiiro, which Char presumes must be voluntary given that Hiiro's Gundam is still active.

Usso gets good news (powerups for his Gundam) and bad news (that Katejina is fighting on the bad guys side). Sara commiserates with Usso's first love being a betrayer, but tells Usso that better lovers can be quite close at hand (referring to Shinobu).

25E. Shikitai no Fukushuu ("Revenge of the Shiki Squad")

Your people find Yasunishi without too much trouble, and Daimoji is inclined to be lenient with her. Pete can understand the lure of truly legendary ancient historical stuff like this. Age is able to identify an artifact that

Yasunishi brought back with her: a storage device which despite its age he may just be able to get running. After some fiddling with it, he gets it to project a hologram - a hologram of a beautiful woman.

With an expression of deep sorrow, she relates that her people are the descendants of refugees from war with the Balmar. They had scarcely begun establishing their own culture on this distant planet when the offworldly assault came again, and the battle rages on even as she records her words. She tells of a massive battle of attrition, the destructive fruit of which is a ravaged surface of the planet soon to be submerged as the polar ice melts. Believing their destruction to be imminent, her people have created twelve special children using the DNA harmonizing apparatus, and sent them to the highest spot on the planet in the slender hope that they can one day revive her people, and with her people's last reserves of Tronium. With a sad smile, she says that even the faintest glimmer of hope that one day her words will be heard and understood makes the undertaking worth it, and says that all depends on the twelve children, and the Mutron-powered combat robot, Reid--

As the message cuts out, Akira is frantic to know more about Reideen, but Age is more astounded by the mention of Tronium. Master Asia is too, though he manages to lie to Domon that his surprise is from hearing that some ancient aliens sent people to Tibet or wherever it was. Unfortunately, Age doesn't get a chance to explain what Tronium is before the bad guys show up.

Ghostelo calls Age out, determined to finish him off this time and not receptive to calls to actually work as a team. The rest of them are planning to wipe out the Taikuu Maryuu, stranding your whole squad here beneath the sea.

Let the Taikuu Maryuu be attacked by the Shiki-Tai to get Fortified Layzner in 33. Else get Layzner Mk. II.

Move Reideen to 10,13, and a voice tells Akira that if he chants the name of God La Mu, his breast will roar with "God Voice". At 13,09 Akira finds the Gorgon Sword, more proof that Reideen is a relic of Mu. Interestingly, Ryuusei will recognize the improved Gorgon Sword that Akira found.

Lu Cain is *less* than thrilled that his men got gaffled down by mere Earthlings, but he lets them off with only a few insults and orders to keep the Earthlings under surveillance.

Meanwhile, Yasunishi gets Age to explain what "Tronium" is, which she guesses must be some kind of metal. It is in fact the rarest and most precious metal in the universe, and to explain why asks if anyone has heard of "warping". Ryuusei, a fan of Captain Kirk, thinks he knows about warp drive, which Age tells you to think of as simply a way to shorten a ship's travel time. Doing so requires a tremendous amount of energy, which normal power plants simply can't supply. Tronium can be used as a catalyst to reach the energy levels needed, but unfortunately it only exists on the planet Tron - and Tron vanished due to a meteoric impact long ago. This caused the value of the Tronium scattered throughout space to skyrocket, especially since it's needed for every warp-capable ship the feuding parts of the Balmar empire want to send into battle. In any event, the highest spot on Earth would seem to be Tibet, though Yasunishi is worried that there may have been somewhere else even higher in Mu's day. Domon wants to head to Tibet right away, but Master Asia curtly tells him to return to base and reprovision before any such expedition. Domon takes the lecture quite easily, much easier than any attempt at ordering him around from the rest of the crew...

26S. Arata Naru Chikara ("A New Power")

Your crew closes in on Side 2, where you see a new colony under construction. It looks less like a colony and more like a space station, and its purpose is somewhat unclear. Kouji then has an unusual proposal for Boz: he wants to trade mecha just once so he can feel what it's like to fire a map weapon. Boz proudly accepts. Meanwhile, as your people draw near Shakti senses something or rather someone approaching - someone powerful. She then goes and asks Rupe to take her to Zanskull, saying only that someone is calling her, someone familiar. Rupe has things of her own to confirm, so she's willing to use this opportunity for freedom.

As expected, the enemy aren't going to let you just waltz in here. Bright figures that this means the new colony is indeed of Zanskull origin, and plans to bug out as soon as you figure out what they're up to. That would be the moment when Rupe, with Shakti as "hostage", departs in the shuttle. Usso is in a very bad position to intervene, with the Zanskull fleet before your eyes. It also turns out that the Borot's map weapon, though powerful, is totally impossible to aim. The good news is that a new ally appears: Rai and Aya's teammate Ryuusei. Ryuusei goes on something of a killing spree, only to have Aya tell him to quit it with that kind of recklessness. Ryuusei isn't afraid of an enemy that puts tires on its warships, which really gets Chronicle and his biker lackey Eke upset.

You'll soon discover an endless supply of bad guys, who arrive four at a time.

This gets tiring, and on turn 5 Bright will have had enough and decide to pull out short of reaching the main Zanskull fleet. Ryuusei then makes his introductions, rapidly proving to be an odd dude and managing to make Kouji jealous of Sayaka for once instead of the reverse. And accompanying Rai is the Getter Team, in Shin Getter Robo! Yes, bet you totally forgot it's even in the game [as did the designers]. Ryouma for his part is rather reluctant to invoke the potentially catastrophic might of Getter, but will admit that the aliens pose an even graver threat. Hayato adds drily that if the SRX would show its true power, there would have been no need for Shin Getter.

Shakti's actions finally come to light from Susie, crying over her inability to dissuade Shakti from following her "mother's" voice. Bright realizes there's no good way to retrieve Shakti, and Marvet points out that Shakti should be just fine given that she's a civilian. Usso slowly comes to terms with the impossibility of a rescue while Hayato hands over some enhancement parts for Mazinger that Yumi sent along. These are based off some ideas from Kouji Kenzou's research notes, and Astonage should have no trouble following the instructions included.

26E. Ankoku no Gundam ("The Gundam of Darkness")

Mangelo reports to Lu Cain that your people have left the ruins, apparently after discovering something there. He continues that there's no indications from the detection device that they've found "that" item. Lu Cain orders Dankel and Kilar to follow your people while the Shiki Squad continues examining the ruins.

Upon your people's return to Japan, Master Asia splits off before Domon can so much as protest. As everyone else is resupplying and conducting repairs at base, a very strange Gundam appears, almost arachnoid in appearance. Many more of the Death Army appear, and while it's not clear if the new Gundam with a horn on its head is an enemy, the odds seem high.

When the mysterious horned Gundam tries to flee, Domon chases off after it, and Rain after him.

Your people have little choice but to return to the base, even with Domon still off in pursuit of the anonymous horned adversary.

27S. SAIDO 5 no Nazo ("The Mystery of Side 5")

Gottso summons Char to tell him that Gresco is off on a special assignment and that Char now reports directly to him. Char tries to say that the humans still resisting are but a small sliver, and easily eradicated. And to prevent other humans from following the resistance's lead, Char is having the Angel Heiro built in Side 2: a giant brain wave amplifier aimed at the Earth. The idea is to amplify Zanskull queen Maria's brain waves and bend the Earthlings to mind control them all... well, to pacify them in any case. Even Gottso is rather astounded that this feat is possible, and tells Char to go ahead.

Nanai is more than a little uneasy about all this, and Char admits that one mistake and all of mankind could become the aliens' playthings. He's willing to take that risk given that it will take time to assimilate the aliens' tech: he needs mankind to sit still until then. Nanai is willing to go along with this so long as Char loves her [stupid little slut] and helps keep construction on schedule.

Kouji and Astonage are both a tad baffled how to use whatever the new gadget on Mazinger is. It claims to be some type of energy charger, and doesn't have any visible controls. Astonage figures that it will probably just... do whatever it does when the time comes. Meanwhile, Bright receives word from Jin that spies have detected Neo Jion freight activity involving Side 5, a region full of demolished colonies. This calls to mind the words of "a certain man" from before, and Bright goes to check it out, to Jin's vast delight.

Chronicle's crew is ready to rumble, and Chronicle is determined to settle the score with those who insulted him himself. He gives command to ungrateful she-skank Katejina and comes over to get reamed.

If you have Usso fight Katejina, she is unable to give a good reason for why she's fighting...

A few turns in, Pipinieden shows up and sends Rupe into battle, telling her that Chronicle doesn't trust her yet. Rupe knows this quite well, and doesn't want to let Katejina show her up...

After the battle, Doctor J contacts Hihiro with some interesting news. As Hihiro knows, Kagachi of Zanskull hasn't been seen for a while - and this is because Char is holding him prisoner. Supposedly, he's imprisoned in a new secret base the Neo Jion are building in Side 5. He tells Hihiro to go and check it out on the hopes that he learns something about what's really going on.

27E. Saikyoku Saiaku DEBIRU GANDAMU ("The Strongest, Evilest Devil Gundam")

With very little damage to repair, your people make ready to set off again. Certain new machines Sakon spotted in the hangar herald some new arrivals. The first and best looking is Kobayashi Aya, another member of the SRX Team. She is a natural enemy of Ryuusei's - a cat to Ryuusei's mouse. Aya figures that if she's a cat, she should at least be a Persian [hey man, don't be

knocking the Maine Coons], and now the rest of your dudes have another distraction from actually fighting. And given there's no word from Rain back yet, your people can do nothing but continue maintenance. Rain meanwhile has lost track of Domon, unease building within her as she searches...

And Domon, on the trail of the mystery Gundam, unexpectedly runs into his master facing a bunch of bad guys. He steps up to help.

This is a bad idea, since Domon is so blinded by loyalty to his master that he is slow to realize Master Asia's true identity as the pilot of the Master Gundam. He directs Domon's attention to a certain object nearby: it's the Devil Gundam! As the depths of this betrayal begins to sink in, Master Asia waxes philosophical, then tells Domon to believe in him, who sees all, if he wants to be saved. He extends his hand to Domon, saying that Domon's brother is waiting and murmuring that Domon can become stronger... and stronger... Just then Rain intervenes, breaking Master Asia's hypnosis. Before Master Asia can smite her, a change comes over Domon as he prepares to unleash Shining Finger.

Before Master Asia can finish Domon off, a newcomer intervenes and smites him back. His name is Schwartz Bruder, and don't you forget it! He urges Domon to strike the Devil Gundam now, before it can become whole. Domon really tries to strike its head, but the Devil Gundam somehow starts absorbing his energy. This was in fact the plan from the start, and Master Asia's taunt rings in Domon's ears as he departs along with Domon's brother.

Domon is very distraught after the battle. Why did his Master betray him, and his brother try to kill him? For that matter, who was that masked man who popped up and saved Domon's ass? As Domon ponders the name "Schwartz", he allows himself to be led back to the group.

28S. Uchuu no Hakaba ("The Graveyard of Space")

Char comes on the radio with a broadcast for all of mankind. He reminds you that these high-tech aliens have come from outer space, and that certain elements are attempting to oppose them by force all over the Earth Sphere (that would be you). He's sure that this is just pissing said aliens off, hastening the day when mankind will be eradicated from the universe, but happily he has managed to parlay with the alien commander Gottso. Three demands are made of the Earth: 1) cease hostilities immediately, 2) hand over all current and future moonstone rights, and 3) dismantle the military. Should these conditions be satisfied, the Earth will avoid abject domination at the aliens' hands, being ruled instead by its "citizens" in the Neo Jion. Your people are, shall we say, less than thrilled. There's general agreement that they'd rather die in battle than submit to anal bitch-boy Char's rule.

At length you reach Side 5, a dark region of space where almost all the colonies are dead. The Ral Kairam cannot approach any further lest it attract attention, but the White Ark can be camouflaged as an asteroid, letting you send in three mecha. Those would be Amuro, Usso, and some manoverable mecha suitable for recon. That leaves out Kouji and Dankuuga, but lets Aya and Rai in.

The White Arc creeps forward into the graveyard of colonies, no doubt quite convenient for hiding all sorts of things. As they drift closer, they spot something stuck to the side of one of the burned-out colonies: surely Neo Jion's handiwork. They get spotted, but as the enemy sortie an unfamiliar Gundam appears and starts to help out. Hihiro is at the controls, and he tells you tersely that, for now, he's on your side. This gives the White Ark

enough time to call up reinforcements.

It turns out that Dr. Hell is behind all this, and he calls up Zechs to keep your people away from his very delicate experiment. Zechs wonders precisely what Dr. Hell is experimenting on, but complies. Ashura is commanded to stand guard at the base, with orders to let not even a kitten in.

Beat Zechs to help good things happen later.

Hiiro takes off somewhere before your people can learn much about him, and somehow in the confusion a person claiming to be from the Riga Militia sneaks aboard. Your people make to take him to the captain...

28E. Dangerous Allenbie

Domon and Rain return to base, with Domon in a **very** foul mood. It falls to Rain to explain what happened with Master Asia, and Rain says that it was as though Master Asia was controlling the Devil Gundam and not the other way around. Domon isn't willing to believe that easily, and Sakon asks why, if her theory is true, Master Asia would want to resurrect the Devil Gundam at all? Of course there's no way Rain could know that, and Daimoji says that until there's some hard information about Master Asia's true intentions everyone had better be on their guard about him. He tells Domon that he'll file a report to Oka about the Devil Gundam, gently suggesting that until things become clear he concentrate on helping battle the aliens. Domon wants to go after the Devil Gundam, even knowing that its whereabouts are unknown and that his Shining Finger won't work on Master Asia. Rain then passes along word from her father, saying that a new Gundam that may be able to defeat the Devil Gundam is almost ready for Domon to use. Domon reluctantly agrees to wait until it arrives.

Dankel goes to report to Lu Cain that the Taikuu Maryuu is about to move again, and tells Kilar to shadow it without being noticed. Its destination is Katmandu, where Age pulls out a portable Tronium detector. And in fact, there is Tronium nearby, though its precise location is proving hard to nail down. Daimoji decides to land, and let Age conduct clandestine sweeps. Most of the rest of your people can go sightseeing, but Gaiking and Voltes are to stay behind and hold the fort.

Lu Cain, upon hearing mention of your people's movements, decides to go to these so-called Himalaya mountains himself. He tells the Shiki Squad to cancel examining the ruins, and as they approach Tibet they too detect the Tronium. Dankel is astounded when Lu Cain lets this fact slip, though Lu Cain refuses to tell him any more details.

Your people hit an arcade during sightseeing, which Domon comments are looking more and more alike these days. You shortly notice a girl who has won at the latest and greatest fighting game sixteen times in a row. When she complains about a lack of worthy opponents, Domon decides to try his hand as a "pro". The two fighters quickly realize that each other is not to be trifled with, and Rain realizes that Domon has gotten serious and is still not clearly winning. Eventually, the game itself crumbles when it can't keep up with the two fighters' movements. Domon is willing to settle the score with Allenbie, and not just as a game, but Rain isn't buying it and storms off. You can either follow Allenbie or Rain.

The former is the first step towards recruiting Allenbie, the latter is the first step towards getting Rain in the Rising Gundam.

Lu Cain tells Kilar and Dankel to hold off your dudes while the rest of his men follow him elsewhere. Their timing sucks, depriving Ryuusei of lunch and everything. Meanwhile, Ghostelo still wants to settle the score with Age, who is not going to appear due to being busy elsewhere.

Age hasn't found the Tronium itself, but he has found the place where the response is coming from. It's a seeming rockslide area in the mountains nearby, yet for some reason Layzner can't begin to budge the rocks. The good news is that your dudes have far more powerful earth moving capabilities...

29S. Indou Sakusen ("Diversion")

The man turns out to be one of Jin's agents. He hasn't been able to get a look inside the Neo Jion fortress, but he has noticed something strange. At regularly scheduled intervals, a shuttle full of people would arrive, and depart again empty. This puts Amuro in mind of the man you encountered who was crying out about wanting to remain human, and despite Ryuusei's misguided attempt at levity your people concoct a plan: create a diversion to let your forces sneak inside. The diversionary squad includes Ryuusei, for whom making a big scene is a specialty.

Things take a turn for the weird when the Zanskull show up though, with Neo Jion behind them. Zechs tells Tashiro to keep everyone away from the base, and Tashiro privately fumes that Zechs is nothing more than Char's puppet.

Once your dudes reach the station, the rest of the crew will (reluctantly in Ryuusei's case) withdraw.

The infiltration squad will find a person lying unconscious inside the base, taking her with them as they make good their escape. Hiiro appears in their wake, realizing that Doctor J's words were all true.

The person you fished out slowly regains consciousness: it's *Kagachi* of all people. He relates how the alien attack and Tashiro's treachery brought about the end of the Zanskull Empire (just as Rupe had said), ending in Tashiro bringing him here a prisoner. When you tell him that Zanskull is still active, he realizes quickly that Char must have taken control. Increasingly panicked, he tells you that you must stop Char before he achieves his misguided goal of robbing all mankind of its emotions, creating obedient soldiers as the aliens want. Dr. Hell has already killed several humans in the process of perfecting this technique, or rather, mutilated them horribly enough that death would be preferable.

Not only does Char's ass need kicking, but you've also got to take out the Angel Heiro before it can amplify Queen Maria's brain waves and sap everyone of their will to fight.

29E. Tansa ("Surveillance")

Lu Cain gets more bad news from his troops: they have failed to pinpoint the Tronium AND had Dankel and Kilar fail. Meanwhile, your dudes are indulging in some serious blasting to get at the Tronium. They uncover a large cave, and there's no telling what's inside. Ryuusei, Age, and Domon are sent in to check, with instructions from Yasunishi not to disturb any of the archaeological stuff inside. Lu Cain's forces are hard on your tail, joining Dankel and Kilar in an assault on your flagship.

Inside the cave, Domon doesn't like Ryuusei trying to play "captain", but

it doesn't stop Age from finding the Tronium. He tells them to cut out the bickering, since if the Tronium gets dropped it'll be very hard to find again. This means that it's small. How small? Three grains of rice, which according to Age is some mother lode - one grain is capable of powering over thirty battleships. As you're about to leave with your find, Master Asia pops up out of nowhere and grabs the Tronium. Age demands that he returns it, saying that it's meaningless to someone who doesn't know how to use it. Domon rather politely challenges Master Asia to a duel, and a bunch of bad guys appear to keep the rest of you occupied.

Unfortunately, Master Asia is unkillable this battle. Let him pummel Domon.

Master Asia is trying to provoke Domon, and Schwartz is trying to keep him calm. He yells at Domon that fury won't help him become a true Fighter, and demands that Domon consider why Master Asia wants him to use Super Mode so badly: rage deprives people of reason, makes them vulnerable. Domon ponders where's he's heard this gentle voice before, and Schwartz tells him what he needs: Meikyou Shisui, a heart like a placid, unclouded pool of water. Master Asia is very peeved at Schwartz's interference, and promises to end his life the next time they meet.

After you deal with the lackeys, Domon and crew head out of the cave in hot pursuit of Master Asia. Lu Cain rapidly changes plans and heads off in pursuit of Master Asia, ordering Dankel and Kilar to finish off the Taikuu Maryuu here.

Not only did Master Asia make off with the Tronium, but the inside of the cave is a shambles after the unavoidable fighting. Yasunishi (now "Eri" to Daimoji) nearly faints, totally unable to comprehend how the hotheaded Domon and Ryusei could ignore the cultural value of whatever was in that cave...

30S. SRX Hatsudou ("SRX, Engage")

Your people figure that they may as well destroy the base they just raided, and Hayato figures that now's a great time to combine the SRX. He explains to them that "Tronium" has been used to stabilize the engine, with the caveat that full power can't be maintained for long (see the other path for all the details). As Ashura and Dr. Hell watch aghast (wondering what Zechs is doing) the SRX breaks open the hatch with one blow.

After smacking around numerous bad guys, your people are impressed at the SRX's massive power. Too bad the pilots still need a lot more training before they can be called fully qualified. At least the base is toast and you can head off to the Angel Heiro, though Amuro notes that Aya is looking a bit green in the gills from all the psychic power she has to expend to keep the SRX together. Hayato agrees to give them one day off. Aya confesses to Amuro later that she is in fact an Esper, apologizing for misleading him earlier. She's not entirely thrilled with her powers, which Amuro can relate to quite well...

30E. Kurenai no V-Max ("Scarlet V-Max")

As it turns out, there was a fourth piece of Tronium, which Age surreptitiously hid in a case he had on hand. Blushing, he stammers something about how his shuttle's engine was out of Tronium too and whatnot. Daimoji resolves to take this precious sample back to Japan right away, but Age wants to split off and pursue Master Asia. The SRX team and Domon join in the hunt.

Meanwhile, the Shiki Squad are having a devil of a time keeping up with the swift Master Asia. When they finally track him down, Lu Cain demands to know who the hell he is, and isn't swayed by Master Asia's argument that he's supposed to name himself first. As he toys with Lu Cain, Master Asia figures out that the Tronium was the true reason for the Balmar invading the Earth (probably no great deduction). Your people show up then, and Age reasons that the Balmar vessel that attacked the Mu back when must have crashed to the Earth - and vessels that old used much more Tronium than modern ships. With this new knowledge in hand, Master Asia makes good his escape, leaving a fuming Lu Cain to try to take out the traitor Age instead. Age in turn demands to know why Lu Cain has been persecuting the Earthlings when all he wants was the Tronium, to which Lu Cain says he's free to dispose of cosmic garbage like the Earthlings however he sees fit.

Things get ugly when Lu Cain uses a V-Max Supercharger to start smacking Age's machine around. Before the final blow can be struck, Ghostelo shows up and smacks the supercharged mech out of the way: Layzner is his prey. Now Ghostelo has made himself the enemy of his fellows, and the SRX team realize they've only got one chance to defeat Lu Cain: something that hasn't succeeded until now... And won't succeed yet, causing Daimoji to sortie the rest of the crew as well as... Shin Getter Robo! This causes Lu Cain to wonder aloud just how many robots Earth has.

Lu Cain is practically impossible to defeat since his subordinates warn him that you all are the people who did in Heinel when his HP are low enough.

Only *after* the battle do your people realize that Domon is missing, presumably gone after Master Asia. Ryuusei is impressed that Domon was able to follow the elusive Tibetan even when the aliens couldn't. As Rain frets over his wellbeing, the SPT folks find it a miracle that Age is alive after how badly his Layzner got ravaged...

31S. Angel Heiro

Word quickly reaches Char about the debacle at Side 5. He has to grudgingly hand it to Bright, at least until he hears that he's next on the menu. Lucky for him, Shakti turns out to be Maria's daughter, which he had suspected by sensing the same brain waves from them. This means that, depending on how things turn out, he may end up using her instead of Maria in the machine.

With a jingling of jewelry, Fala pays the now-general Tashiro a little visit on behalf of Gottso. Tashiro is more than little afraid, despite Fala's merry assurances that she's not a ghost as such. She is wryly amused when Tashiro claims to be happy that the aliens saved her, and takes exceptional glee in showing him the "traditional" bladed jewelry that befits a member of the Guillotine family.

She has a proposition for him: why not serve Gottso directly instead of going through Char. She's already put in a good word for him, seeing as how they're such old friends and all, and purrs that she's not holding his past actions against him. After all, they are man and woman... and it's pretty clear who will be wearing the pants in this relationship...

Once more, Chronicle and Pipinieden get to try to stop your dudes. What are the odds.

Kill enough of Pipinieden's dudes and he'll panic and try to send word to Chronicle. Shoot down both messengers and Chronicle will notice enough to

send aide on his own.

Katejina, unknown to Usso in her new MS, is feeling some semblance of regret that things turned out this way, though she blames it on Usso for coming this far. When you finally get rid of Katejina's mech, Usso begs her to stop fighting. She insists that he must pay for the sin of causing all this fighting, but he's not having it: he points out that she's being deceived by Chronicle.

The only way to destroy the Angel Heiro is to blow it up from within. Usso is sent as part of the team, but Hayato realizes that it's going to take no less than four different ultra-high explosive charges to do the trick. And unless the timing is perfect, your people will get caught in the blast. The Shrack Squad is skilled in demolitions, and everyone else gets to guard them. Amuro tells Usso to prepare himself for the possibility that Shakti may not turn up...

31E. Meikyou Shisui ("Clear Mirror of Still Water")

Your people know something has to be done about Lu Cain, since even in V-Max mode Layzner was like a powerless infant before it. Layzner in fact may be impossible to repair, and Age himself has only barely escaped life-threatening injury. Hayato then informs the SRX team that the time has come to change out their engines, saying that only when combined as one can the SRX show its true power. The new engine uses Tronium, which requires a vast gaping plot hole to explain how it could be developed so quickly. The bad news is that at around three minutes of time at full throttle, the engine is likely to meltdown and explode - and the pilots surely won't make it through alive. For wanky game mechanical reasons, this means that the SRX can only stay combined for three turns, and once the pilots separate again they won't be able to recombine that battle. Oh, and Gaiking is going to get powered up too, as well as Voltes V.

Domon has in fact kept up with his (former) master. Domon's position: he's taking down Master Asia before taking down Kyouji. Master Asia's position: there's no way a pupil can beat a master, and there's nothing worse than a man who doesn't know his limitations. Master Asia then asks his lord to show some pity on the pitiful Domon, and Kyouji pops up, laughing his ass off. This pisses Domon off immensely, and Master Asia figures that now it he time to strike when Domon is burning all that energy needlessly. Schwartz pops up and intervenes, reminding Domon of a moment [which you can only see in the anime] of clarity when he saw Meikyou Shisui. As Kyouji tells him to die peacefully, Domon finally grasps the drop of water, switching from anger Super Mode to True Super Mode. Lu Cain is smart enough to flee before this shining golden power can kill them all, and Schwartz is in fairly bad shape...

Master Asia won't go down the first time. When Schwartz is hurt badly enough, Master Asia will taunt him some, but Schwartz says he won't let anyone hurt his brother. Domon finally recognizes his brother's voice, and rapidly realizes that there are in fact two of his brother. Schwartz tells Domon to strike the Kyouji in the Devil Gundam, but Domon can't understand why at first. As more of the Death Army gather, Schwartz explains that he's Kyouji's "shadow" - a mere copy of the real Kyouji made with DG Cells. This all was done so the Devil Gundam could be defeated. When the Devil Gundam fell to Earth for some unknown reason, Kyouji regained consciousness but found that his body had already been assimilated by the Devil Gundam. So as he regenerated the Devil Gundam, he used its power at the last moment to copy himself. He makes Domon promise to kill the Kyouji in the Devil Gundam,

as the only way to free him from the hell he's trapped in. Schwartz dies in Domon's arms just as the SRX team arrives and manages to combine. The crew is ecstatic, and Ryuusei promises not to let this super robot that he's dreamed of get hurt.

Rain learns that Schwartz was Kyouji (kind of), and grieves alongside Domon. Meanwhile, the bad guys are quivering in fear over the living robot that is the Devil Gundam. The Shiki Squad has never seen the like, but Lu Cain has. Several years ago, there was a skirmish between the Balmar Empire and the Dug Stellar Republic. Lu Cain was leading a small squadron on a mission to infiltrate a small asteroid, meeting little resistance. But just as it seemed the enemy base had fallen, the enemy appeared: larger and more menacing than what he just saw, but similar otherwise. If in fact they've just encountered a Dug weapon, what is it doing on Earth? Maybe Master Asia is a Dug agent? But if so, why hasn't Dug itself attacked Lu Cain's forces? In any case, they won't know until they catch Master Asia, so Lu Cain musters all his forces and calls Sharkin up in preparation for a decisive battle.

32S. Tenshi-tachi no Jouten ("Angels' Ascent")

With the defenders out of the way, Char receives word that your people are about to force their way into the Angel Heiro itself. Furious that Amuro is this insistent at getting in his way, he decides that the time has come to settle the score once and for all. Knowing that Nanai is worried about him, he promises to do whatever she tells him to once Amuro is toast. She meekly goes into the battle bridge to await the outcome. Your people walk through the front door, knowing full well that the enemy could come at them from any angle. Each of the Shrack members has one bomb, and Amuro reminds you all to be especially careful of doors that have switches only on one side. What's more, all the bombs have to be emplaced simultaneously.

Some interesting tidbits arise in certain fights. Char initially faces Amuro with derision, then grudging respect for his fated rival, then finally disbelief that the Sazabi could be defeated.

Gyunei will ask Rai if he's a "Fortified Human", which of course Rai knows nothing about. He then demands to know how Rai can be so calm when his life is on the line in this battle, and Rai says that calmness is only natural for a skilled pilot: could it be that Gyunei is afraid of fighting? Yup.

In the lower-left enclosure, you find Shakti! She had been brought here to take her mothers' place, and you quickly have her hop aboard.

Beat Zechs with Hihiro as a step towards getting the Wing Gundam later.

Shakti explains that she was in the Angel Heiro because she had to be put into the machine in place of her mother the queen. Your people fill her in on how Char deceived her into thinking she could stop the fighting and put her mother at ease. Amuro kindly tells her that she needs not apologize for cooperating with an apparatus intended to brainwash mankind - it's all Char's fault for leading her into it. And with the Angel Heiro out of commission, all that's left is to track Char down and settle the score once and for all. Oh, and there's still the colony-killing alien mothership left to deal with. ...But *before that*, your people apparently need to blow off a bit of steam and get into a full-fledged brawl. O_O Apparently everyone's okay though...

32E. Honkon no Shitou ("Hong Kong Deathmatch")

Your people's attempts to cheer Domon up aren't working very well. But Rain has something for him to see: the God Gundam! Domon is quickly impressed by its amazing abilities, and notices another machine nearby: the Rising Gundam, which will let Rain help out somewhat. [This only if you elected to follow Rain.]

Meanwhile, Sharkin has reported to Lu Cain. A brief Tronium response has been recorded in Hong Kong, but it's currently invisible again. Desmond and Asimov have rejoined their comrades too, and this time they don't plan on letting the Earthlings have their way.

The Taikuu Maryuu is also on the trail of the Tronium. The flagship itself can't venture into the residential area, but with reports of the aliens approaching they have to do something. It seems that Master Asia has been spotted as well, and Daimoji orders the R-1 and R-2 to accompany Domon as he heads out after Master Asia.

The Shiki Squad see something very strange while pursuing the Tronium, an apparently unfriendly Gundam. Your people show up, and Domon recognizes Allenbie. The Shiki Squad briefly cowers from the threat your people cause, but decide to stick it out to salvage some honor for their unit.

[If you followed her earlier, you must persuade her twice by turn 2.]

The bad guys were coming out of a certain run-down building, and Domon reckons that you can't tell anything more without going inside. Your people venture into the dark, rubble-strewn halls, and Ryuusei is the first to "discover" a hole in the floor. It turns out he's found a very large tunnel, but Rai wisely radios the Taikuu Maryuu before too much exploration occurs. The Taikuu Maryuu can track your people by radar, so Daimoji gives the go-ahead to see where the tunnel leads. Oddly enough, the very long tunnel seems to lead out under the ocean. Pete spots a small island at its terminus, and Daimoji scrambles the Taikuu Maryuu to the scene.

Lu Cain's forces note the Taikuu Maryuu's movements, and with no contact back from the Shiki Squad Lu Cain has no choice but to follow.

33S. Senba ni Hibiku Suzu no Oto ("A Bell Resounding Across the Battlefield")

Bright makes contact with Jin... or rather, ONE of the Jins. There's a bunch of them to prevent against assassination attempts, and according to Romelo this is the *real* one. Come to find out it's Usso's dad, who makes an uneasy apology for mixing Usso up in the war. Bright has him check on the location of the alien mothership, and Jin says that he's thrown in some enhancements for the V2 as well. Usso wants Romelo to install them right away, sort of glad that at least he now knows who his father is.

Meanwhile, Fala is ecstatic that Char is toast, figuring that if they can stop the Ral Kairam here Tashiro could take Char's place. And that's precisely what she plans to do: install him as the new ruler of mankind.

Jin gets back with the news that the aliens are hiding in Side 5, near the former Neo-Jion secret base. More accurately, that base was an alien laboratory which Neo-Jion was given the use of, and it's fairly natural to assume that the aliens are still lurking there.

As your people arrive on the battlefield, Usso and Amuro start hearing the sound of a bell or something. Noone else can hear it, but pretty soon some kind of weapon is fired out of nowhere and blasts the starboard engine.

This is odd because Fala can be wiped out like a crack-smoking bitch writing on the whiteboard in a single hit. Call it poor game design. Anyways.

Tashiro shows up on round 2, wondering where Chronicle is at. He and his escorts are barely a snack for your dudes either.

[If Chronicle ever shows up, I sure didn't linger long enough to see it...]

The main engine is all repaired, so off you go to Side 5. Shakti is trying to comfort Usso for a showdown with Katejina that didn't actually take place last battle. As your dudes point out, Usso has Shakti to keep him warm at night, so no need to worry about psycho hosebeasts from years past.

33E. Rantao-jima no Himitsu ("The Secret of Lantao Island")

As the Taikuu Maryuu approaches the small island, you begin to make out what looks like an observatory at its center. Actually, it seems to be a light house from what those in the tunnel claim. In fact, it is a lighthouse off in the distance, and Rain is so glad to see Domon again that she calls out his name without realizing that there's no way he can hear her. The adventurers then decide to go check out the observatory and see what is what.

For starters, it's a very peculiar observatory that lacks even a single window. It's more like a fortress, and defended by the Death Army to boot. Lu Cain's forces show up too, determined to settle things once and for all now. His main aim is Voltes V, and the Four Generals think they can finally prevail. Domon meanwhile heads inside...

Sharkin offers to sortie too. On the next turn, Age shows up in a new vehicle the Earth defense forces made by studying his Layzner: what Ryuusei dubs the Layzner Mk.II. Upon seeing him still alive, Lu Cain decides to personally sortie too.

Once again, the Shiki Squad will fish Lu Cain's ass out when you smack him down hard enough. They're all badly enough wounded that their only choice is returning to their mothership.

With that, it seems all the aliens on the surface have been mopped up. However, Domon is still underground, presumably mixing it up with the Devil Gundam. While your people lightly place bets on whether the God Gundam could kick the R-1's ass...

34S. Gyakushuu no SHAA ("Char's Counterattack")

It turns out that Char is still alive (figures), and pissed off at your dudes' futile struggles. Once again, Char questions Amuro's sanity while Amuro questions Char's impatience which has led him to despair over mankind's chances. ...With few other words, it's time to break Char's ass once and for all. No, we mean it this time. Honest.

Once Amuro gets damaged beyond a certain extent, Psychoframe resonance begins and Amuro begins to sense Chain's presence. Char feels no fear from him, only peace. He yells at Amuro that people with that kind of peace can still destroy the Earth, which Amuro says is all the more reason they must show the Earth what a human heart is. Char then accuses Amuro of being rather cold to Quess, and Amuro counters that he's not a machine: he's not

capable of being Quess's father figure. On the contrary, it was Char who tried to make Quess a machine by putting her in the Alpha Aziel. This strikes Char as immensely revelatory, and Amuro scorns how a man as great as Char could have such a small view of the world. Char demands to know how Amuro, who killed the woman who could have become Char's mother figure (Lalah) has any right to say that. Lalah? Char's mother? Amuro is astounded to say the very least.

When beaten, Char will furiously say that Amuro wouldn't have even had a chance if he hadn't leaked info to the Federation about the Psychoframe, noting further that Amuro wouldn't have even been worth killing in his old piece of shit mech. Amuro figures that Char is doomed to look down on others for all eternity. Nanai will then go over and fish Char out, saying that he's indispensable to Neo-Jion AND to her, and ignoring his pleas to stay out of it.

If you've jumped through the right hoops, beating Zechs here will give you the Wing Gundam.

And all of this taking me 1.5 turns - so much for the legendar(il)y #sexually_impotent Red Comet and his assorted analwives.

Gottso takes news of Char's defeat rather well, asking instead how Lu Cain's injuries are. Lu Cain is in good health and bad humor over his defeat by the humans, but Gottso says that Lu Cain's father Gresco has been proved right: the humans' fighting ability is beyond reckoning. What's more, the tougher the challenge, the more the humans stand up to it - in short, the aliens are just making the humans stronger. Lu Cain is still feeling pretty confident about his chances, but Gottso sounds the vaguest bit worried about what will happen when the humans make it to the Helmoze...

34E. "Sekiha Ten-Kyou-Ken"

Sakon marvels over the building Domon is in: it is not made out of concrete, but rather some totally unknown substance. It may be stronger than Super Alloy Z or Gundarium, and is likely impervious to missiles. Meanwhile, Watta and Sanshirou have been taking a manly leak together when they spot a surveillance camera [which in turn has spotted them - expect to see pics on 2chan any day now]. Daimoji reasons that if there are cameras, there must be some switch to open the building too.

Domon is on the case, and finally convinces Master Asia, more supercilious than ever, to show himself. Claiming that he's busy, Master Asia leaves some bad guys for Domon to play with...

You can't take out Master Asia immediately, but you can chase him. A cave-in will trap you both, and Domon agrees to a cease-fire so that they can both escape. Master Asia reminds Domon of something he's seen before, the uttermost hidden technique of the Touhou Fuhai style: the "Rock-Crushing Heavenly Alarming Fist" technique - Sekiha Ten-Kyou-Ken! He pulls it off with aplomb.

Master Asia tells Domon that he's now passed on to him his last piece of knowledge, and can now venture forth without regrets. With much impressiveness he informs Domon that he is not of this planet, but rather from the Dug Federation which opposes the Balmar. Which is not to say that he and Domon are totally different life forms: long ago, a certain race fled their homeworld under the threat of the Balmar armies. Split into different groups with leaders over them, the race attempted to flee. One group fell beneath

the Balmar shadow, one group fled to the safety of the Dug. And one group staked their lives on travel to a little-known, distant region of space. That group formed the Mu culture, and are in fact Domon's ancestors. Master Asia is in turn descended from the Dug faction - long-lost siblings from a bygone planet. Master Asia has read all this history in the writings of the ruins.

It turns out he's an agent of the Dug government, sent in response to reports of intelligent life on this planet. He apologizes to Domon for traveling alongside the Devil Gundam, explaining that upon arriving at this planet, he met two people: Domon's father Professor Kasshu, and Char Aznable. He figures that the latter was where his problems started, coming short on the heels of the signing of the Luna Treaty that guarantees independence and sovereignty for the Earth, Moon, and Colonies. This simple treaty was enough to bring peace to the war-weary humans, but could not by itself remove the scars of the war. Char, who loved humanity more than anyone, also hated it even more at the time, having sacrificed numerous followers and taken many lives himself. And he possessed vast influence and resources, so Master Asia treated him as a representative of humanity. He was led to believe that humans were unstable, destructive beings, and decided to manipulate Kasshu to help nip any potential for trouble in the bud.

With but a hint from Master Asia, Kasshu, the most gifted scientist alive, discovered the Three Theories and set about building the Devil Gundam. That was the time Master Asia first met Domon, and immediately felt an overwhelming sense of warrior kinship. To test Domon's potential, he began the enjoyable process of training him, realizing too late that Domon proved that not all humans were dangerous. But it was too late to prevent the completion of the Devil Gundam, which sadly took Kyouji prisoner and even survived its plunge to Earth. Then the Balmar arrived, and Master Asia saw little chance of escape_or_of mankind surviving. But then he realized he could use the Devil Gundam to blow away one or two of the enemy ships, and has been working hard at that ever since. But he realized another mistake: Earthlings are far more resilient than he expected. For this grave error and all the trouble stemming from it, he would normally proffer his life as an apology to Domon on the spot. However, with a second and even third Balmar fleet coming, he needs to return to Dug and enlist aide. Domon, moved nearly to tears, praises Master Asia's dedication to peace and freedom, and the two exchange manly martial words before Master Asia's departure.

35S. Kessen! HERUMOOZU ("Final Battle of the Helmoze")

As your people deliberate how to take on the enemy mothership, one of the other Jin Jahanems calls in with info about their fleet. The fearsome Helmoze isn't so fearsome if you simply stay out of the way of its main gun; the battleship Grandos is another matter entirely. For starters, it can hide itself from radar, and its armaments are totally unknown. On the other hand, your Newtypes will be able to sense the hearts of the people aboard it, so Amuro isn't too concerned. He also gives you the rundown on the armaments of the Flay escort ships, wishing you luck before signing off. Even as an "imposter", this guy is doing good work, and Bright for one is grateful for it.

Your people are a bit daunted by just how large the Helmoze is, so the plan is to take out all the escorts first. Bright warns you again not to get directly in the Helmoze's path.

When you try to take down Gottso, Gresco shows up and frantically requests his lord to retreat. It seems Carla contacted him without permission, fearing the situation here.

Once you take down Gresco, Gottso decides that it's time to get serious. If Usso fights him, Fala will show up, vowing to pay back the debt she owes Gottso. When Usso protests, she tells the little boy to shut up, saying that only a strong man like Gottso can satisfy her - and Tashiro wasn't up to the task.

Gottso will be rather disbelieving when his ass gets handed to him. Surely this is a dream, a nightmare that he'll wake up from as soon as he gets back to the Helmoze... Except that he can't, because the Helmoze fires its main gun and reduces him to fundamental particles.

If you proceed to the final battle from here, your people muse that something seems lacking in the victory you just won. It's not that the enemy wasn't strong, it's just that you got strong too as you fought all this time... Just then a MS approaches: it's Zechs, with a message from Char, who apparently is STILL alive. In it, he expects to find you in a festive mood, a mood unjustified by what he is convinced has been a horrific mistake for mankind as a whole. He reckons that you just got lucky with this victory, and points out that the Balmar are sure to send a second, or third fleet to Earth, and THIS time they won't have any shortage of firepower. Just how far will your efforts last, he muses, ostentatiously checking himself and claiming sarcastically that sour grapes weren't the intent of this message. Since he is worried about mankind too, in his fashion, he has chosen to accompany the aliens returning to their own worlds. Therefore, he is entrusting you with all the alien technology he has been able to amass, telling you to put it to good use for mankind.

Oka calls up just then to congratulate you on your victory, but with a heavy heart Bright relays Char's message. You have little time to ponder, however, since word comes your way of an aberration at La Vie En Rose, where contact has been lost with all docked vessels. The order is to go and investigate in tandem with the Taikuu Maryuu. This requires interrupting Watta's dinner to get him to accompany the rest of the crew to space.

35E. Final Battle

The people outside are amazed to see the dome opening like a ginormous jack-in-the-box. Domon emerges to Rain's grateful embrace, and relates all that Master Asia has told him. Master Asia also entrusted you all with defeating the Devil Gundam, seeing that you were able to defeat Lu Cain and all.

Your people arrive in time to see Ghostelo get eaten by the Devil Gundam. Domon assures everyone that it's okay to wreck the Devil Gundam, since his brother (Schwartz) is already dead - destroying it will simply allow Kyouji's soul to rest in peace.

If you don't have data from the space route, Kyouji will thank Domon before dissolving into light. Domon knows this is a happy occasion, but his tears won't seem to stop. Rain tells him to cry with all his heart, to wash away all the sadness within. The rest of your people leave the two of them alone, beginning to ponder what to do next. Ryou plans to return to training alone in the mountains, at least until his skills are needed again. Pete is going to go into the Mu souvenir business, and Watta's people are going to take a rare corporate holiday and overhaul Trider. The SPT folks are going to crash at Rolan's house, to the immense surprise of his mom no doubt. Age meanwhile plans to look around this planet where his father was born, with Anna as his guide. And Daimoji invites Yasunishi to dinner...

[Credits roll]

36. Kyouki no Chikara ("The Strength of Madness")

[You may notice that all your items have been taken from you. This feels like a bug...]

Your people make quick introductions and get to planning. La Vie En Rose consists of two outer areas and one inner area - the plan is to split up and deal with the outer two in parallel, meeting up at the inner area. You can feel free to mingle the Lond Bel and Taikuu Maryuu teams, but you must send at least one representative of each into the final area.

In the first area, you quickly discover that Eek now has zombies among his motorcycle corps. Zombies with double motion as it turns out quickly! In fact, all sorts of supposedly defeated foes are coming back to haunt you this battle. Most of the mecha are #feeble, but a few more powerful mecha are mixed in...

[Time for some shopping! Run around to pick up assorted dudes as follows:]

Get Domon into the room at (30,48)-(37,54) and Schwartz will appear. Given how he's just a copy of Kyouji's memories in a cyborg body, it's not implausible that he could reappear - but the bad news is, he senses the Devil Gundam somewhere nearby. You've got to double check, and if it's there, defeat it for good this time.

Get Age into the room at (36,03)-(46,04) and he'll find his sister Julia. Age is very remorseful that he killed his former mentor, but Julia claims she's found Gail again here. Age cautions her that it's not the real Gail, but rather a ghost or something. Nevertheless, she wants to see him again, and will tag along.

If you've got Hiiro, go to (38,24)-(46,28) to pick up Zechs.

Move Ken'ichi to (1,10)-(6,15) and Heinel will appear, cautioning him of a horrible monster lurking at the heart of this base. Heinel is here to help eradicate this monster as an attempt at penance for all the wrong he's done your people.

In the final installment, it turns out that Ghostelo has become the new core for the Devil Gundam! As you continue pounding on him, Ghostelo repeats his usual saying that his brain is going to explode, only this time he may mean it.

Kouji is disgusted that the Devil Gundam would revive the dead as zombies, and the psychological effect of doing so is plainly visible on Age's face as he remembers Gail. Ryuusei speaks for you all when he hopes that this really was the end, and that you're not going to hear the beep of another message calling you to battle. You do in fact hear a beeping, but it's just Watta's watch telling you all that it's time for tea. Ryuusei gives him a mostly good natured clunk on the head, which Watta's butler finally responds to in kind on Ryuusei's noggin.

In any case, the battle is over - for now. You must remain vigilant lest the Devil Gundam revive, or more aliens from afar terrorize you, but that's work for a younger generation.

One threat is defeated, but another threat awaits rebirth. The age in which man was mankind's direst threat came to an end, even as the curtain rose on an age of new, unknown threat from beyond.

THE END!

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