

Star Ocean: The Second Story Battle Skill/Talent FAQ

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STAR OCEAN: THE SECOND STORY
BATTLE SKILL/TALENT FAQ
Version 2.7
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This is very similar to my SaGa Frontier Skill FAQ. Yes there are awfully many FAQs written for this game but I felt that none of them explain all the battle skills in detail (until recently) and especially Talents so here it is. (This is still incomplete though.)

(Note: Again, no walkthroughs nor lists.)

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REVISION

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V1.0 - 02/Aug/99

- Started writing this FAQ.

V1.2 - 25/Aug/99

- Quit the damn Galaxy mode since it's no fun. Done all of the basic parts and written part of Claude, Rena, Ashton, Celine and Precis' section.

V2.0 - 06/Sep/99

- Done all character's overviews except for Noel's. Some spell and KM descriptions are in.
- Added the "Talent" section
- Added "The Ugly Side of the Game" section
- Added the "Cancel Ability" and "Link Combo Ideas" for most characters

V2.5 - 18/Feb/00

- Do an update just to show you that I'm not dead and neither have I abandoned this project. It's just coming along slowly. There should be one more update before my copy of Vandal Hearts 2 and SaGa Frontier 2 arrives.
- Filled in more KMs for Claude, Ashton, Opera and Precis, some spells from Rena and Celine too.
- Fixed a LOT of typos
- Derived the equation for the healing spells
- Listed many MANY more bugs!
- New tips section
- Noel's overview
- Some character's initial stats

V2.6 - 12/Jan/01

- Hey guys, didja miss me? Been almost a year since my last update so here's another one. Filled in more KMs for Precis, Opera and Bowman, more spells for Leon and Rena as well. They're not completed yet as I have yet to raise their Proficiency, but they'll be in shortly.
- Fixed a LOT of typos and changed some format to make it more readable
- Updated Sixth Sense talent acquisition
- 2 bug fixers are in
- Bits here and there, and there, and oh, and ah missed a spot. Basically a bit of everything.
- An extra tip. More comin' up, when I remember them.

V2.7 - 20/Jan/01

- Completed Rena, Bowman, Leon, Opera, Chisato, Noel's sections. Almost completed Ernest and Claude's sections. Don't expect the next update in quite a while though, because I need a rest away from the game.
- More bugs
- More on Spell Absorption and Reflection
- Bits here and there etc.
- Added a set of AI priorities for Rena's actions

CREDITS

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- * Enix and Tri-Ace for making this extraordinary game!
- * Links for the wonderful FMVs.
- * SCEA for porting it over.
- * Ian Kelley for his fantastic FAQ on the Japanese version of the game. BTW, his translations are, more often than not, better than the official translation. I'll take his script over the official one any day!
- * Ex-Death for helping me to get Precis' Machinery Killer Moves, as well as his fabulous guides.
- * Shewin Tam for his most excellent guides, especially the "In-Depth Tips & Tricks" FAQ.
- * GameFaqs for being the best gaming site on the web. It's the only other site I check everyday.
- * Happy Matt for telling me about this game aeons before most people even knows about this game. Also thanks for helping me in various places in the game, giving me helpful tips and being a great friend! :-) (Have fun with your new games, hehe..)
- * FeralNoa <FeralNoa@aol.com> who has shared MANY strategies, tips, bugs and other weird stuff with me, not just for this game but for many other games as well. Thanks!
- * <AkfeKa@aol.com> for info on learning Sixth Sense
- * <HuperZoe@aol.com> for info on Sixth Sense

ABOUT ME

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Like I said in my SF FAQ, I am a guy so don't call me "girlfriend" or something like that OK? Aya is awesome!

Anyway, I live in New Zealand. I'm 17 now and am currently doing a Commerce degree in university, and yes I am 2 years ahead of my time but don't take me for a geek though. I'm only doin' this so I can graduate sooner and get it over with. (I HATE school/university!)

I love RPGs but I have a very high standard in them, and Star Ocean 2 was one of the few RPGs that really impressed me and got me hooked on for god knows how long! (Geez, even Lunar failed my expectations.)

My ICQ # is 15185682 and you're welcome to have a chat with me sometime, I'm usually free when I'm online.

INTRODUCTION

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Welcome to my in-depth Star Ocean: The Second Story Battle Skills FAQ. In this guide I will evaluate every single Killer Move and spell in the game in detail, how they change and where it's best used for. Also in the guide are the Skills you can learn in this game and hear my advice on them. Of course, no guides will be complete without discussing the abilities of the playable characters. And finally my tips, tricks, tactics and notes on various aspects of this game such as Item Creation, talents, glitches and lotsa miscellaneous stuff. Enjoy! (Well, that was then. I don't know if I'd include sections on skills and Item Creations but we'll have to wait and see.)

Yes it's rather incomplete at the moment since I'm not too fond of

that game right now, but I really want to complete this guide just for the sake of it.

Note, it is assumed that you know the basic controls of this game, and I won't explain the menus like I did in my SaGa Frontier FAQ since they're self-explainable.

STAR OCEAN: THE SECOND STORY

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It seems that a lot of people didn't even know that this game is actually the second Star Ocean game, hence "The Second Story". (I'd refer to it as SO2 in my FAQ.) Released sometime late last year in Japan and was ported over to the US shore by the brilliant SCEA. Although the translation could use a little more work, it isn't nearly as bad as Final Fantasy Tactics, at least they got everyone's names right and no more of those stupid "bracelets".

The game features a mixed setting, clichèd but somewhat interesting characters, a poor story and an awfully addicting battle system. Unlike most other RPGs, SO2 has its own fairly unique features, such as Private Actions, the "affection" system, the skill system, gaining Proficiency, Link Combos, the extremely innovative but poorly implemented Item Creation system and the 80+ bits of endings to keep you strolling back for more. Of course, nothing is perfect and this game is miles away, see what I mean under "The Ugly Side of the Game" section. ;)

STARTING THE GAME

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Upon starting a new game, you'll be prompt with a number of options, such as sound output, battle mode, vibration and then you get to choose from one of two possible characters to play through the game with: either Claude Kenni or Rena Lanford.

If you're starting your third game and you have heard enough voice samples (ie, getting the empty spaces in your voice collection filled) then you may choose your difficulty setting. There are 3 settings: Earth, Galaxy and Universe. Earth is standard, Galaxy is hard where the enemies have more HP, attack power and are slightly smarter, Universe is for the extreme experts where the enemies gets a boost on ALL their stats and are REALLY smart. I'm currently playing the Galaxy mode and I must admit that it's VERY hard already, since your ally AI is so crappy, you basically have to take control of 3 out of 4 characters in able to win! Universe is possibly impossible!

My comments: If this is your first game, I highly recommend that you choose Claude over Rena, even though parts of his game are slightly more difficult. When I played through Rena's quest on my second game, I thought her story was terrible, it was basically a watered down version of Claude's. She had less cut scenes to view, less story advancement and some cut scenes were irrelevant to her story. If you play her quest first, chances are you'll have no clue of what's going on. Yes this is a double scenario game (meaning the story remains mostly unchanged but are viewed through the eyes of 2 different characters, like that of RE2), but the attempt is only average.

My comments #2: Remember that I do NOT recommend the harder Galaxy and Universe modes. They're THAT hard!!! Unless you're EXTREMELY

patient or you can reprogram the game, I don't even suggest that you should give it a try. Just think why you bought this game for. To have fun right, not frustration! If somehow you played these modes and lived through it, good on you!

---Sound system---

Star Ocean 2 is the first RPG I've played that implements 3 different sound output systems (ordered from worst to best):

- Monoaural
- Stereo
- Surround

If you have 5 or more speakers, I highly suggest that you choose Surround sound. I'm not into this kinda stuff but you might. Stereo is ok for 2 speakers and Mono if you only have 1 speaker.

---Combat mode---

The back of the SO2 box says the game "features 3 battle modes", which might sound good at first, but there's actually only 2 since Semi-Active is just a mixture of the 2 with no new features, and they don't differ all that much. (Now if the game lets you fight turn-based battles, then that's REALLY something, although not very realistic in this game.) What's even more misleading about that statement is that you can actually mix-and-match the different features of each mode to create what really suits you! The 3 "different" modes are:

	Manual	Semi-Active	Active
Target	Manual	Semi-Auto	Full-Auto
Camera	Normal	Leader centered	Leader Centered
Movement	[] + D-pad	[] + D-pad	D-pad only

Of course, Active battle is the most fun, although the AI gives you little target control, it'll usually target the closest enemy. (In battle, a green arrow will point at your current target.) If you want target control then change the Targeting mode to "Manual" or "Semi-Auto", but beware, time won't stop when you're choosing your targets!

The camera options don't seem to be very different from one another, as both controls the camera terribly! However, DON'T use "Leader centered", because every time after someone casts a spell, the camera will drift away and you'll be unable to control your character effectively. This happens 99% of the time in "Leader centered", although "Normal" will sometimes do so as well.

I think we can all agree on the fact that controlling your character with the D-pad (or left stick) only is much more convenient.

STATUS

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There are many statistics in SO2, but unlike most other games, they're quite confusing, so here's a summary of what each statistics does. Note, most stats will increase at level ups, and certain equipment can increase certain stats:

HP: Hit Points, the most well known feature of any RPG. Your HP level decrease as you get hit by the enemies and when it drops to zero, your character faints and is unable to participate in combat. Parts

of your current HP can be recovered naturally depending on your Stamina level.

MP: Magic Points, but are not always used to cast magic spells, usable for fighter's Killer Moves as well. Every time you use a Killer Move or cast a spell, your current MP will decrease by the MP cost of that skill. Once your MP reached zero or below the required level to use that skill, you'll no longer be able to use that Killer Move or spell. Like HP, MP can also be recovered automatically after a battle according to your Stamina level.

STR: Strength, affects the ATT (attack power). The higher this stat is, the more damage you'll do in your attack. Also affects the power of most fighters' Killer Moves.

CON: Constitution, affects the AC (defence). You'll take less damage if you have high CON.

DEX: Dexterity, affects the HIT (accuracy or hit rate). Measures how often you can successfully hit an enemy, very useful later in the game.

AGI: Agility, affects the AVD (evade). Characters with higher AGI can dodge attacks more often than characters with lower AGI.

INT: Intelligence, affects the MAG (magic power). A magic user will be able to deal more damage with their spells with high INT. Interestingly, all characters (even magic users) joins you with their INT at zero!

LUC: Luck, affects a little bit of everything, or nothing at all. Luck can raise your hit rates or evade rates, how often Guts appears and the success of Item Creations minimally. Don't worry too much about it.

STM: Stamina. IMO, the most useful statistic for any character. This determines how much HP and MP a character can recover after a fight. With high STM, a character can recover more HP/MP than they've used in battle! However, recovery is also affected by your actions in combat. Attacking, moving, casting spells will all waste energy, meaning your character will recover less as they take more actions in battle.

GUTS: Guts and will-power of a character, this has a few effects.

- 1) The first is the DEATHBLOW EFFECT. When a character attacks an enemy, "GUTS" will sometimes appear above the character and they'll do MUCH more damage (usually twice as much!), and I think this can work with certain Combat Skills to a greater effect! It's even compatible with Killer Moves, making them much more powerful!
- 2) The opposite, ADVANCED GUARD EFFECT. When a character is hit, "GUTS" appear over their heads and they'll take slightly less damage. Enemies can achieve this effect too and it also applied to magical spells.
- 3) When a character's health is low and receives an attack that would usually knock them unconscious, "GUTS" appears and the character will stay at 1HP, sorta like that of BOF3 but this effect is quite rare until later.

The below stats are not the natural stats of a character but are

related to it:

ATT: Attack Power, this is the combined value of a character's STR and the equipped weapon's power. Most important stat for fighters, as both their normal attacks and most Killer Moves are proportional to this value. Less useful for magic users.

AC: Armor Class/Defense Power, this is the combined value of a character's CON and every single piece of equipped armor's defense power. Useful for all characters but becomes sort of irrelevant in the later levels of the Trial Cave.

HIT: Accuracy/Hit Rate, basically the character's DEX value, but most weapons will give a bonus to this stat. Useful for fighters mainly, especially later in the game where the enemies blocks your hits like crazy.

AVD: Evade/Avoid, the AGI value plus any AVD bonus from armors. More important than AC in the Trail Cave since most attacks can kill you in one hit regardless of your AC. You can avoid 90% of the hits if you have a high AVD and mastered the Parry Combat Skill.

MAG: The magic power of your character, just the INT value of any character plus any MAG bonus associated with your armor or weapon. Quite useful for any magic user but are useless for all fighters. However, some of my fighters have a MAG level (well, INT actually, but they're the same thing) that rivals a good mage like Rena!!! I don't think this affects magic resistance, since all spells are elemental, equipping elemental defence items will reduce the damage taken from spells.

CRT: Critical. Not a real stat (ie, cannot be found in your status screen) but many equipment have a CRT bonus. The chance of a critical blow (different to that caused by GUTS) increases with this, where your's attack makes a loud noise, makes the screen flash (slightly), does more damage (not as much as GUTS though) and instantly Peeps the enemy.

COMBAT

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Like most RPGs, combat takes place randomly when you're walking around in a dungeon or on the world map. When a fight occurs, the screen will flash and you will be zapped to a new screen.

Combat takes place in a semi-3D environment, where you're given an angled side-view. Your fighting party (ie, first 4 party members) will usually be on the right side of the battle field in their current formation, while the enemies will usually be on the left. The battle is fought in real time and you can move in every direction but can only attack enemies when you're facing left or right, kinda like the classic side-scrolling games like Final Fight. You can control one character at a time (default is the first character) while your other characters will be controlled by the AI.

Although this seems to play like an action game like Secrets of Mana, it's actually very different. For example, you can press the X button to do a regular slash, which in action games will make your character swing his weapon right where he is. However, in SO2, your character will move close to the targeted enemy so they're in your character's

attacking range before making their strike. So if you press the X button at full screen length, you'll character will actually run across the screen to attack them, which is quite troublesome as the enemy can launch their attack before you can get close to them and nail you just when you're about to hit them. And if the enemy moves or runs away, your character will actually chase after them *UNCONTROLLABLY*, since once you press the button to attack there's no way of cancelling the action but you'll regain control if you get hit or you hit the enemy (or if you miss). In a way, the attacking system is very similar to Tales of Destiny/Phantasia.

If the target enemy is airborne, your character will use their air attack. Most characters' air attack is a jump and attack in the peak of their jump, which gives you even less control!

The targeting system is very similar when using Killer Moves for your fighters. On the bottom-left corner of the screen is the "range indicator", which marks the distance between the character you're controlling and the target enemy (I use Auto, so I don't know what happens in Manual). Pressing the L1 or R1 button will allow you to execute the Killer Move assigned to that button, and depending on your range (Long or Short), you'll execute the Long or Short range version of the Killer Move. (Some Killer Moves has only one version though.) Most Killer Moves have an execution point, which means that you must be exactly that far away from the target to execute the Killer Move. Again, if you're too far away from the execution point (regardless of whether you're right next to the opponent or at full screen length), you'll have to spend some time running to the desired distance. If the target moves or run away, you'll again loose control of your character as he/she chases after the enemy. Few Killer Moves can be executed at any place on the screen, take advantage of these.

Note however, standing away from the enemy is not the only way to register a long range. You maybe also knock them high into the air, it's possible through the Float Combat skill combined with Strong Blow, some Killer Move can launch an enemy into the air and enemies will fall from the air at the beginning of the battle during a "surround attack".

Of course, it's not very a good idea to control just one character, so you might want to swap characters when the AI slacks or someone is standing around idled. By pressing the O button, the time will freeze and you'll see a cursor above the character you're currently controlling, press left or right on the D-pad (or the analogue stick) will allow you to swap characters, press the O button again on the desired character to resume combat. This is also a good feature to use when you want to pause the fight or just get a better view of the surroundings without wasting combat time. Once you've changed your character, the L2 button will be available to switch between that character and the default character quickly. If you change characters again with the O button, the L2 button will exchange control between the default character and the character that you've switched to last. After the battle is over, the controlled character will revert back to default.

Pressing the R2 button will put the character into Manual mode. In Manual mode, the AI will not control the character if you switched characters, so in other words, they'll just stand there waiting to get killed if you switched characters. I don't see what good this is for, unless you're resting or something (but then again, I wish you

had more control over the camera angles.)

There's an hourglass to the upper left corner, it indicates whether you'll be able to enter commands for the character currently under your control at a particular time interval. When it's blue it means you can control the character freely but if it's red then it means that your character is in the middle of another action, is moving, recovering from an attack or other frames of animation that makes them "occupied". This is not too important.

Regular attacks and Killer Moves are not the only actions you can do in combat. By pressing the triangle, you'll be able to access the ring menu of your current character (which is similar to the spell menus in Secrets of Mana). There are 4 options: Magic/Heraldry (magic users only), Item, Tactics and Run. BTW, time is paused when you're selecting from the menu so don't be afraid to take your time.

---Magic/Heraldry---

Equivalent to the fighter's Killer Moves, mages can cast spells. Select Magic/Heraldry will give you the list of magic available for your magic user to cast, press the X button will allow you to cast the desired spell. Any spell name in grey cannot be used due to insufficient MP. Unlike the Killer Moves, you can cast a spell anywhere on the battle field, but a spell has a casting time associated with it. All spells will take sometime before it is executed. Usually the more powerful a spell is, the longer it takes to cast. Beware, your magician is very vulnerable during this time since they cannot move, and if they take any damage, their concentration is ruined and the spell dissolves. Try to protect the magic user when they're casting spells or move them out of the way.

You can also "absorb" spells by having 2 characters casting a spell at the exact time. The effects varies depending on the elemental of the spells combined, explained below.

After the spell takes effect, an orange bar appears near the magician and starts to deplete. During this time, the magician must recover their mental strength and is unable to cast another spell. However, they can still move, and once the orange bar disappears, they'll once again be able to use magic.

Fighters will have a red cross over their Magic menu because they can't cast spells.

---Item---

This is simple enough, to use a usable item during battle. Selecting this will give you the list of items in your inventory. IMO, this is rather badly done, as items both usable and unusable in battle will appear in the list. Items that cannot be used in battle are in grey. Sort your items by "combat" (double swords) will help out a lot.

After using an item however, it gets more complicated. Similar to spell recovery, you'll be unable to use an item for a short period of time. (Reason?) If you look to the top of the screen to the right of your character's stats, you'll see a vertical green bar with the word "Item" down the bottom. If the bar says "OK" then items are usable during that time. When an item is used, the bar will turn purple and will begin to deplete, while the green will begin to recover. Until the bar turns back into green and the word "OK" appears again, your

Item menu will be sealed (by a red cross over it).

---Tactics---

Changes your character's strategy during battle, similar to the menu. Explained below.

---Run---

Try to escape from the battle. This will put all characters who are not currently attacking/casting spells into their running animation (the characters who are occupied will finished what they're doing before trying to run.) While in the running animation, they'll be uncontrollable and will stay that way until they ran away or gets killed. IMO, SO2 has the worst "escape system" (yes even worse than Parasite Eve or Wild Arms) so my advice is to never use this option unless you're in the beginning of the game. You'll most likely to get a "GAME OVER" if you try to run later in the game or (especially) in the Trial Caves. You'd be better off using a Skanda to warp you out (duplicate lots and lots of those!!) or use a Dummy Doll to distract the enemies as you run.

---Negative Status Ailments---

As of any RPG, bad status ailments are unavoidable. There ain't that many of them in this game but the ones it does have are deadly.

* POISON <The character turns green, bubbles appear over their head>
Like most RPGs, Poison is the mildest status. Your HP drops every few seconds. This will not disappear after battle, not even if you stay at an inn! You must cure it through the use of spells or items. On the field, you'll loose a bit of HP for every few steps you take.

Sample cures: Cure Poison, Aquaberry, Spring Water; Antidote and Dispel spells.

* PARALYZE <A yellow lightning bolt symbol appear above one's head>
The character is unable to do anything, so they're frozen in one place. He/she cannot take damage while Paralyzed. A Paralyzed character will not gain any experience points after battle. Like Poison, this status cannot be recovered even by staying at an inn.

Sample cures: Cure Paralyze, Spring Water; Dispel spell.

* STONE <The character turns into grey motionless stone>
Also known as Petrify. Someone's too lazy to think up a new status effect so this is basically exactly the same as Paralyze. You cannot act but you won't continue to take damage so it's slightly better. A Stoned character will gain no experience after a battle and cannot be cured by staying at an inn.

Sample cures: Cure Stone, Spring Water; Dispel spell.

* FAINT <The character falls unconscious>
Not a real status, but it's in the manual. The character is basically dead, unable to act or move. This happens when a character's HP drops to zero, as well as the effect of a few rare instant-death attacks. This CAN be recovered by staying at an inn.

Sample cures: Resurrection Bottle, Resurrection Mist, Smelling Salt,

Revival Card; Raise Dead spell.

The following status ain't real ones, they're not in the manual, but I thought they're worth mentioning.

* PEEP <Stars spinning around a character's head>

The game calls this status "Peeping" but it's commonly known as Dizzy or something like that. A Dizzied character will not be able to act nor move for a short period of time, making them very vulnerable. A character will become Dizzy when they got strut by a critical blow or is constantly taking hits. You can knock an enemy Dizzy as well, the higher your CRT the easier it is. Characters with multiple-hit Killer Moves can take advantage of this as well. You can also cast some spells to Peep an enemy, or use an item. The last way is through a successful hit with any weapons that produce stars when swung, such as Claude's Eternal Sphere or by wearing the Angel's Armband.

Sample cures: None, but this will be recovered after a certain period of time, however, the enemy can Peep you again (since you're defenceless during Peeping time) to extend the Peeping time.

Note: The accessories Peep Non and Peep Half will resist Peeping.

* BERSERK <The character turns red for a second>

When one of your party members gets knocked out in battle, there's a chance that another character will get angry. An berserk character will gain a huge status boost to all his/her stats and starts doing double damage to the enemies. The chance of triggering this is random but if the character who falls has a good friendship or passion with another character, chances of getting angered will be increased.

It's kinda hard to spot a character who turned angry. However, if they calls out the name of the fallen member or shouts something like "You'll pay for this!" then it's a sign that someone has achieved Berserk. The bersek character will turn red for a second then immediately returns back to normal. The angered character will remain Berserk for the rest of the battle, even if the fallen member is revived, but the effect *may* wear off if they fall unconscious themselves. (I don't know.)

I've tested this with magic users like Celine and found that the character's magic strength won't increase very much at all. Celine's Energy Arrow was doing around 500 damage and it increased to ~530 when she's in Berserk, where as her normal attack does around 50 points gets increased to ~100 when angered! Also, other stats like DEX and AGL will be increased too. So it's much more useful if the Berserk character is a fighter.

* FROZEN <Animation stops and character turns blue>

This is the effect of the Deep Freeze spell. A Frozen character is basically immobile and cannot take any actions for a small period of time. I have encountered this once when I was fighting against Zand.

Sample cures: Not too sure. Either no way, a fire spell or Neutral.

* SILENCE <No animation>

A Silenced character cannot cast spells. If they try to they'll charge up for it but a message pops up saying you cannot cast spell when you execute it. This is most often the effect of enemy magic, but your magician characters can use this to their advantage. Note

non-magic users can get Silenced but it won't do anything since they can't cast spells anyway.

Sample cures: I think the Neutral spell can cures this, but chances are, it'll be the character with the Neutral spell who gets Silenced. I don't know of any other way to cure this.

* OTHER

Like Silence, there are a variety of spells that causes negative effects (like Delay, Deep Mist etc.) which I assume, can also be cured by Neutral, but the fact is that the enemy NEVER uses those spells so no worries. I personally have never seen the enemy cast any status spells but Silence (and Delay).

BATTLE STRETAGY

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The AI will control a character a certain way according to the tactic if give them. There are 3 sets of different strategies:

---Fighters---

Fighters are your main offense, they should dispatch the enemies quickly before the enemies gets to the mages. Always have at least 2 fighters in your team!

- Attack with all MP!
- Protect friends!
- Conserve Killer Moves!
- Spread out and attack!
- Stay away from enemy!
- Do nothing!

Comments:

- Unless I was in the very early part of the game, I always set every one of my fighter's strategies to "Attack with all MP!" Why? Because their MP would regenerate with their Stamina (and equip the Fairy Ring so they use less MP) also you'll gain quite a bit of Proficiency by doing so. Also, Blackberries are cheap so you really won't loose anything if you choose this option.
- "Protect friends!" is a good one to set one of your fighter to later in the game (especially in the Trial Caves) to protect Rena or any other magic user. Basically, use this for some of your characters in tougher areas.
- "Conserve Killer Moves!" is good for earlier in the game where your Stamina is too low to be any good, but beware, the fighters tends to be very aggressive and forgets about defense with this at times.
- "Spread out and attack!" will make your fighter attack the enemies who are not currently being attacked by another character, while generally a bad idea to get separated, it's quite good if you want the AI characters to target those annoying mages in the back row.
- "Stay away from the enemy!" should only be used during "Time attack" battles when you're trying to last a full minute, otherwise, fairly useless.
- Choosing this strategy is the same as pressing the R2 button which sets the character to "Manual".

---Rena---

Being the primary healer of the party, Rena has her own strategy!

- Recover friends only!
- Aid friends!
- Aid self only!
- Cast no spells!
- Put self into attack!
- Do nothing!

Comments:

- "Recover friends only!" is great for extremely tough fights and the lower levels of the Trial Caves, where you need her to cast Fairy Light constantly! Use it when you cannot afford for her to cast anything else but make sure that she's protected! In this mode, Rena will only cast healing and curing spells. Don't know about status-up spells since I seal them immediately.
- "Aid friends!" is the all round strategy for Rena IMO. She will heal all allies as a first priority, and in her spare time she will try to aid allies with either stats-ups/downs or attack spells. Very important that you should seal her stats spells or she'll cast them constantly and waste her MP. Don't worry about her attack spells though, as they're actually quite useful. A weird thing about this is that if Rena runs out of MP, she'll start attacking physically!
- "Aid self only!" is an extremely selfish command, I never use it, nor do I see any reason to.
- "Cast no spells!" is another rather stupid (and dangerous) option, she will never cast a spell and stands around like a fool. If you want her to conserve MP, put her in "Recover friends only!" and seal away all the spells you don't want her to cast!
- "Put self into attack!" is actually fairly good earlier in the game, as Rena is quite a decent attacker for a mage, and she might even do more damage than Claude!! (She did in my game!) A bit dangerous later in the game though. One thing of note, she will never cast a spell in this mode! Again, she'll be very aggressive and tends to forget about defense.
- "Do nothing!" is useless.

---Magic users---

The advantage of magic users is that most of their better spells can hit multiple/all enemies. Make sure they're in the back row and protected!

- Attack till all MP are gone!
- Conserve MP!
- Attack fleeing enemy!
- Use no Heraldic spells!
- Throw own body into attack!
- Do nothing!

Comments:

- "Attack till all MP are gone!" should be the one to use, for similar reasons as fighters (MP refilled after battle, Proficiency). But it can get annoying with the camera constantly changing, maybe the best solution is to not have a mage at all. Anyway, this is the way to go if you like mages.
- "Conserve MP!" is good for Celine earlier on, as some of her better spells (Ray, Starlight etc) drains her MP like crazy. Might also be good if you want a magic user in your party but don't want their spells to confuse you constantly.
- "Attack fleeing enemy!" very good for attacking those hated mages

in the back row, but since most of your mages spells are all-targeted, it doesn't make too much of a difference. Now the question remains is not whether you'll pull off a spell, but it's more like whether you'll be able to pull off a spell before the enemies! It's not much use if Celine's casting Explode that takes forever while the enemy casts Light Cross constantly! I found that to control the mage manually to be more effective.

- "Throw own body into attack!" is a very dangerous option, avoid avoid! Attack magicians have lousy attacks, bad range/speed and running all the way into the midst of a battle could only mean suicide since their defense is terrible. Even standing around doing nothing is more favourable!
- "Do nothing" is again useless.

FORMATIONS

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Like each character's strategy, your party's formation is also very important. There are 13 formations in this game and most of them has some use. (I'm not very good at Ascii art, so excuse me if they look terrible.)

Linear Motion

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|           4|  Comments:
|           |  Functional and standard, but your
|           3|  characters start too far away. Maybe
|           |  ok if you want to stay defensive but
|           2|  there are better formations.
|           |
|           1|
-----

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Square Shift 1

Square Shift 2

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-----
|           | |           2 4|  Comments:
|           2 4| |           |  Good if you have 2 mages
|           | |           |  and 2 fighters. The mages
|           | |           |  are safe at the back, but
|           | |           |  it takes time for the
|           1 3| |           |  fighters to get back to
|           | |           1 3|  the mages if they are
-----
|           | |           |  attacked.
-----

```

Tri-Shift 1

Tri-Shift 2

```

-----
|           | |           |  Comments:
|           3 | |           3 |  Good for 3 fighter and a
|           | |           |  mage party. #1 is you want
|           1 4| |           1 4|  to protect your mage and
|           | |           |  #2 is you want to get to
|           2 | |           2 |  the enemies quicker.
|           | |           |
-----

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Free-for-all

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|           |
|           2 4 |  Comments:

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			Not very good as your party is spread apart.
			Unless you have 4 fighters and they all have to
			be fairly strong. Put the long range characters
	1 3		like Opera at the back.

	Upper Guard		Lower Guard	
<hr/>				
	3 4			Comments:
	2			Both are basically the
	1			same. It's defensive and
				good for harder dungeons
			1	where you're constantly
			2	outnumbered and over-
			3 4	powered.

	Astral Shift			
<hr/>				
	3			
				Comments:
	1 4			I can't really see a use for this other than
				being pretty. The Tri-Shifts are better, unless
	2			you have 3 mages or something.

	Escape Shift		Assault Shift	
<hr/>				
				Comments:
				You're bunched together
			3	in both. The former if you
			1 4	have to escape a lot, the
			2	latter if you have 4
	24			fighters and want to kill
	13			off the enemies quickly.

	Upper Caution		Lower Caution	
<hr/>				
	2 4			
	3			Comments:
	1			A variation of the Upper
				and Lower Guard with
			1	similar effects.
			3	
			2 4	

Note: The numbers represents the position of the character in your fighting party. Eg, if Claude is in your first slot, he'll occupy position 1. You cannot change which number occupies which space in the formation, but you can change the position of your characters via Replacement.

The manual for this game seems to be quite detailed, however, they didn't even mention a word about elemental effects! Like most RPGs, SO2 also utilizes the different forces of nature, commonly known as elemental effects. There are 10 (!!) different elements in SO2, although some of them are very confusing. Understanding them would help you greatly in this game. The first 2 letters inside the parenthesis are used by the game in battles (when you check the enemy's stats), the second note is the symbol for that element used in the menus.

- * Earth (Et, denoted by a brown cube)
 - Utilizes the forces of the ground, causing earthquakes or cave-ins to damage the target. Useless against flying/airborne enemies.
- * Water (Wt, denoted by a water droplet)
 - Utilizes various forms of water, from icicles to tidal waves, to freeze or drown the target. Useful against fire enemies.
- * Fire (Fr, denoted by fire)
 - Utilizes the power of heat and fiery explosions to scorch and burn enemies. IMO, the most useful out of all the elements.
- * Wind (Wd, denoted by a cloud)
 - Utilizes the forceful power of wind, forming whirlwinds and tonados around the enemies.
- * Thunder (Th, denoted by a lightning bolt)
 - Utilizes the power of thunder and lightning to shock the targets.
- * Star (St, denoted by a 5-pointed star)
 - Controls the mysterious extraterrestrial forces which falls from above to crush the enemies.
- * Vacuum (Vc, denoted by a star-studded vortex)
 - Has the power to extract and consume life energy from living beings, also known as "Negative energy."
- * Light (Lg, denoted by a yellow sphere with a smiley face)
 - Has the power over high intensity light that conquers evil.
- * Dark (Dk, denoted by a black sphere with red "eyes")
 - Manipulates the power of shadows and darkness that creeps up to an unsuspecting victim.
- * Void (Vd, denoted by a white cube)
 - Has the power to control the extra-dimensional-density, which can summon demons from another plane or crush its target with gravitational energy.

Everyone in your party can be affected by one or more of the attributes, your overall elemental attribute can be viewed by pressing the Square button on their status menu. All symbols in grey suggests that a particular element does not apply for your character. The first row is used for your weapon, your normal attacks will do whatever type of elemental damage shown here. If you have none, then you'll do neutral or non-elemental damage.

The second row is your elemental defense, you're not protected against any symbols that are in grey. Unlike weapon, you can have

negative attributes too, denoted by a "-" next to the element. A character that has a negative defensive attribute is said to be weak against that type of element and will take more damage against that those types of attacks. Likewise, a "+" next to an element makes you strong against it, which may reduce the damage you take against that type of attack to half, nothing or even let you absorb it!

---Elemental defense---

Everyone will have neutral overall attributes naturally. Certain equipment will give you an attribute when equipped. Equip carefully though, if any equipment has a weakness, put something on that makes you strong against that element to negate the effect. Interestingly, if you put a positive elemental defense over a negative one, your overall attribute against that element will stay positive!

Usually, 1 positive elemental defense makes you take half damage against that element, two of them will negate any damage taken and 3 or more of them will let your character absorb it instead. However, some equipment does not obey this rule, like the Angel's Armband, which will always absorb Star attacks no matter what. Most equipment has a "Element Resistance Ratio" which reduces a percentage of the damage taken, eg, 30%. If the culmulative bonuses adds to 100%, you will take no damage. Damage will be absorbed above 100%. The game does NOT tell you each piece of equipment's ratio though, which is really annoying!

Elemental defense becomes increasingly more important as you progress through the game. Enemies later in the game will cast insanely powerful elemental spells which can wreck havoc on any party without protection.

---Elemental attacks---

Elemental attacks are less important, as a matter of fact, most of them are a hindrance since enemies later in the game will have multiple elemental defense attributes. This can be solved by equipping only non-elemental weapons.

All damage-dealing spells in the game are elemental based, as well as some other support spells. Also, every fighter has a few elemental based Killer Moves as well. Try matching an elemental attack with the weakness the enemy. You can view the elemental attribute of any enemy by using a Spectacle on them. However, you can usually rely on the AI. The computer will always use an elemental attack that the enemy is weak against. Similarly, AI controlled character will seldom cast a spell that will do only half damage and will never cast those types of spells (or use Killer Moves) that won't do any damage or gets absorbed.

AFFECTION

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Like a mini dating game, you can match two characters together through affection. Each character has a pre-set affection level for each and every character when they joins your team, which includes "friendship" (measures the friendliness of one person for another. The higher this is, the better friends they become) and "passion" (measures the romantic attraction level of the two persons). One's affection can be higher for one person than another. For example,

Opera and Ernest has high passion level for one another as they're lovers, while Dias won't get along with everyone as well since he's Mr Anti-Social by nature.

There are a few ways of altering affection scores:

1) Private Actions, you'll often meet up with another party member. Depends on the situation, you'll usually be prompt with a choices as an answer when they ask you a question or as actions that you can take. If you help them or choose an option that would make them happy, there will usually be an increase in affection between the hero and that character. Likewise, if you piss 'em off, their affection towards the hero (or vice versa) will decrease.

Sometimes a Private Action might not exactly be between the hero and another party member, but between 2 different party members as well, although those events are quite rare. That's going to be your chance to pair them up!

2) Pickpocketing when travelling together with your team will have all member's affection decrease toward the character who's picking the pocket. The Super Specialty Reverse Side will make everyone in your party's affection towards everyone else. Don't do it!

3) Books made by Publishing can alter the affection level to a fixed level. Each character can write 2 books, the common one that alters friendship and a rare one that alters passion. Having another member read the book that one member of the party wrote would alter their affection depending on which book it is. Careful though, this will alter their affection to that fixed level (semi-high of 8) regardless of their previous affection level, which means you're actually decreasing it if their affection level was high!!! Good for very early on in the game to give their affection levels a boost.

4) Fighting together can increase everyone's affection towards everyone else who was in the fight, but this is a very slow procedure! I think 100 fights equal one point increase in affection. Certain boss fights will also automatically increase everyone who participated in the fight's affection towards everyone else who was in the fight by 1!

5) Does anyone know how/where the Twin's Tonic can be gotten from? Or more importantly, how it works? I've gotten one via a Treasure Box but it didn't seem to work very well when I used it, it's supposed to "Deepens the bond between friends".

So why going through all that trouble just to increase the affection of some lousy virtual characters? Well, there are a few bonuses for having high affection:

1) The chance of someone getting Berserk when one member falls will be increased.

2) The characters will fight in a more harmonized manner. For example, some characters will back up another character when they're in danger more often, or the healer will heal a wounded character quicker.

3) The endings are based on each character's affection towards another to determine which 2 characters will pair up. That's why

there are 80+ endings in this game!!! Basically, a character with the highest affection level towards another character (and the other character's affection is of similar level), they'll be paired up. However, characters who are of the same sex will be paired depending on their friendship which characters of opposite sex will be paired depending on their passion. (No LesBN action here, sorry. Hehe...)

Read an another FAQ or Ian Kelley's FAQ for more information.

How do you know how high the affection level of each character is? You don't, as there's no way of finding out. However, certain "traits" can be noted by the way some character fights that will give you some clue whether they have high or low affection.

- 1) Those characters that have high affection will tend to stick together and cover each other's back or help each other out when in danger.
- 2) Magic users tend to cast support or healing spells on the ones they have higher affection for first, but this can be quite annoying, as they'll basically ignore the ones they don't like (or don't like as much). For example (this happened to me many times.) In the Trial Caves, Opera and Ernest both falls from battle. Rena would cast Raise Dead on Opera first, then she'll cast Fairy Heal/Light to bring Opera to full health then (guess what?) she casts a Star Flare!!! I was furious and started taking over for the dumb AI!
- 3) In disc 2, you'll be able to meet the fortune-teller in Fun City. If you do a Private Action there, you'll be able ask the fortune-teller the passion between your main character and all your teams members of the opposite sex. She'll give you some kinda indication on how well your relationship is going.
- 4) Some Private Actions will only take place when your affection towards another character (or vice versa) is above a certain point. If you see a Private Action where a character shows a lot of interest in you or if they started to get kinky, you'll know that your affection is doing well.

KILLER MOVES

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There are 2 types of characters in SO2, every playable character in the game is either a fighter or a magic user, and each has their own distinctive skills. Killer Moves are the fighters' specialty, which are deathblows or various gadgets used for dispatching the enemies. Each fighter characters has 8-11 unique Killer Moves of their own, and up to 2 Killer Moves can be brought into battle at the same time, assigned to either the L1 or R1 shift button. Each fighter has only a small number of his or her total possible Killer Moves when they join you, but by gaining levels you'll be able to obtain all of them. (However, Ashton, Precis and Opera have a few Killer Moves that are gained through some other means.)

Each Killer Moves has an execution cost, which uses up your MP during battles. What's great about Killer Moves is that each KM also has a Proficiency record. The Proficiency is increased by 1 each time you use a particular KM, to a maximum of 999. As the Proficiency levels

go up, various things can happen to the Killer Move (usually getting better), such as increased power, faster execution time, amount of hits increased, different animation etc. Choose your KMs carefully as different KMs works better than others in certain situations.

Every Killer Move has a range-dependence, which are mentioned under "Combat". The execution point each Killer Move is very important as miscalculating the range can mean an instant death in the Cave of Trials, so learn to familiarize yourself with the different versions of the Killer Move and their execution points.

Note that many Killer Move has a very short long-ranged version, which I sometimes call "mid range". And a rule of thumb, the point blank spot at which the character's attacks becomes long range is about 5 character widths away from the target. In other words, walk about 5 character widths away from the enemy and the "range indicator" to the bottom left of the screen becomes "Long range".

How do you execute mid range attacks? Now this is more complicated than you think, as if you stand at the execution point of the mid ranged Killer Move, you'll do the short ranged version instead! Why? Well, the game take that you're in short range at under 5 character widths away from the enemy (look at your current range to the lower left of the screen.) So to execute a mid ranged Killer Move when it already has a short ranged version, you must move away from the enemy until your range changes to "Long", which mean you'll have to run up to the enemy before executing the mid ranged Killer Move because you've moved away from the execution point.

I know it sounds VERY confusing, so here's an example. Claude's Shooting Stars has a Short and Long ranger version. Claude punched the enemy during the short version and throws an energy ball at the enemy during his long range version. However, the Execution Point of the Long Ranged version of Shooting Stars is about 2 character-widths away from the enemy. Since anything under 5 would be considered "Short Range" by the game's means, to be able to execute the Long range version of Shooting Stars, you'll have to distance Claude until he's at least 5 character-widths away from his target. Assuming that the enemy does not move, Claude will run 3 character-widths towards the enemy, pause then execute his energy ball. So to repeatedly execute his Long range Shooting Stars, Claude must distance himself from the enemy after EVERY move. I hope this is clear enough.

A few Killer Moves are "uni-ranged" type, which can be executed anywhere on the screen.

Keep in mind though, the damage of most Killer Moves are directly proportional to a character's Attack power, which are affected by their STR and weapon, so these 2 stats are a must for powering up Killer Moves. Some Killer Moves are not terribly powerful, as a matter of fact, most of them do about the same damage as a normal attack, so don't expect them to be **really** great until later.

So why use them? It's because that all Killer Moves can "evolve" with their Proficiency levels, and becoming more and more powerful. Also, all fighter characters have KMs that hit multiple times for lots of damage, so it would be your interest to take advantage of them.

A few note on weapons, their power will affect all damage dealing Killer Moves, although it might make no sense whatsoever (like

Claude's Burst Knuckle since he don't use his sword for it and Chisato's Tear Gas.) Gaining better weapons will significantly increase a KM's power. Likewise, weapons with an elemental alignment or special effects WILL be carried to the Killer Move.

For example, Claude's Twin Slash is a non-elemental attack, but when Claude is equipped with the Flame Blade, it (and all his KMs) becomes Fire elemental! If Chisato is equipped with the Weird Slayer, all her KMs can kill "Weird" in one hit and gain HP, like if she's using normal attacks.

I have no idea of what will happen when you execute an elemental KM while equipped with a weapon of a different element, the Killer Move will probably be "dual elemental" but I dunno.

Likewise, most Killer Moves can successfully trigger certain Combat Skills too, although it might make no sense whatsoever how some cheap projectiles hitting Below the Belt or whatever. Characters with MASSIVE multi-hit Killer Moves benefit most from this feature though, as each hit in the KM is checked to see if it has triggered a Combat Skill separately, rather than an "all or nothing" situation as with a regular attack. So you'd find characters like Chisato, Opera and Claude achieving more Combat Skills than say Dias, Bowman or Precis.

Since Killer Moves are specific to the character, it makes sense to put them under the Character's section.

---Link Combo---

Upon acquiring the Link Combo accessory and equipping it on a fighter character, pressing the triangle button in his/her Killer Moves Setting will take you to the Link Combo menu. A pop up window will ask you if you want to steal (the ability to use Killer Moves) from another character, and another window will pop up asking who you want to steal from. (You can only steal from characters that are in your fighting party or the Link Stock.) If the character's name has "LC" next to them, it means that they already have the access to Link Combos, and if it's "Stolen" next to their name, it means they have already been stolen from. You cannot steal from either character that way. If you stole from a fighter, they will no longer have the ability to use their own Killer Moves, but if you steal from a mage, it will function as usual and the mage character won't lose anything since they can't use Killer Moves anyway.

Upon activating the Link Combo, you'll immediately gain 2 more slots to equip with Killer Moves, however, 2 Killer Moves will be assigned to the same button. (And thus, pressing that button in battle will let your character execute both killer moves one after the other, in the order you place them in.) The recovery frames for the first KM will be significantly shortened, thus use this to your advantage!

Try out different Link Combos as some Killer Moves links wonderfully while others don't work quite as well. Beware though, as it can drain your MP fairly quickly, so equip MP cost reduction items if you can. Also, you must have enough MP for BOTH Killer Moves assigned to that button to use it, although the MP is deducted separately as you execute the Killer Moves.

For example, I assign Claude's Air Slash (4MP) and Shooting Stars (7MP) to the L1 button. The L1 button will only respond if Claude has

at least 11MP remaining (if you don't have enough you'll hear a "buzz".) MP will be deducted separately though, meaning if Claude failed to execute Shooting Stars for some reason (like if he gets hit out of it), the 7MP will not be deducted.

When linking Link Combos, take into account each Killer Move's speed, range, recovery as well as their execution ranges, because the last thing you want is to leave your character wide open to attacks in-between Killer Moves. IMO, a combo with minimal character movement is quite effective. Another idea is to execute a projectile attack followed by a short ranged one, and during the time you run to catch up with the enemy, you're pretty much safe because if the enemy tried to hit you, they'll get knocked by the projectile. (Although if the enemy moves, you're back to the "chase the enemy" routine again. Also, it can be a disaster if the initial missile was blocked.) Another idea is to knock the enemy away with a short ranged then follow up with a longer ranged attack. The combinations are endless, use your imagination!

More about Link Combos and sample LCs can be found with the Killer Moves under the Characters section.

MAGIC/HERALDRY ARTS

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Matching the fighter's Killer Moves, magic users has the ability to cast spells, which are mysterious energies and elemental forces channelled through and released from the spell caster's bodies. Each mage in the game has a total of 23 spells, most of which are gained through gaining levels. (Celine and Leon has a spell that has to be found.) Like Killer Moves, most spells can also increase in Proficiency with similar effects when powered up, such as faster casting time, increase in power or altered animations. The spells that cannot be powered up (ie, most support spells) will have no Proficiency.

However, spells are a bit more complicated to use than Killer Moves, because other than having to be bothered with the MP cost, there's also a casting time and recovery time (not to mention the insanely lengthy animation time of some of the better spells!) The better and more powerful spells will take longer to cast (although they can be improved with Proficiency), but I think all spells have the same recovery time. One other thing of note is that spells usually take up a LOT more MP than KMs, usually more than it's worth, but that's another story.

In the Speciality menu, you can press the square button on a spell name to "seal" it, the spell name will then turn grey. (Press it again to "unseal" it.) A sealed spell can still be used in combat, however, if the computer controls your magician, they will never cast that spell. Use this to your advantage when you don't want the computer to waste your MP on the useless spells like Deep Mist.

You can sorta put the spells into 2 categories, static and non-static. Non-static spells are the weaker ones that takes effect in real time (ie, time won't stop as the spell's animation and effect take place.) Non-static spells are not very effective as they sometimes don't target properly and may take some time before the effect takes place. For example, Claude is gracefully wounded and you use Rena to cast Heal, a non-static spell. It takes a couple of

seconds for those healing to take place and in that couple of seconds, Claude can be killed if you're not careful.

Most spells in this game are static, that is, time will be paused while the spell effect and animation takes place, and the effect is more "instant", and is always a "sure hit".

Note Rena uses Magic while the other magicians use Heraldry (Magic of Expel.) They both work exactly the same way, Rena uses Magic only because it fits the story.

Spells are evaluated in details under the Character's section.

---Spell absorb---

Like Link Combos for Killer Moves, mages can combine their spells to a greater effect, but it's usually a difficult process. When 2 characters (friend or foe) executes their spells at the exact same moment, their spell effects will be combined. Only some static-type and damage-dealing (offensive) spells can be combined. A combined spell will have both spell animations taking place at the same time, which is quite cool at times. The damage of a combined spell is maxed out at 9999, except for the case of Gremlin's Lair. Also, a little note appears to the lower right corner of the screen, which goes something like:

[Party] [Element] -> Absorb -> [Party] [Element]

Everything's all bunched up together in the game so it's quite hard to see exactly what it says. The [Party] can be either "Friend" or "Enemy", and the arrows can point towards either way. The [Element] indicates which spell absorbs which other spell. What this indicates is (I think) which side will take the priority of the combined spell. For example:

Enemy Lg -> Absorb -> Friend Dk

Say the enemy is the one who casts Light Cross (Light elemental) and the ally is Leon casting Shadow Flare (Dk). Shadow Flare is stronger so it will absorb the enemy's Light Cross, making it stronger.

Combined spell lies mainly in the elemental alignment of both spells and whether the spell casters are a friend or foe, as well as the target system of the spells. Only static spells (those that stop the flow of time while they animate) can be combined and some of the best spells may not be combined. I think only certain elements will combine though, it's explained in Sherwin Tam's most excellent "In-Depth Tips and Tricks" FAQ, look there for more details.

If 2 of the same spells (same element) are mixed:

- It affects the opposite team at double strength if both spells were cast by the same team
- It affects both teams at double strength if each team casts one spell
- If the spells ain't of the "all-targeted" type, only the appropriate targets are affected

If 2 distinct spells are mixed (regardless of element):

- The stronger spell (usually the one with higher MP cost) takes the priority, affecting the opposite team at combined strength

- If the stronger spell is not of "all-targeted" type, then the combined spell affects the appropriate targets (ie, the original targets of the stronger spell)
- If both spells were cast by the same team, the combined spell affects the opposite party at combined strength. The target rule above still applies though.

Also, with all Spell Absorption, there's a 5% chance that the absorption will "fail". A failed combo spell effect is that the stronger spell works normally while the weaker spell effect is omitted.

---Spell Cancel---

Occasionally, when 2 spells are combined something will go terribly wrong in that one spell cancels the other, causing zero damage to no targets. This will only happen with spells that are of opposite elements though, I know for sure that Light will definitely cancel Dark but I think Water and Fire works in similar ways. Spell Cancel happens rarely, probably a "spell backfire" (see above) effect when 2 of the combined spells are of opposed element. Otherwise, most of the time mixing 2 spells of the opposite element works fine.

The one that I can swear that I have seen is Star Flare and Shadow Flare. (I have seen this at LEAST 5 times during the short period where I put Leon in the same party as Rena.) I think I've seen other "cancel" as well but I cannot remember which spells. It is highly possible that Eruption and Noah will cancel accordingly.

---Spell Reflection---

I have just seen this really weird phenomenon because of the dodgy spell absorption system in this game. While I was wondering around in the early parts of the Cave of Trials, Leon accidentally cast Star Light at the same time as the enemy mage's Light Cross. I saw the indicator on the screen and it went something like:

Enemy Lg <- Reflect -> Friend St

The result was that, each party's spell reflected off of each other and hurts their own side. I have been able to duplicate this a few more times with Star Light and Light Cross. However, I really don't have any idea of how or what caused it to happen. The 2 spells weren't of the same element and at other times when one team absorbs another team's spell, one almost always gets absorbed by the other. Anyone knows more about Spell Reflection?

CHARACTERS

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Star Ocean: The Second Story has 12 possible playable characters, however, you can only get a maximum of 8 characters in your party. It is not possible to try all of them out in just one game. Each character has distinctive abilities, strengths and weaknesses, as well as their own personalities and backgrounds. Also new in this update are their initial stats, skills and equipment, pointless as it may seem.

Favourite Food: Every character has a favourite food, that when consumed by the right character, will recover his/her HP/MP to full

health. There's a space for each character's favourite food in their status screen, but until you let them try their favourite food, it will be blank.

Favourite Instrument: Every character has an instrument that they suppose to play very well, and the song will have greater effected when played by a character's favourite instrument. However, you don't have to believe this crap since Dias is just as good at playing the Violin as Celine with identical levels, the same goes with Opera playing the Trumpet etc.. I have never had ANY trouble playing a non-favourite instrument, as long as I have both of the required talents.

Favourite Quotes: The voice samples of that character that I found amusing, or just funny.

Favourite PA Moment: Minimal spoiler here, I'll try not to put any major details here. Any cool Private Action events are listed here.

I'll use the below terms when describing Killer Moves and spells.

MP Cost: The MP needed to execute that command.

LV Gained: The level where the character gains that skill.
(If "NA", it means that the character will start with that skill.)

Range (KMs only): I'll put a number from 0-5, where the number represents the number of character widths between the character and the enemy when the KM is executed, 0 being right new to them and 5 being point blank long range. A "U" in here denotes a uni-ranged attack, meaning the KM can be executed anywhere.

Target (spells only):

- * Single enemy: One enemy
- * All enemies: All enemies
- * Single ally: One ally
- * All allies: All allies
- * Line of Sight: Hit enemies on a straight line
- * Radius: Select the target, any enemies near the area will also be affected

Elemental: The elemental alignment of that Killer Move/spell.

Quote: The phrase/s that character shouts as they execute the move.

Also, the texts inside the brackets are the descriptions of the skill. However, Killer Moves uses:

- < > for short range
- << >> for long range
- [] for uni-range (KMs that can be executed everywhere)

I'll use P(x) to denote the Proficiency, where "x" is the Proficiency level needed. A "~" means approximate.

The following special sections applies for fighters only:

===Cancel Ability===

Just an overview of how good the character is at using the Cancel Combat Skill, as well as which KMs are compatible. Remember that when

a character successfully triggers Cancel, their recovery frames will be omitted and the KM will follow the attack immediately, like buffering effects in most fighting games. Try to get used to the rhythm.

===Link Combo Ideas===

I'll put any decent Link Combos a character has in this section. Also, a rating is attached, 1 being so-so and 5 being a perfect link or a killer LC.

=> One note on healing spells!!! ~~~~~
| I think I've finally figured how out the healing spells work! |
| The equation goes something like this: |
| => Healing = Base + (MAG * K) + (Prof. * X) |
| |
| K and X are both constants and are different for each spell. K |
| indicates how much of the caster's MAG stats is going to affect |
| the healing (better spell = larger K) and X is the upgrade per |
| Proficiency. It's usually a fraction that's why you don't get a |
| linear/constant upgrade as Proficiency goes up. Base is damage |
| healed at zero Proficiency and zero MAG. (Note that this is only |
| an approximate. I'm not a great mathematician so don't sack me if |
| it's incorrect.) |
~~~~~

CLAUDE KENNI  
-----

Note: His name really should be Crawd Kenny, as that's his OFFICIAL Japanese name. (I've been to Enix' site and saw the name clearly printed as "Crawd".) Although Crawd isn't the best name around here, I prefer that over "Claude" (I've actually changed his name back to "Crawd" in my first game) but I'll use "Claude" simply for the sake of it's in the english version of the game.

Claude's father is Ronixis Kenni, the captain of the space ship Calnus who is well respected throughout the Earth Space Federation. Claude admires his father very much, but also hates him due to the envy and sarcasm of his fellow cadets has towards him because he's the son of the great captain. While out to explore an unknown planet, Claude got sucked into some kinda portal which transported him to Expel. While on Expel, he was mistaken by the locals as the legendary "Hero of Light". Knowing that sitting around and doing nothing won't fulfil his desire of returning home, Claude accepts the mission of investigating the Sorcery Globe, a mysterious meteor. Claude is a nice guy who always comforts others, but some of his actions and/or speech ain't really believable.

Initial stats:

|       |     |      |    |       |     |
|-------|-----|------|----|-------|-----|
| HP:   | 130 | STR: | 10 | LUC:  | 132 |
| MP:   | 20  | CON: | 5  | STM:  | 15  |
| LV:   | 1   | DEX: | 10 | GUTS: | 20  |
| EXP:  | 0   | AGL: | 10 |       |     |
| NEXT: | 10  | INT: | 0  |       |     |

Initial equipment: None

Initial skills: Scientific Ability LV1  
                  Functionality      LV1

Favourite Food:

Steak (Cook with Meat, or bought from Giveaway for 600Fol)

Favourite Instrument: Silver Trumpet

Favourite Quotes:

- "Crawd has advanced forward, heh.." (Sounds playful.. :) )

Favourite PA Moment:

- Going for tea with Ashton. Choose the third one and they'll drink out of a shake with 2 straws!

Claude is definitely the most powerful character in the game, having the best stats, most powerful weapons/armor and some of the most effective Killer Moves. One good thing about Claude is that more of his KMs has both a long and short ranged version than any other fighter in the game, making his attacks quite versatile.

He fights with a sword, and uses both sword skills as well as some martial arts skills in his Killer Moves. His normal attack has good range, fairly good speed/recovery time and is very strong. His air attack is a jumping slash, but it's no better or worse than most character's air attacks, however, note that Claude's attack takes place on his way DOWN! Making his attack rather unreliable and easily gets hit out of. If you must use the air attack, use it at long range.

Claude has the highest STR, AGI and (especially) CON in the game, his CON is unmatched and is usually twice as high as that of the character with the second best CON! What's even more is that his best weapons are also many times more powerful than other characters, and with the ability to equip the best armor, you have got an awesome powerhouse on your team!

Most of his really great Killer Moves are at short range and you should definitely use him as a "short-ranged character". However, Claude has a few fairly decent longer range Killer Moves, although it can be a pain getting it to hit. One slight disadvantage is that Claude's Killer Moves takes more Proficiency to build up. His best Killer Moves are Ripper Blast (all round attack, especially against lotsa enemies. Unmatched when powered up!) and Mirror Slice (no doubt the most damaging attack in the game.)

#####Killer Moves#####

---Phase Gun---

<<Claude's palm lights up and if the enemy is of reasonable distance away from Claude, they'll get hit and gets shocked by many beams of light>>

MP Cost: 0MP

LV Gained: NA

Range: 3

Elemental: Light (?)

Quote: "Burn!"

(You'll get to use this move if you're playing as Claude, but you'll only get to see this move if you're Rena.)

This Killer Move is awesome simply because it's free and it does a huge amount of damage (around 700) at the beginning of the game! However, you'll only get to use it for the first fight and maybe just a few random encounters before you reach Salva. Claude will use his Phase Gun to blast through Alen's front door, then the gun runs out of power and you're unable to use it throughout the rest of the game. (Yes, that's how he lost it! For those of you who played Rena's quest first.) Well, it was fun while it lasted.

---Air Slash---

<Claude slowly swings his sword in front of him, which produces a ripple-like shockwave that sweeps in an arc and hits any enemy in front of him>

<<Claude swings his sword which produces a ripple-like shockwave that travels along the ground towards its target>>

MP Cost: 4MP

LV Gained: 3

Range: 1, U

Elemental: None (Not Wind)

Quote: "Air Slash"

An ok Killer Move since it's the first one you'll get. The long range version will do the same damage as your normal attack but the short range version does only half of it. At long range, this move is actually "uni-ranged" meaning Claude don't have to move around to target the enemy, he just aim it at whatever direction the target is, at where he's currently standing. However, it's not a guaranteed hit since the shockwave is quite slow and won't home in, so if you use it when the target is far away, they can easily avoid it by moving away. After careful examination, I discovered that the long range version of Air Slash DON'T travel across the full battlefield. The shockwave will dissolve after travelling about 90% of the way.

The short ranged version can hit multiple enemies if you time it right and will sometimes hit the same target twice if you're lucky. There's quite a bit of delay before the shockwave comes out and the recovery is horrible, plus the damage don't shine, making this move very dangerous to use at close range. You're better off using your normal attack. The shockwave in both versions of Air Slash don't rise high enough above the ground to hit airborne enemies.

Because you'll do more damage at long range and Claude don't have to move around at all, Air Slash is MUCH more useful at long range. The best time to use this is about half a screen distance away from the enemy (at long range) so it won't miss that easily, especially if they're advancing on you, for decent damage. Also, this move is excellent if you wanna play "keep away" with the enemy, just stand on the same spot doing this over and over again and the enemies won't be able to get to you. This works even better if you have Celine or any magic users casting spells behind you. Using this strategy can, however, drain your MP very quickly at the beginning of the game.

At P(200), both versions of Air Slash will turn gold, raises higher above ground (long range is barely enough to hit most flying enemies, but the short one doesn't) and is executed slightly quicker (still slower than Dias' Air Slash though.) Also, the damage is doubled,

making this move a good one (and cheap) to use, until later in the game when he gets his best Killer Moves.

### ---Shooting Stars---

<Claude holds his sword in one hand and uses the other to execute a series of thrashing punches>

<<Claude sends out a ball of energy from his fist>>

MP Cost: 7MP

LV Gained: 7

Range: 0, 2

Element: None

Quote: "Shooting Stars"

This Killer Move is pretty good at short range. If you can somehow trap the enemy against a wall/another character, or the enemy is immobile, you'll be able to do up to 6 hits, each hit is about half the strength of a normal attack. Works best on heavier/bigger enemies. If you're using this on light enemies, it'll push them away after about 1-3 hits. The range of this attack is only about half a character width, meaning it's sometimes hard to even hit the enemy with Shooting Stars at close range. If you're sneaking up to an unoccupied enemy from the rear, you'll barely be able to hit them at all because they can and will move out of the way. You'll miss again fast enemies and do a max of 2 hits against the others. Also, once Claude executes this move, he'll stay in his "punching" animation for many seconds, whether he hits or not, meaning it's very easy for enemies to attack him from the rear during that time. Avoid using this when you're in between multiple enemies, because when you use this to hit one of them, the other ones will get a free hit and they might even trap Claude between them! Otherwise, a fairly decent attack for trapping enemies.

At long range, the energy ball will do double the damage of one hit from the short range version (ie, normal attack damage). Has little range and does only one hit, meaning the short ranged version is more useful in comparison as it can set up traps. Also, it'll dissipate soon if a target is not hit. Good for "hit and run" tactics.

The best time to use Shooting Stars is to sneak behind an opponent when someone's attacking them from the front to trap them. It's a bit hard to trap them in corners unless you have some help. If you have Chisato or someone with long range multiple hit Killer Moves (Opera, Ashton) it's quite easy. Let them use their Killer Move to push the enemy against the wall from long range, then sneak up right next to them and use this. Otherwise, Claude'll have to push the enemy all by himself. Try using normal attacks or one-hit Killer Moves, then Cancel his normal attack into a Shooting Star when near the corner. If another ally may attack the enemy from behind, it will either set up your trap or ruin it for you by pushing the enemy away.

At P(100), the short ranged version will have a slightly extended range (but still not too great), also hits a maximum of 8 hits. The energy ball generated in the long ranged version will be slightly bigger, not that it's of much good since there are no added bonus to the damage, but it will travel a bit more before dissolving.

At P(200), the punches will turn gold and the range will be improved

to about 1 character width, which makes it easier to hit the enemies. Also, Claude will punch a lot more times than usual, to a maximum of about 12 hits. At long range, the energy turns into an ugly oval that looks kinda like pizza, still only does one hit though, but will travel for a longer distance if not hit. No damage improvements though. :(

---Head Splitter---

[Claude jumps up into the air and lands up-side-down with his sword pointing downwards at the target's head]

MP Cost: 9MP

LV Gained: 12

Range: U

Elemental: None

Quote: "Hya!"

Head Splitter is a good attack to use all through the game. This is one of the CPU's favourite attacks. Put this on Claude and he'll use it non-stop! (Drains your MP FAST!) Since Claude leaps so high into the air, he'll be invulnerable to most physical damage. Depending on the distance between Claude and the enemy, it might take some time before Claude lands and the enemy might be able to move away. If you're too close to the enemy when executing this move however, it's likely that Claude'll get hit on his way up, so avoid this in close quarters. Head Splitter only does one hit but the damage is about 1.5 time that of a normal attack. Since he's mostly invulnerable while in the air, this Killer Move is very good to use when you're trying to keep the distance from an enemy. Also, if you don't mind using up your MP, this is a great way of covering distance quickly.

At P(130), Claude will be followed by a blue trail as he falls, causing twice as much damage as his normal attack.

At P(260), instead of falling up-side-down on the enemy, Claude will spin around many times with his sword in his hand as he descends, which is similar to one of Garuda's/Hayate move from Street Fighter EX/2. This also only hits once but the damage is now doubled! (At ~P(500) with the Eternal Sphere, this will do 9999 damage.) However, I found this is harder to hit, since sometimes Claude'll land without doing any damage at all! If Claude has his blade towards the enemy when he gets near the ground then he'll hit, but if it's away from the enemy then he won't.

The best time to use this is when Claude is about 3-5 character width away from the enemy, which is almost guaranteed to hit and still stays a fair distance away from the enemy. However, Head Splitter might have a harder time connecting in the Trail Caves where the enemies runs around at insane speed. Another way to use this move safely is not to occupy the same "plane" as the enemy's attacks. Meaning avoid standing in a straight horizontal line with the enemy.

The height of his jump is quite unpredictable at times. I think the longer the distance between Claude and his target, the higher he leaps, which makes it terrible at full screen distance as it'll take forever for him to land. If you're too close to the enemy, Claude will do a tiny mini-leap.

### ---Energy Sword---

[Claude holds his sword in front of him, with one hand on the blade and one hand on the hilt. The yellow ring spears around him and he gets healed]

MP Cost: 11MP

LV Gained: 20

Range: U

Elemental: None

Quote: "Energy"

I finally understand how this skill works now. This is basically a healing Killer Move, although its uses are limited. There's a bit of lag time before this move is executed, and since Claude mainly fights close to the enemy, the lag time will make him a defenseless standing target. An ok skill with some use, especially in the Cave of Trials where Rena's healing is sometimes not enough, but make sure you get away from the enemies before using it. Also, you only get 2 slots to equip Killer Moves with, equipping this means you have to sacrifice a perfectly good offensive skill. An idea is to equip this as a Link Combo with another fair Killer Move and assign your important Killer Moves to the other button. Keep using the other button throughout the fight and use the Energy Sword Link Combo when needed.

The amount of HP this Killer Move (Healer Move would be a better name) is exactly one fifth (ie, 20%) of Claude's MAXIMUM HP, meaning it could take up to 5 uses to bring him back to full health. However, this will improve. At P(100), the yellow ring that appears will look thicker (it's quite obvious when it happens) and the amount healed goes up to 40% of his maximum HP. At P(200), the yellow ring evolves and flickers like fire, at this time Energy Sword will heal for 60% of Claude's maximum HP. So this KM can heal for a lot of HP later in the game.

To build up the Proficiency of this quickly, look in the tips section.

### ---Burst Knuckles---

<Claude's fist catches on fire and he punches the enemy with it>

<<Claude sends out a ball of fire from this fist>>

MP Cost: 12MP

LV Gained: 28

Range: 0, 5

Elemental: Fire

Quote: "Burst knuckles"

Another fairly decent move, although it can be hard to connect with it. The short ranged version has less range than even Shooting Stars, has a slight execution time where Claude draws his fist but it's VERY quick to recover from. It only does one hit, at about 1.5 times the damage of his normal attack. Because of the delay, you'll miss if you sneak up from behind the enemy and will probably get hit out of if you're right next to the enemy. The *\*safest\** (and extremely effective) way of using this is to Cancel it off a normal attack, the link is perfect and since it has zero recovery time, almost any KMs can link fantastically after it.









attack to Cancel from, since it's pretty fast, nice range, good recovery and can Peep the enemies easily with his Eternal Sphere, setting the trap for his KMs that follows up very nicely. What's more is that Claude's short ranged KMs are excellent attacks to Cancel into, since they're fast and powerful. Basically, if you manage to land a normal attack, you're basically gaining the upper hand.

These Killer Moves works well:

- \* Shooting Stars (cheap and many hits)
- \* Twin Slash (harder since Claude has to first jump into the air)
- \* Mirror Slash (fast and powerful)
- \* Burst Knuckle (my personal favourite!)

===Link Combo Ideas===

Claude has a few good Link Combos since he has a variety of Killer Moves. However, since most of his KMs have 2 ranges, some of his Link Combos will occasionally turn out differently than expected. One slight disadvantage of giving Claude Link Combos is that his KMs are the most expensive, his MP can be drained very quickly.

\* Ripper Blast - Air Slash                      Rating: 4              MP Cost: 21MP  
Geez, talk about playing "hard to get". Use this and the enemies can't even touch you. Works even better if you have a pair of Bunny Shoes.

\* Air Slash - Head Splitter                      Rating: 3              MP Cost: 13MP  
Ripper Blast - Head Splitter                      Rating: 3.5              MP Cost: 26MP  
Hehe, you can deal lotsa damage to the enemy before they even get to you with these. However, timing is crucial. Execute this only if you're about half a screen away from the enemy so the first attack hits, while they're stunned by the Air Slash, they'll get hit by the Head Splitter, hopefully. (Air Slash may take a bit long to recover.) The latter is a great anti-air move too!

\* Burst Knuckles - Shooting Stars              Rating: 4              MP Cost: 19MP  
Burst Knuckles - Mirror Slice                      Rating: 5              MP Cost:  
I've tried these once and it was brilliant. Throw in a normal attack then Cancel it into Burst Knuckle and they'll be stuck and will take a lot of damage. Mirror Slice is better since you don't have to be in a corner.

\* Energy Sword - Air Slash                      Rating: 1.5              MP Cost: 15MP  
Energy Sword - Head Splitter                      Rating: 2              MP Cost: 20MP  
The only decent Link Combos involving Energy Sword. Since you have minimum control over where Claude would end up after his first Killer Move, it's usually not a good idea to link Energy Sword after anything, 'cuz Claude might end up right next to the opponent after executing the first Killer Move. Both Air Slash and Head Splitter can hit from anywhere on the screen.

\* Sword Bomber - Ripper Blast                      Rating: 4              MP Cost:  
Again, a great Link Combo for staying away from the enemy, hits many times for lots of damage. Works best on those worms that can swallow you since they're slow. Against faster enemies, the Sword Bomber maybe harder to connect. It works the other way too, but you may have to run a bit out of range for Sword Bomber.

\* Twin Slash - Mirror Slice                      Rating: 4              MP Cost:  
I used this before I tried Burst Knuckles. It's not bad really, but

there is a bit of lag time when Claude lands. Not sure if it's a good move against flying enemies, because Twin Slash will hit but some hits in Mirror Slice won't.

There are many more good combinations, especially ones starting with Mirror Slice, but I like to use Mirror Slice only as a finisher.

RENA LANFORD

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Rena lives in the southern end of Expel, in a village called Arlia with her mother. One day when she was strolling around the Shingo Forest like she always does, she was attacked by a monster. A mysterious stranger appeared to save her. In the muddled state that she was in, Rena instantly recognized the stranger to be the legendary "Hero of Light" and made a big commotion back in Arlia only to find that the stranger, Claude Kenni was far from being the hero that was prophesied to save their world. Quickly made up her mind, Rena decided to go with Claude in his mission to investigate the Sorcery Globe in hopes of finding her birth mother as well as the origins of her healing powers. Rena is very bitchy and reminds me a lot of Cecilia of Wild Arms, in that she has "morals" and tells everyone off for nothing, even when it's none of her business.

Initial stats:

|       |     |      |    |       |     |
|-------|-----|------|----|-------|-----|
| HP:   | 100 | STR: | 5  | LUC:  | 130 |
| MP:   | 40  | CON: | 2  | STM:  | 10  |
| LV:   | 1   | DEX: | 10 | GUTS: | 30  |
| EXP:  | 0   | AGL: | 8  |       |     |
| NEXT: | 10  | INT: | 0  |       |     |

Initial equipment: Knuckles, Robe

Initial skills: Kitchen Knife   LV1  
                  Recipe            LV4  
                  Good Eye         LV1

Favourite Food: Short Cake (Cook with Egg/Dairy Products)

Favourite Instrument: Lyre

Favourite Quotes:

- "My strength is starting to overflow" (Sounds like Lisa Simpson)
- "I won't loose" (The first quote I've ever heard from her)

Favourite PA Moment:

- After Celine caused a big commotion in Fun City with her potion, find her and the potion starts to affect Rena too, as she turned red and a heart pops up.

Rena is the most useful character in this game. She basically provides heavy healing and support for the entire team, you'll want her in most fights just in case you accidentally get your butt kicked. Although a large portion of Rena's spells are used for healing or support, she has a handful of offensive spells as well, even though they're not as strong as Celine or Leon's. Her offensive consist of Light, Void and Star type attacks, which are more used for disrupting the enemy mage rather than heavy damage. Unlike the other magic users, she can actually fight pretty well too! Her normal is a punch, which is very fast (even faster than Claude's) and has decent

range and excellent recovery, so it can be done in a quick succession to temporarily disable the enemy. Her air attack is very confusing, it's either an awkward downward punch or a back flip in mid air, not too good at all.

Like I said, she can fight pretty well, so her STR is (although lower than any fighter) pretty decent for a magic user, around about 600 at later stages, that's just a bit lower than Opera's! Rena, being a magic user, has low STM (perhaps lower than that of Celine's) which makes MP recovery quite difficult earlier in the game so keep some spare Blackberries in stock just in case.

She is quite weak defensively though, so keep her in the back. Remember that her primary job is to heal/support friends, not offensive spells or physical fighting. However, if everyone's healthy, feel free to cast an offensive spell with her. You should ONLY use her in physical combat if you have full control over her, but only in certain circumstances, such as self-defence (like if an enemy moves too close) or if you see a definite opening and it's not too far away, but everyone must be healthy first!

After playing the game a lot, I think I'm beginning to understand how the AI likes to controls Rena. These are the desirable actions the AI likes to use, ranked in order of priority.

- 1) Healing spells (eg, Fairy Heal)
- 2) Raise Dead
- 3) Stats-up spells, if applicable (eg, Angel Feather)
- 4) Stats-down spells, if applicable (eg, Deep Mist)
- 5) Attack spells, if applicable (eg, Star Flare)
- 6) Physical attacks

The priority however, is influenced by Affection values. For example, if Rena has high Affection towards Claude but low Affection towards Ashton, when Claude and Ashton both falls in battle, Rena's actions would go something like this:

- 1) Cast healing spell if Rena or 4th party member is injured
- 2) Cast Raise Dead on Claude
- 3) Fairy Heal or Fairy Light on Claude
- 4) Star Flare
- 5) Healing spell if anyone is injured
- 6) Cast Raise Dead on Ashton
- 7) Fairy Heal or Fairy Light on Ashton

However, her AI is also dependant on Rena's strategy setting. So if you are in a tight situation, control Rena manually so she doesn't slack off.

Being a magic user disallow Rena to wear very good armor, so concentrate on a good MAG boost with Robes, but do give her the best equipment available as she's the most valuable character of the team, if she falls, you'll have quite a hard time at healing yourselves.

#####Magic#####

---Heal---

[Green sparks swirls around a character from head to toe]

MP Cost: 3MP

LV Gained: NA

Target: Single ally

Elemental: None

Quote: "Heal"

A very simple healing spell. It's very quick to cast, about 1 second but since it's a non-static spell, it'll take another second to take effect. The amount recovered is hopelessly low though, but it's enough to keep you going until around the Mars event.

Healing = 100 + (MAG \* 1/4) + (Prof. \* 0.7)

The first casting restores 100HP, and another HP is added per every 1 or 2 castings, so y' see, even at P(999) this spell still restores less than 1000HP. Good earlier on, on gets outdated quickly.

---Antidote---

[A small green ring encircles one ally]

MP Cost: 5MP

LV Gained: 3

Target: Single ally

Elemental: None

Quote: "Antidote"

An early spell but it's likely that you'll need to use it until the end of the game. This will cure the Poison status. It's a non-static spell, is very quick to cast but takes a while (2-3 seconds) to take effect. This becomes extremely useful in the Trial Caves since the enemies there tend to be very cheap and Poisons you all the time. Never seal this, you'll never know when it'll be useful.

---Press---

[A 10-ton weight drops from above its target]

MP Cost: 7MP

LV Gained: 5

Target: One enemy

Elemental: Void

Quote: "Press"

"Be crushed!"

Rena's first offensive spell is a really weak one, I bet she can attack the enemy for more damage. This does about 50 points of damage when you first get it and at the end of the game, this can only do about 150 points of damage. The casting time is about 2.5 seconds, not too great but it's a static spell so it takes effect immediately after that. It can be ok when used to disrupt an enemy mage's concentration, but if you manage to get the Proficiency of her better spells (like Star Flare) up to around 400, they'll be faster and does more damage. Press is an ok spell to combine with Leon's Gremlin Lair, if the timing of Rena's other spells are a little long.

---Deep Mist---

[Clouds appear near the target to obscure their ision]

MP Cost: 11MP

LV Gained: 8

Target: All enemies (?)

Elemental: Dark

Quote: "Deep mist"

"Oh fog"

Ummm, I'm still deciding how useful this spell is. I ignored it pretty much in my first 2 games, then tried it a bit near the end of the game, but it wasn't really effective at all since it won't ever work, I guess I was just lacking Proficiency. Now in my third game, I actually find this quite useful during random encounters (it's a lot harder on Galaxy mode y' know) as it reduces the enemy's hit rates by quite a bit. I think this may also reduce their evade rates too. If an enemy gets blinded, some blue words will appear above them (can't read what it says 'cuz it's too small) and those who weren't affected will have "MISS" above their heads. It won't really work on the bosses though (especially most of them are strong against Dark) so stick to harder random encounter fights. Forget it if you don't want to waste your MP, as you can complete a game without ever touching this. I'd seal it immediately, and use it manually.

The casting time is around 3 seconds. This may look like an area affecting spell, but I once cast this on a target in the middle of the screen and enemies that were miles away were affected too, so I guess this affects all enemies.

---Cure Light---

[A sphere of light appears above the target's head and heals them]

MP Cost: 11MP

LV Gained: 10

Target: Single ally

Elemental: None

Quote: "Cure light"

This spell will replace Heal and works fairly well until you get to the Lacour continent. It's still fast (about 2 seconds) but it's a non-static spell so it'll take about another 2 seconds to take effect, you could be killed by then!

Healing =  $800 + (\text{MAG} * 1/2) + (\text{Prof.} * 1.3)$

The first casting will restore 800HP, and each casting afterwards will restore another 1HP, but it sometimes varies. It isn't good for a very long time but you're sometimes forced to use it, as the next single targeted healing spell (Fairly Heal) is quite a few levels away.

---Silence---

[Rena summons a 4 armed spirit, and the spirit extends 2 of her arms out]

MP Cost: 14MP

LV Gained: 12

Target: All enemies

Elemental: None

Quote: "Silence"

This spell attempts to silence all enemies, but are only good against





Quote: "Cure all"  
"Oh healing light!"

This is what I call "faith healing". :) This is the first all-affecting healing spell you'll have access to, and becomes quite useful from the Sanctuary of Linga and onwards, but will be replaced by Fairy Light later.

Healing = 1200 + (MAG \* 1) + (Prof. \* 1.7)

The first casting of Cure All will restore 1200HP and each casting following will gain either 1 or 2 HP. The casting time is around 4 seconds but it's a static spell so once you pull it off, you're pretty much safe. Since this restores more HP than Cure Light, it's a good spell to use even only if one character is hurt (badly), since you won't have access to Fairy Heal for a long while.

---Delay---

[Rena calls forth a large pocket watch, it hang over the target and resets itself]

MP Cost: 18MP                      LV Gained: 22  
Target: Single enemy              Elemental: None

Quote: "Delay"  
"Oh time"

This is basically SO2's version of the infamous Slow spell from FF. It will take 4 seconds to cast, but once cast it'll have a decent chance of success and it even works on some of the bosses. Delay will slow the target's movement rate giving you the upper hand, but I'm not sure if it does anything else (like evade, accuracy etc.) It's a good spell but since it misses often, it might be a better option to Haste (see below) all your allies. Turn this off or Rena will use it constantly (if you set her to "Aid Friends") and cast it manually whenever you feel like it.

---Dispel---

[A large runic green circle appears below the character and gets showered by blue sparks]

MP Cost: 24MP                      LV Gained: 25  
Target: Single ally                Elemental: None (?)

Quote: "Dispel"  
"Disappear you impure people!"

Another one of Rena's most useful spells, Dispel will negate Poison, Paralyze and Stone status. Becomes increasingly important as you progress though the game, as many enemies has really cheap attacks that inflicts status ailments, often multiple ones at one time! Of course, use this when someone's affected by all 3 statuses, but if it's just one status, you might consider using an item and let Rena do the healing in tougher fights. If the target is affected by Poison only, use Antidote instead. NEVER seal this spell!

NOTE! I am not 100% sure about this but Dispel may have the effects of Celine/Noel's Neutral as well. What proof do I have of this? Well, one time Rena was affected by an enemy Delay spell, and the AI had Rena cast Dispel on herself. Now I dunno whether it was a feasible reaction or if the AI is just plains stupid, but the AI is usually smart enough to cast only the spells that they need. For example, Rena would never cast Silence if none of the enemies are magic users, so it may just have that extra bit of Neutral effects. :)

Note my "?" next to the "Elemental". This is probably a non-elemental spell but the animation is very similar to Anti (a Void spell) and it kinda makes sense for a status-dispelling spell to be Void elemental (remember Vortex from SaGa Frontier?) Well, I have no idea why I'm making such a fuss about something that ain't even gonna affect the gameplay... \*sign\*

---Gravity Press---

[Dark clouds forms in the sky and countless 100-ton weights drops from it and crushes anything beneath them]

MP Cost: 24MP                                      LV Gained: 28  
Target: Radius                                      Elemental: Void

Quote: "Gravity Press"  
      "Hit it!"

Wow, great! Even Celine don't have a spell as powerful as this at LV28! It deals a solid ~600 points of damage to most enemies on screen. Although the enemies gets knocked Dizzy during the animation of this spell, Dizziness does not last after the spell finishes. A fairly good spell for the time being but gets replaced by Celine's spells quickly, especially that it uses so much MP! The casting time is about 4 seconds.

A great way of using this is to combine with Leon's Gremlin Lair, for an added 1400 damage to each HIT!!! Although this may sound a little crazy, but I found it a little hard to time that spell combination because Gravity Press actually takes longer to cast!!!

---Light Cross---

[Multiple beams of light hits battlefield causing mild explosions]

MP Cost: 18MP                                      LV Gained: 30  
Target: All enemies                                      Elemental: Light

Quote: "Light cross"  
      "Oh holy cross!"

A very disappointing spell after Gravity Press, as the damage is only slightly better than Ray, and you gets it so late. When I first got this I did around 290 points of damage, not very helpful at all. Ignore this, as Celine'll soon get a very powerful Thunder Storm (if she hasn't already.) Casting time is 4 seconds.

---Protection---

[A shield falls from heaven to protect an ally]

MP Cost: 18MP                                  LV Gained: 33  
Target: Single ally                              Elemental: None

Quote: "Protection"  
      "Oh shield of light!"

This spell will raise the target's defense by I don't know how much. It's good against bosses especially flying ones since most of your fighters will be very vulnerable when jump attacking. Costs a bit much earlier on and doesn't gain Proficiency so seal it.

---Tractor Beam---

[A rainbow colored, cylindrical force field envelopes the target and any surrounding enemies, lifts them up into the air and drops them head down back to the ground]

MP Cost: 22MP                                  LV Gained: 36  
Target: Radius                                   Elemental: Star

Quote: "Tuactor bea" (weird!!!)

A unique but average attack spell in Rena's possession. The casting time of 4 seconds makes this spell a bad choice for disturbing enemy spell casters. The area of impact of this spell is not bad, but not as good as other spells of this type. It's useful for a while when you first obtain this, which is around Sanctuary of Linga. Note, airborne enemies or enemies gets propelled into the air will not be affected by this, which makes casting this spell on those "Bunnies" less effective. Although the AI is quite bad sometimes and casts this on flying enemies. The damage is around 700+ when you first gets it and at the end of the game it can do 1000+ damage, pretty weak huh. You can also combine this with Leon's Gremlin Lair, but the damage is about the same as if you use Gravity Press instead.

---Haste---

[A pocket watch appears above the ally and fast-forwards itself]

MP Cost: 20MP                                  LV Gained: 42  
Target: Single ally                              Elemental: None

Quote: "Haste"  
      "Oh time!"

This spell will raise one ally's running speed and will never miss, although it's not as good as it is in theory, as your character will only be a teeny-weeny bit faster that you won't even notice it!! Use it if you want but I'd rather save my MP. Seal this though or else Rena will cast this during random encounters and uses up her MP faster than expected.

---Growth---

[An orange sphere of energy clouds one ally and enlarges them temporarily]

MP Cost: 22MP                      LV Gained: 47  
Target: Single Ally                Elemental: None

Quote: "Growth"  
      "Power up!"

A very good spell for most boss fights as it increases the damage done by one ally by a LOT, possibly by an extra portion of their regular attack power. I was doing about 800 damage and after this spell was cast, my guys started hacking away for 1100!! I think the effect will wear off when that ally dies in battle, and this has no Proficiency, so seal it and use it manually during boss fights. Fighters are probably the only ones who benefits from this spell unless you want your mages to attack in front line. This combined with Berserk can cause MAJOR damage and use it against tough bosses for a big power boost.

---Fairy Heal---

[A beam of light shines upon a character from the heavens and angels descends.]

MP Cost: 30MP                      LV Gained: 52  
Target: Single Ally                Elemental: None

Quote: "Fairy Heal"  
      "Please!"

GREAT spell. If you've been leveling Rena up a LOT then you can get this as early as when you get to the Eluria Tower. It's really useful as at ~P(300) you'll be curing over 8000 HP! Here's the equation for the spell:

$HP\ Restored = 2800 + (MAG * 2) + (Prof. * 4)$

So every time you use it, an extra 4HP is restored so it really gets powerful quite quickly.

---Anti---

[A large magical rune is summoned by the caster and all allies are protected by orange sparks]

MP Cost: 40MP                      LV Gained: 54  
Target: All Allies                Elemental: Void

Quote: "Anti"

This is another great spell. Anti will protect every one of your allies from enemy magic attacks, so it's absolutely essential for later bosses and the ones in the Cave of Trials. Seal this one as well and use it manually. It does not have a proficiency counter either. Some of the lesser spells are even negated by this spell!!!

---Raise Dead---

[A cone of light is cast upon the fallen ally as angels descend to heal him or her]

MP Cost: 45MP                                  LV Gained: 60  
Target: Single ally                              Elemental: None

Quote: "Restore mercy!"

One of the best spells in the game, Raise Dead will save your life many times. The risen ally will be at 50% of their max HP when they're revived, so it might take another Fairy Heal or Fairy Light to get them healthy. The casting time is a little long, at about 5 seconds without Motormouth and cannot be improved, since this spell gains no Proficiency. If you need to revive somebody urgently, use an item instead.

---Star Flare---

[A large star hangs over the battle field as shards of it breaks off to crush the enemies]

MP Cost: 26MP                                  LV Gained: 63  
Target: All enemies                              Elemental: Light

Quote: "Star Flare"

The opposite of Leon's Shadow Flare. Star Flare is a great spell for Rena even though it does not do heavy amounts of damage. It's a spell unique to Rena though, but it's not th best Light spell in the game (Celine's Lunar Light is). Star Flare is quick to cast, with Motormouth, it only takes one and half second! When you have high Proficiency, it'll be just as quick without Motormouth, so this is a dependable spell if you wanna disrupt the enemy mage's concentration. Damage is not that great, later in the game, it'll do 2000-3000 damage. Not bad for Rena. As a bonus, Star Flare is also extremely quick to animate!

---Fairy Light---

[Many beams of light shines upon the allies from the heavens and multiple angels descends.]

MP Cost: 40                                      LV Gained: 65  
Target: All allies                                Elemental: None

Quote: "Fairy Heal"  
      "Heal everyone!"

HP Restored = 2200 + (MAG \* 2) + (Prof. \* 4)

Fairy Light is another one of the most useful spells in the game, it heals everyone on your team for an ungodly amount. It has a lower Base HP than Fairy Heal, but since it doubles your MAG and each Proficiency point is worth another 4 HP, it really gets stronger quickly. Later on in the Cave of Trials, Rena will have to cast this spell repeatedly.

---Angel Feather---

[An angel descends from the heavens to give a character her blessing]

MP Cost: 30MP  
Target: Single ally

LV Gained: 72  
Elemental: None

Quote: "Angel Feather"

Angel Feather will give a character an all-round stats boost, effectively a Haste + Growth + Protection + Bless combination, except each of the singular effects don't seem to be as effective as the separate spells. It also gives a boost to evasion though, and a few others like magic defense and such. Use this during hard boss battles, but if you have access to the other stats-boost spells, feel free to use them also.

CELINE JULES  
-----

Celine is a free willed young woman from the Mars village famed for her abilities in Heraldry Arts and her beauty. Sick of the pre-arranged marriages from her parents, Celine leaves home to find excitements in treasure hunting, and maybe, just maybe, finding someone in the world that really takes her for who she really is. Celine is a very typical "sweetie darling" type of girl, who like expensive and classy objects. She's very open minded though, and can be quite romantic at the right times. Celine is also very generous, always giving her friends gifts.

Initial stats:

|       |     |      |    |       |     |
|-------|-----|------|----|-------|-----|
| HP:   | 400 | STR: | 15 | LUC:  | 154 |
| MP:   | 100 | CON: | 8  | STM:  | 14  |
| LV:   | 8   | DEX: | 12 | GUTS: | 45  |
| EXP:  | 735 | AGL: | 5  |       |     |
| NEXT: | 325 | INT: | 0  |       |     |

Initial equipment: Rod, Robe, Pin Heels, Ruby Earring, Prism Ring

Initial skills: Mineralogy LV1  
                  Craft LV1  
                  Esthetic Sense LV5  
                  Scientific Ability LV2  
                  Fairiology LV2

Favourite Food: Baby Rabbit Risotto

Favourite Instrument: Violin

Favourite Quotes:

- "Oh, is it already finished?"
- "Behind me??"
- "I deserve this!"
- "I have no choice" (ALL of her quotes sounds really cool!)

Favourite PA Moment:

- Not a PA, but when you go to the clothes shop in Klik with Ketil, choose to dress up Celine and you'll get to see her in a bikini!!!

- She got angry with me when I tried to steal from her and failed!
- Who can forget the romantic side of her when she got engaged to a certain blond guy

Not only is Celine one of the classiest chicks ever to be in an RPG, she's also quite a powerful character. I think Celine is the best attack magician in this game. Celine joins your party pretty early in the game, where her spells are unmatched, but like all magic users, their spells gets out classed by fighters as they can do much more damage in less time and don't have to be bothered by the lengthy spell animations. What makes her more useful than Leon is that her spells controls more useful elements than Leon, that the enemies are often weak against. Celine is the master of Fire, Thunder, Star and Light, with a few spells of Wind, Void and Vacuum elemental, although a few of her better spells takes forever to animate. :(

Physically, Celine is THE weakest character in the game, she has the lowest STR and her normal attacks are pathetic. Her ground attack is a swing with her rod. She obviously hasn't had any training as it has basically no range! Don't try to attack the enemies or it'll leave her VERY open to attacks. Her air attack is even worse, a swing that has no range. I can NEVER get her air attack to connect. Don't try, as she'll get hit instead.

Celine can only wear the crappiest armor, so concentrate on a good MAG instead, and keep her at the back at all times. Celine also runs extremely slow in battles (the slowest) so it's almost impossible to escape (without Bunny Shoes) if an enemy gets on her tail. The AI controls magicians very badly in this game (although Celine is better than both Leon and Noel) as they'll just stand at the same place. The enemy casts a Firebolt and they'll just stand there. The Firebolt approaches and they just stand there... and gets hit by the worst spell in the game, time after time!!! Also, if enemies get to them, they'll only move at the LAST SECOND possible, therefore usually gets killed very quickly (there isn't even a strategy to make them move!) And lastly, magic users tend to stand there and be idled during the fights, even on the most aggressive AI setting, casting a spell occasionally whenever they feel like it. So if you're planning to use magic users in a serious fight, make sure YOU'RE controlling them.

Celine has low STM earlier in the game, and since her spells are all quite expensive, her MP gets drained very quickly. Also, equip the weapon that gives her the best MAG, as you won't need her for attacking. Another thing of interest is that Celine is very gutsy for a magic user, with a GUTS level that rivals Claude's but I suppose it's not as useful for her as for a fighter.

#####Heraldry#####

---Firebolt---

[Celine launches a ball of fire at the enemy]

|                      |                 |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| MP Cost: 2MP         | LV Gained: NA   |
| Target: Single enemy | Elemental: Fire |

Quote: "Firebolt"

The weakest attacking spell in the game has many flaws, obviously.

The first is that the Firebolt will pause in front of Celine for about 2 seconds before it launches itself. It also travels quite slowly. This spell is non-static so a hit is not guaranteed, but at that speed, it would be a miracle if it did hit an enemy at full screen. The casting time is 2 seconds. I only managed to do 15 points of damage when Celine first joined, so give this spell a break.

Note around the 4th floor of the Cave of Trials, those Goat-head-like enemies can cast Firebolt but their Firebolts do around 2000+ damage to a character with neutral resistance!!!!

---Wind Blade---

[Celine fires a slim tornado at the enemy]

MP Cost: 2MP                                      LV Gained: NA  
Target: Single enemy                              Elemental: Wind

Quote: "Wind blade"

The Wind elemental version of Firebolt, has identical drawbacks and same casting time. Wind Blade is better though, as the tornado is launched immediately upon casting, making this easier to hit with. The damage is also greater, I managed to deal 25 points! Put this on your ignore list, even if the enemy is weak against Wind, because Celine has much better spells.

---Thunderbolt---

[A small bolt to lightning blasts the enemy]

MP Cost: 4MP                                      LV Gained: NA  
Target: Single enemy                              Elemental: Thunder

Quote: "Thunderbolt"

The weakest Thunder spell. Unlike Firebolt and Wind Blade, this can actually hit the enemy most of the time, as the lightning appears right above where the enemy is standing. A bit more stronger, at 35 points damage. Only worth casting for the cute voice sample or when you're very early in the game. I sometimes cast this for fun (not that it's that much fun watching a lousy spell.)

---Ray---

[Countless rays of white light gathers in the air, as many slender beams of yellow lights are emitted and hits the enemies]

MP Cost: 10MP                                      LV Gained: 9  
Target: All enemies                              Elemental: Light

Quote: "Ray"  
"Go!"

Unlike Rena, when Celine first receives Ray (the Cross Cave event) it's godly powerful, although takes a lot of MP to cast. It will deal about 80 points of damage at first, but won't rise very high. This is



exceptionally useful when fighting the Gargoyles in the Cave of Cross.

#### ---Energy Arrow---

[Numerous purple energy darts accumulates and explodes about the enemy]

MP Cost: 17MP                              LV Gained: 12  
Target: Single enemy                      Elemental: Vacuum

Quote: "Energy arrow"  
      "Gather together darkness!"

This will be Celine's most powerful spell for a while, but still isn't too damaging, about 500 points of damage is what you normally get. The casting time is around 4 seconds. Although it might be a little expensive, this spell will get rid of most of the normal encounter enemies during the early part of the game with one hit. Tired of those archers in the Mountain Palace hitting you before you can even get close? Use this and they'll be no more. It works on the mages with very powerful spells too. However, I think this spell is not too useful during boss fights. :(

#### ---Forget---

[Black thunder bolts strikes the target mentally, causing amnesia]

MP Cost: 10MP                              LV Gained: 15  
Target: Single enemy                      Elemental: Thunder

Quote: "Forget"  
      "Oh thunder run!"

This is Celine's way of disposing of enemy spell casters by (a rather innovative way) hitting their heads with lightning. IMO, this is more effective than Rena's Silence, but targets only one enemy. It's up to you if you want to use this spell. Again higher the Proficiency, the more accurate this is. Try it on an enemy weak vs thunder, but there ain't that many of them around. The casting time is about 3 seconds but this spell become very fast after about 30 castings.

#### ---Starlight---

[Celine sends a chain of stars into the air, which in terms shines beams of light down at the enemies, causing an explosion]

MP Cost: 10                              LV Gained: 18  
Target: All enemies                      Elemental: Star

Quote: "Starlight"  
      "Oh light!"

A fairly decent spell, but still, Energy Arrow is more effective during boss fights. Starlight will do around 140 points of damage to all enemies, so it's better used on encounters with hoards of enemies. Note this has the same MP cost as Ray, but the damage is

much higher. I like this spell for disrupting the enemy magicians.  
The casting time is about 4 seconds.

---Reflection---

[Thunderbolts form a barrier around an ally]

MP Cost: 8MP                                    LV Gained: 19  
Target: Single ally                            Elemental: Thunder

Quote: "Reef-Lection"

Hmm, more innovative ways of using lightning bolts. This will reduce the damage taken from PHYSICAL attacks only, but it works differently to Rena's Protection, as this reduces damage directly which Rena's will only increase DEF. I'm not sure exactly how this spell works but it seems to reduce damage by a certain set amount rather than in a percentage. This is only a guess but maybe Reflection reduces damage by Celine's MAG value PLUS the Proficiency of this spell. Nice spell to cast during boss fights, but Celine's AI will sometimes cast this on herself first, or cast this spell for no apparent reason during normal encounters.

---Mind Absorber---

[A red/orange bubble of energy is sucked out of the enemy and gets absorbed by the caster]

MP Cost: 1MP                                    LV Gained: 22  
Target: Single enemy                            Elemental: Vacuum

Quote: "Mind absorber"  
       "Excuse me!" :)

This might have been a good spell in the FF series, where almost every enemy had MP. This is not the case in SO2 however, as usually only the spell casters have MP, so casting this on other enemies simply wastes the spell. This can be used on enemy spell casters to drain off all their MP, and therefore, disabling them. Just prepare yourself so that you won't be too surprised when it missed. I simply let Celine cast this on enemy mages when her MP gets too low, since this spell costs so little, it's a nice substitute for Blackberries, and you'll gain Proficiency. The MP absorbed is quite low though. I managed to drain 20MP when I first cast this. I think the amount of MP drained is affected by your MAG power while the success rate is affected by the Proficiency. It also depends on target's current MP. It's fun, but not totally reliable so don't use it in a life-or-death situation.

---Neutral---

[The character gets dazzled by brilliant blue showers]

MP Cost: 17MP                                   LV Gained: 27  
Target: Single ally                            Elemental: ??

Quote: "Neutral"

One of the least useful spells in the game, Neutral gets rid of those nasty pseudo-statuses (like Silence, Delay etc.) that the enemies hardly ever cast. I've never actually had to use this spells, but if you happen to be affected by Deep Mist or something then give this spell a try.

---Bless---

[A light embraces the character as rings of rainbow resonates about them]

MP Cost: 18MP                                   LV Gained: 28  
Target: Single ally                           Elemental: ??

Quote: "Bless"  
      "By the goddess of luck!"

Bless increases an ally's hit rate. It's more useful than it sounds (as characters rarely miss in other RPGs) since the later enemies have an annoying tendency to block most of your physical attacks thrown at them. Doesn't gain proficiency so seal it or Celine would use it during normal battles and wastes her MP.

---Thunder Storm---

[Many thunder bolts blasts the battlefield from all directions]

MP Cost: 28MP                                   LV Gained: 31  
Target: All enemies                           Elemental: Thunder

Quote: "Thunder storm"  
      "Bolt down!"

Goodness me, finally a decent spell after all that time! You'll probably get this around the Sanctuary of Linga part of the game and it'll become really useful during that time, since the boss in that dungeon is weak against Thunder. This spell will do an enormous 800+ points of damage to all enemies when you get this, but keep an eye on Celine's MP as a few of these willleave her MP-less. Probably useful until the point you get Thunder Cloud. Note the casting times of this and all the up-and-coming spells are becoming quite long, so you can't disturb the enemy mages as easily with these. Thunder Storm's casting time is about 5 seconds.

---Eruption---

[A large pile of lava erupts out of the ground and burns surrounding enemies, while more burning lava falls from the sky]

MP Cost: 30MP                                   LV Gained: 34  
Target: Radius                                Elemental: Fire

Quote: "E-Ruption"  
      "Oh flame!"

Hate those annoying mages in the Mountain Palace hurting your guys

badly with this spell? Well, now Celine has it and she's not afraid to use it! \*Gasp\* Anyway, Celine will probably get this after clearing the Sanctuary of Linga or the beginning of Hoffman Ruins. Around that point, Eruption will do 1000+ points to most enemies. Its area of blast is about the same as Rena's Tractor Beam. Since this spell is kinda expensive, you might choose to cast this only on tightly packed enemies and use Thunder Storm if the enemies are more spread out. The usefulness of this will wear out sooner though, as it's a long time 'til you get Explosion.

---Curse---

[The target is engulfed in a beam of blue light as skulls pounds the target]

MP Cost: 20MP                              LV Gained: 39  
Target: Single enemy                      Elemental: None

Quote: "Curse"

I don't know what to think of this spell. It's suppose to cancel any positive spells an enemy casts on themselves (ie, Haste, Angel Feather etc..) Very useless since enemies almost never use these spells, except maybe later bosses and the ones in the Cave of Trials. I've NEVER had to use this spell. So use this when you're fighting a boss with Celine in our team and the boss cast a stats-upper on himself, but it will almost never happen. What's kinda weird about this spell is that it can gain Proficiency! Hmm, maybe it has a stats-down effect too?

---Lunar Light---

[A large moon appears in the sky as yellow beams of light descends and explodes into a large dome]

MP Cost: 25MP                              LV Gained: 43  
Target: All enemies                      Elemental: Light

Quote: "Lunar light"

This is Celine's first REALLY good spell and can be used all the way to the end of the game as this is the most powerful Light spell. Celine gains this really early (some point in the Eluria Tower) and it only costs 25MP, which is really cheap towards the end of the game. For the best Light spell, it can reap up quite a nice sum of damage, about 2300+ at the point where you get this. Later in the game, you can do a lot more damage by boosting Celine's MAG, the damage can go upwards of 6000!! Also, another good point about this spell is that the animation time is pretty quick for an ultimate spell, and Light elemental is rather useful since not many enemies are strong against it. The casting time is really sluggish though (a sign of what you should be expecting in Celine's later spells), about 5-6 seconds.

<More spells are under construction>

## ASHTON ANCHORS

-----  
Somehow cursed to have the worst luck in the world, Ashton travels the world performing heroic deeds to help common folks. Although he has good intentions, his lucky always ruins it for him in lots of unexpected ways. When trying to slay the evil twin-headed dragons in the mines of Salva, he was distracted by the party and received a possession from the dragons. Now he walks with 2 dragon heads, Gyoro and Ururun, attached to his back. In hope of finding a way to exorcise them, he joins the party. Although he rarely shows it, he cares for the dragons a lot and he's very thankful to have friends (the party members) who cares about him. He's also a VERY comical character.

Favourite Food: Hamburger (Cook with Meat, or bought from Giveaway for 200Fol)

Favourite Instrument: Piano

Favourite Quotes:

- "Oh god..."
- "I diid iit!" (Don't know why but these 2 quotes seem like what Dan from Street Fighters would say.)

Favourite PA Moment:

- In Fun City with his biggest obsession for barrels yet!! ("BARREL BARREL BARREL BARREL BARREL..." :) )
- Also in Fun City, the kids mistook Gyoro and Ururun for stuffed animals!

Ashton is, IMO, the second most powerful character in SO2. To be honest, I found it hard to adjust to his style when I first got him, and the CPU can control him much better than I can.

Ashton is very nimble with his hands, because he fights with a pair of short swords, one in each hand. He uses Heraldic Swords techniques in his Killer Move, but not all of them are really great, and his later Killer Moves will utilizes the power of Gyoro and Ururun. Even though Ashton is equipped with 2 swords, he will only attack with one with his normal attack, which is a quick slash. It is of slightly less range than Claude's but is quick. His air attack is, again a jumping slash, still not that effective but it's better than Claude's since he attacks on his way up.

He has a lot in common with Claude for the fact that they both have very high STR and CON, and can equip some of the best armor, although the two-handed nature of Ashton's weapons forbids him to wear the best shields so he has to stick to smaller bucklers. Ashton also has some really powerful weapons, and can equip the best weapon in the game, the Levantine Sword. Ashton is probably the unluckiest person on Expel, since his LUC starts off at 18 and will never raise any higher, poor Ashton. I won't worry too much about his LUC though.

Ashton's Killer Moves are really a mixed bag. The ones he get near the start of the game are some of the WORST in the game, slow as hell and takes forever to recover. However, his later Killer Moves are some of the best. Like Claude, Ashton should really be used as a

short-ranged character. His missile attacks are TERRIBLE!!! Ashton's best Killer Moves are probably Sword Dance (second only to Mirror Slice!) and maybe Hurricane Slash (not THAT strong. But great in juggles.) Dragon Breath is fairly good too.

#### #####Killer Moves#####

##### ---Twin Stab---

<Ashton out-stretches his arm to pierce the enemy with one sword, takes it back and stabs the enemy with the other sword>

<<Like above, except the swords extends out more>>

MP Cost: 4MP

LV Gained: NA

Range: 0, 1

Elemental: None

Quote: "Twin stab"

Twin Stab is below average for a Killer Move. There's a huge lag time before he extends his sword out to hit the enemies and Ashton will pause for about 2 seconds before he sends out the other sword. The enemy would be brain dead if they didn't counter during those times! The range is so-so. There's also a bit of recovery time (Ashton will pause again after the second stab) so this move is quite dangerous. Plus, the damage don't really shine either, each stab does the same damage as a normal attack so you'll be better off with normal attacks.

After careful examination, I discovered that Twin Stab has a long ranged version! If you press the button at long range, Ashton will run up to the enemy to stab them, just like the short ranged version, however, the range has been seriously increased, to around 2 character widths. But still, the time takes for Ashton to run across to the enemy could leave him in danger so this version is not too useful either. The long lag time is still here and it does the same damage.

At P(100), the damage of both short and long range version are increased to 1.5 times the normal damage each, so it's still pretty weak. I haven't found any good ways of using this Killer Move.

##### ---Cross Slash---

<Ashton executes an upward slash then charges forward with his other sword, invoking a blinding purple light as it hits>

<<Ashton charges forward with a downward slash then charges again with the other sword>>

MP Cost: 8MP

LV Gained: NA

Range: 0, 2

Elemental: None

Quote: "Cross slash"

Another fairly average Killer Move that's slightly more useful than Twin Stab and has similar drawbacks. The effects of both the short and long version of this move are identical, each hit is as strong as

a normal attack. Pretty good range again, the first strike has the range of 1 character-width, the second hit seems to have virtually infinite horizontal range, but Ashton cannot act as he slides forward uncontrollably. The first hit in the long ranged version has more range but is slightly slower, the second hit is exactly the same. The problem with this move lies within the second hit, as sometimes the first hit of the short-ranged version will propel the enemy into the air and causing the second hit to miss. Even if the second hit hits, Ashton will still continue to charge forward. If the enemy is in front of him, he'll stay in his "charging" frame for many seconds, and a counter from the enemy is almost unavoidable. If Ashton misses completely however, he'll run for miles to the end of the screen!!! Make SURE that you hit with this move if you're going to use it.

The first strike from the short-ranged version WILL hit a flying enemy (and it's actually quite effective) but the second hit won't. Don't use it too often for that purpose though, as the second hit will leave you in the "defenceless" frame for a while and takes you miles away from the enemy.

The best place to use this is, IMO, for juggling the opponents. An effective Link Combo finisher, especially after Hurricane Slash. Another fairly good use is to Cancel an attack into this after achieving "Float", but it's quite tricky as the combat skills are unpredictable. Again, you might only get the first hit to connect during juggles. Also, it can work against those annoying "Bunny" enemies that keep prancing around, do it as they are about to land and they'll land on the blade hehe..

At P(100), the damage will increase to 1.5 time the normal attack for each hit.

---Leaf Slash---

[Ashton aims with his sword in front of his face as rings of leaves begins to appear around his target, then he runs a short distance and disappears. Ashton's image appears before the enemy and slashes them twice, and then Ashton reappears behind his target]

|                    |                 |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| MP Cost: 19MP      | LV Gained: NA   |
| Range: U (Special) | Elemental: None |

Quote: "Leaf slash"

A very useful attack especially since you get it so early, but it's a VERY expensive Killer Move then. There's quite a bit of delay but since you can execute this from almost anywhere, it doesn't matter too much. This is a "uni-ranged" KM except that Ashton cannot execute this while standing within 3 character widths away from the target horizontally. Note that if the enemy moves, the rings of leaves will move with them, so there's no way that they can escape this. However, Ashton will miss flying opponents or ground opponents that gets launched into the air as Ashton attacks them. Ashton has limited invulnerability during the lengthy time where he disappears. I think most physical attacks won't harm him but is vulnerable to breath weapons or maybe projectiles too, but is definitely vulnerable against magic. Ashton will execute 2 slices, each doing normal attack damage.

Use Leaf Slash sparingly though, as this is Ashton's move expensive Killer Move quite a long time, but it's his best attack during that time. If you're feeling that this move is draining too much MP, swap it for another. Or save your MP for the bosses, or use items to replenish your MP prior to it.

This is a great move for bosses and other powerful enemies alike, since this will warp Ashton to where the boss is standing quickly and still protects Ashton from attacks (since he is invincible.) Use this first thing in a boss fight, then trade it for a faster short-ranged attack if you can. If the boss warps away, use this move again to nail them.

At P(200), Ashton will do an extra slash, bringing it to a maximum of 3 hits, each at normal attack damage. So you see, even though Ashton can teleport to where the enemy is and is invulnerable, this KM will do too little damage to be really useful very later on. It's still one of his better KMs though.

---Northern Cross---

<Ashton swings his swords twice and cross them in front of him as a chunk of ice forms from them, then he sends the icicle at the direction he's facing>

<<Exactly like the above>>

MP Cost: 9MP

LV Gained: 18

Range: 2,5

Elemental: Water (Special)

Quote: "Northern cross"

This is probably the second worst Killer Move in the whole game (can you guess which is the worst?) The ice takes forever to form and even longer to fire. You can actually hit the enemies with his sword slashes that Ashton executes before he starts to form the ice. But the problem is that the execution point requires some space between Ashton and the enemy, which means if you execute this move in front of the enemy (to try to get the sword slash to connect), Ashton will jump back and so unless the enemy advances on him, the sword slashes will miss. If somehow you got the sword slashes to connect, they will do normal attack damage each, but there's no guarantee that the ice will hit. You'll always get hit out of it even if you do get the sword slashes to connect. What's worse is that the ice does not act as a protective barrier, so the enemies can walk right up to him and hit him. If you DO get the icicle to hit, it'll do normal attack damage. Note ONLY the icicle is of Water elemental, the sword slashes are non-elemental.

As pointless as it may seem, this KM has a long ranged version that's even more useless since it's almost impossible for the sword slashes to connect since the enemy is so damn far away.

No, I don't have any use for this move, it's terrible. Don't bother with it. I've just seen the CPU use this move in a sorta worthwhile way, you guessed it, those damn "Bunnies" again. Execute this when they're about to land and they'll land on the swords, therefore gets hit twice. Still guarantee that the ice will hit though (probably won't.)



At P(100), the icicle in both versions will be enlarged and the damage is increased to 1.5 times normal attack. No damage bonus for the sword slices though. At P(200), the icicle is enlarged even more and gains the damage potential of twice that of a normal attack, but still no damage increment for the sword attacks. Note, when Northern Cross evolves, the icicle generated by the short version will no longer be a projectile, instead, it just materializes in front of Ashton and damages any enemy who comes close. Even with the damage increases, this attack is still one of Ashton's worst, rarely hits and puts him in danger since it's so slow. I'd say not to even bother with this.

---Piercing Swords---

<Ashton leans back and pulls out a pair of swords in each hand and throws them at the enemy, but 2 of them hit the ground>

MP Cost: 8MP

LV Gained: 22

Range: 3

Elemental: None

Quote: "Piercing swords"

Another pretty bad missile attack, although it's certainly better than Northern Cross. It cannot be executed far away from the enemy to keep Ashton safe from their missile attacks, since this move is quite slow (there are too many frames at the start up). Although Ashton throws 4 sets of swords at the enemy, 2 of them will miss and hits the ground and the other 2 swords each do about 75% of his normal attack damage each. Since it's quite slow, enemies can move out of the plane and Ashton may get hit. The swords thrown will travel all the way to the end of the battlefield if a target is not hit though.

At P(65), Ashton's aiming improves and all 4 swords will be thrown and none of them will hit the ground, making it a quick 4 hit missile attack. At P(130), Ashton will now throw 6 swords instead but one will miss and hit the ground, bringing the number of hits to 5. At P(185), all 6 swords will fly towards the enemy doing 6 hits worth of good damage, making this move one of Ashton's better ones. I personally quite like this move when it evolves as it can really do a lot of damage, and the time it takes for Ashton to throw his swords seem to be shortened. I usually let the computer control Ashton and it uses this attack well. The speed at which the swords flies is quite fast and can usually take the enemy by surprise.

===Cancel Ability===

Even though Ashton's normal attack is very good to Cancel from, since it's fast, certain Killer Moves don't link very well since they take so long to be executed.

These Killer Moves works well:

\* Hurricane Slash

\* Sword Dance

\* Cross Slash (but you should only Cancel if the enemy is hit, even better if Float is achieved)

===Link Combo Ideas===

\* Hurricane Slash - Cross Slash                    Rating: 4            MP Cost:  
Hurricane Slash - Sword Dance                    Rating: 5            MP Cost:  
Hurricane Slash is a famous Killer Move for juggles, while Sword  
Dance and Cross Slash are great for this purpose.

\* Piercing Swords - Leaf Slash                    Rating: 3            MP Cost:  
Dragon Breath - Leaf Slash                      Rating: 4            MP Cost:  
I just don't like Leaf Slash being the starter since you have no  
control over where Ashton will reappear, so this is a better option.  
The long range attacks are slow though, so you have to figure how to  
get them to connect.

Gotta play with his Link Combos a bit more.

PRECIS NEUMANN

-----  
Precis is the daughter of an inventor in the town of Linga, although  
most people in town think of them as "freaky" and avoids them  
whenever they can. Upon hearing that the party is investigating the  
Sorcery Globe, she immediately requested to join, thinking it'll be  
fun and hoping to find new inspirations for her inventions. Being the  
lively one that she is, she always cheers up anyone when they're  
feeling down, as she enjoys being the "mood-maker".

Favourite Food: Chocolate Crepe (I wonder how she keeps her figure.  
Can be made from Eggs/Dairy Products or bough in Click.)

Favourite Instrument: Harmonica

Favourite Quotes:

- "There's Mr. Enemy"
- "I won't looose!"
- "I win!"                                    (Like Celine, ALL of her quotes are cool,
- "Don't bother me!"                    probably 'cuz it's done by the same person)

Favourite PA Moment:

- The one where she said her dad is the only one who wants to be  
"groovy"
- The Peppermint Jam event!
- The Green Tea Jam and Liver and Onion Jam event!

I know that nobody likes Precis but I do, I think she's brilliant  
since she's got some unique Killer Moves, looks neat and has a  
wonderful personality, not to mention that she has the most Private  
Action events. I've heard a few complaints regarding her voice, well,  
if you're a very hyper person or you know someone who is, you'd  
understand. :)

While no where near as strong as Claude or Ashton, Precis has little  
problem handling most enemies. She has a wide variety of Killer Moves  
and I must say that NONE of the other fighters can do what she can,  
since her KMs are VERY unique. Precis is the master of machinery and  
build various devices and gadgets and uses them in battle. In fact,  
all of her Killer Moves involves these machines. She has a robot pet  
named Bobot (it's Mujinkun in the Japanese version) that she carries  
around with her, and even uses it in battles. Precis always wears her  
backpack which holds her secret weapons, one of such is a pair of  
large robotic arms which is controlled by Precis via a controller

that looks suspiciously like my Dual Shock pad!!

Precis' normal attack is a smack with one of the robot arms, though it's far from being the best since it's quite slow but with good range. I almost NEVER use her normal attack since it's so slow. She has 2 air attacks, the first is a jump'n slam with her robotic arm, but like most air attacks of this type, it's very unreliable as it's hard to hit the flying enemy and leaves you vulnerable. Her other air attack is one of the best, where she launches a robotic arm from her backpack like a missile and she does NOT leave the ground! I believe you have to be in long range to execute this version though.

Unlike the other female members, Precis' best weapon is VERY strong, it's the second most powerful weapon if you don't venture into the Cave of Trials. You cannot buy her weapons from most stores though, as they're strange and must be custom-made by her via either Customize or Machinery, or found once in a while. Armor-wise, Precis is pretty weak just like the other females in the game, she can equip only the weaker fighter-type armor. Her MP is usually drained very quickly since she can execute her Killer Moves in succession very fast (or maybe it's just because I don't use her normal attack), so keep lotsa Blackberries and Sour Syrups in stock!

Most of Precis' Killer Moves are some kinda missile/bombs that Precis throws at the enemies, which are usually very fast but has to be a bit of distance away from the enemy to execute, and are kinda weak. She was a few that transforms Bobot into some type of vehicle, climbs in and execute its special attack. These are the most unique since she's usually invulnerable when inside Bobot, making her an excellent choice against big bad bosses. Also, there's a few where she'll reveal her secret weapons in her backpack! Her best KMs are Barrier (powerful and hits a LARGE radius), Bloody Mary (hits many times for strong damage, not to mention invincibility) and Bang-bang Attack.

#####Killer Moves#####

---Rocket Punch---

<<A large pair of robotic arms pops out of Precis' backpack and one of them is launched at the enemy>>

MP Cost: 4MP

LV Gained: NA

Range: 5

Elemental: None

Quote: "Rocket punch"

Basically a beefed up version of her normal attack that has more range, executed at point blank long range. It has a very little lag time and once it's executed then it's sweet since you can keep launching more rockets in a quick succession. It does one hit and the damage is the same as a normal attack. It's cheap and it's fast and it works well against most enemies, although Precis will run out of control to get out of range when used against some of the faster enemies, and she can get smacked when executing this as well. Works on flying enemies too, which is certainly a bonus.

At P(120), the robot arm will be upgraded and some orange thingy is attached to its knuckles to do more damage. Damage is increased to 150% of a normal attack, good for earlier on but becomes really weak

later on, since it does only one hit.

It's useful when an enemy is advancing on you from afar, also a pretty good opening attack of the round if the enemy is standing about 6 character widths away from Precis at the start, she'll execute this immediately and the enemy'll get whacked. Once the first punch hits, you'll have an option of whether or not you want to continue, as they'll be in range and are open and since you can execute this in succession fast. Don't use this if multiple enemies are advancing on you though, as you'll only hit one of them and the rest can get into range to hit you.

---Hop Step---

<<Precis jumps into the air and towards the enemy, smacking them with a 100-ton hammer as she gets bounced back>>

MP Cost: 5MP

LV Gained: NA

Range: <=5

Elemental: None

Quote: "Step!"

"Hop!"

Well, it's definitely the CPU Precis' favourite attack, equip this and they'll use it non-stop. It works kinda like Claude's Head Splitter except that she'll be bounced back afterwards, so she'll subject to less danger when she lands. The damage is 1.5 times that of a normal attack. The execution point is quite strange though, as the longest distance you can execute this is at point blank long range, but anywhere closer than that will do as well! If the enemy decides to use its breath weapon after you hit them then you're in trouble, as you'll land without enough time to escape!! Otherwise, it's a good attack if you wanna get closer to do damage quickly.

At P(140), Precis will be followed by a trail of shadows when she's in the air, much like the Super Combos in Street Fighter Alpha 3. At this time, the hammer will do double damage -> 3 times that of a normal attack! Also, she can sometimes do wider and longer jumps too, as well as higher, which is great at evading ground projectiles.

I found this attack fairly useful because it will temporarily put Precis out of danger. Use this if long range projectiles won't work very well (like against the last boss) or to dodge projectiles thrown by the enemies. Use it if you want to get closer and attack them with one of Precis' close range Killer Moves. Also can be used as some sorta escape technique, if you're surrounded by lots of enemies, try this and hopefully it'll launch Precis away from the villains.

---Mole---

[Precis puts Bobot onto the ground before her as it turns into a tank with drills. Precis puts on a helmet, climbs in and dives underground in the tank, then travel to the enemy, submerge and hurt them with the drills]

MP Cost: 7MP

LV Gained: 17

Range: U

Elemental: None

Quote: "Mole"

This is a cool Killer Move. Of course, the execution time isn't too healthy but once Precis gets underground, she's basically invincible. I think breath weapons can hit her out of it, but I'm not too sure about magic. Avoid using this close up, as she'll probably get hit. The speed that she travels is about the same as her running speed (without Bunny Shoes) so this is pretty slow. The drills will only hit once at normal attack strength. The drills cannot hit airborne enemies though, as it barely reaches above ground and misses ground enemies occasionally, too.

At P(100), the tank will travel a LOT faster than usual, making our lives a little easier. Other than this bonus, the drills can also hit multiple times, to a maximum of 3 hits, each at normal attack damage.

This attack is very useful on enemies that are really far away, use it like Ashton's Leaf Slash. Again try not to use this when standing too close to the enemy or on a tightly pack group, since she'll end up really close to them and can get hit afterwards.

---Ally-oop!---

<<Precis throws Bobot 1.0 at the enemy like a frisbee>>

MP Cost: 8MP

LV Gained: 25

Range: 5

Elemental: None

Quote: "Ei!"

"Yaa!"

This was called "Ei! Yaa!" in the Japanese version, why did they change it to such a stupid name? Anyway, this is another pretty decent missile attack with identical range to Rocket Punch. The execution time is slightly faster though, and you can throw 'em in succession fast. This attack will knock lighter enemies back though, so bombarding them with Bobots isn't too great of an idea, since Precis will have to move to regain her distance every time (unless they're in a corner). The damage is identical to a normal attack. Note this can hit flying enemies, Precis will throw Bobot upward at an angle to hit them.

At P(200), Precis will kick Bobot 2.0 at the enemies, doing an extra hit. The second hit is executed even faster then the first, and there are nil lag time in between!!! Some guides says it gets upgraded at P(220), but it's actually P(200)!!

Ally-oop! is great if you want to stay on the run all the time. You can run, stop to throw a Bobot and run again since the speed of this attack is pretty good. Also like Rocket Punch, if you start the round standing about half a screen away from the enemies, use this to knock them for "First attack", except this isn't a fighting game. :(

---Parabola Beam---

<<Precis puts her backpack on the ground to reveal a satellite dish, which emits a beam of loops>>

MP Cost: 12MP

LV Gained: 38

Range: 5

Elemental: ??

Quote: "Parabola beam" (I think "Parabola" is pronounced wrongly)

I've always liked this Killer Move. There's a bit of delay when Precis slams her bag on the ground, so use carefully. The execution point is again, at point blank long range. The beam only hits twice though, each at half the strength of a normal attack. Also note that the loop dissipates when a target is hit, so this move cannot hit multiple enemies like Chisato's Tear Gas or Opera's Hyper Launcher. If a target was not hit, the beam will travel to the end of the screen, meaning it has infinite range.

At ~P(100), more chains of loops are emitted from Precis' satellite dish, doing an extra hit.

---Bang-bang Attack---

<A pair of large hammers extends out of Precis' backpack and impales the enemy>

MP Cost: 15MP

LV Gained: 49

Range: 0

Elemental: None

Quote: "Bang bang attack"

Bang-Bang attack is a great move for Precis. A large hammer springs out from Precis' backpack and impales an enemy in front of her. It is fast to both come out and recover, but the range isn't that great. You also have to be right next to the enemy to execute this move, which may put Precis in danger. The damage is equivalent to a normal attack.

Don't be discouraged by this move (like I did) because it is up close and does only 1 hit, it will get a LOT better. Each P(170) interval, another swing of the hammer is added, to a total of 4 hits at P(510). It does take a lot of time to evolve though, but each follow-up hits are done very quickly, leaving the enemy with no time to recover. No damage bonus when it evolves though.

The best way to use Bang-Bang Attack is to use Cancel. I dunno why but Cancel rarely works with Precis. But if you managed to Cancel into this move, you'll be able to do a lot of damage. The start-up is non-existent if you managed to successfully trigger cancel. It's also quite effective as a corner trap, like Shooting Stars.

Bang-Bang Attack is pretty good with Link Combos too. Great as a starter, especially since it works with Cancel. Bloody Mary and Holo-Holograph are both fairly good starters to continue Precis' multi-hit rampage. Hop Step is also pretty good as it has no start up and can be used at short range. As for an ender, anything that brings Precis up close (Mole) will do the job nicely.

---Bloody Mary---

<>

MP Cost: 32MP

LV Gained: 57

Range: 1

Elemental: None

Quote: "Bloody Mary"

<Under construction>

---Barrier---

<<Precis throws Bobot like a grenade and it explodes into a white hemisphere, damaging all enemies who got caught in the blast>>

MP Cost: 28

LV Gained: Machinery Item Creation

Range: 5

Elemental: Light?

Quote: "Barrier"

<Under construction>

---Mujin Super Beam---

<<>>

MP Cost: 24

LV Gained: Machinery Item Creation

Range: 5

Elemental: ??

Quote: "Mujin Su-per beam"

<Under construction>

---Holo-holograph---

<<>>

MP Cost: ??MP

LV Gained: Private Action

Elemental: None

Quote: "Holo-holograph"

<Under construction>

===Cancel Ability===

Precis' normal attack is certainly a bit slow to Cancel effectively, but she does have a couple Killer Moves that links well after it. Bang-bang attack and Bloody Mary are the only good one, since her other ones requires her to be at long range to execute.

===Link Combo Ideas===

Precis has some unique Link Combos as well as some rather generic combos. She has a large collection of missile attacks and can be combined in almost anyway and is fairly quick. However, her non-missile attacks are very strong though, and most of them makes her invincible. Definitely a worthy member to receive the Link Combo.

\* Rocket Punch - Ally-ooP!

Rating: 3

MP Cost:

A quick blast of missiles, but hasn't got damage on its side. Works the other way too. Hits air enemies too.

\* Rocket Punch - Hop Step                      Rating: 3              MP Cost: 9MP  
Ally-ooop! - Hop Step                      Rating: 3              MP Cost:

If you wanna go by air. It's safer if Hop Step has evolved though.  
Can also be used to hit airborne enemies.

\* Rocket Punch - Parabola Beam              Rating: 4              MP Cost:  
Ally-ooop! - Parabola Beam              Rating: 4              MP Cost:

I like this a lot. The initial missile pushes the target back followed by the beam. Still kinda weak though.

\* Bloody Mary - Bang-bang Attack              Rating: 5              MP Cost:  
Hop Step - Bang-bang Attack              Rating: 4.5              MP Cost:  
Mole - Bang-bang Attack              Rating: 4.5              MP Cost:

The first attack brings Precis safely up next to the enemy which sets up for Bang-bang Attack. Lots of damage if you levelled up these moves, especially Bloody Mary.

\* Rocket Punch - Barrier                      Rating: 4              MP Cost:  
Ally-ooop! - Barrier                      Rating: 4.5              MP Cost:  
Parabola Beam - Barrier                      Rating: 4.5              MP Cost:  
Mujin Super Beam - Barrier              Rating: 5              MP Cost:

Simple missile attacks. You can basically mix these 5 Killer Moves in any way you like to get a similar effect, but I like Barrier since it has a large blasting area.

#### OPERA VECTRA

-----  
Opera is the heir of the noble Vectra family, who belongs to the race of Tetrageses living on a far away planet. Trying to pursue her love of life, Ernest, she leaves her home planet and crashed onto Expel. (Tut tut, just wait 'til her parents hears this.) Unable to leave, she travels the world of Expel trying to track down Ernest. Opera is the more mature type of girl who'd rather sit down in a café rather than venture out in the sun. She sometimes acts like if she's dumb blonde/bimbo though.

#### Initial stats:

|       |       |      |    |       |     |
|-------|-------|------|----|-------|-----|
| HP:   | 1200  | STR: | 60 | LUC:  | 142 |
| MP:   | 140   | CON: | 31 | STM:  | 21  |
| LV:   | 21    | DEX: | 52 | GUTS: | 60  |
| EXP:  | 16945 | AGL: | 30 |       |     |
| NEXT: | 3094  | INT: | 0  |       |     |

Initial equipment: Booster Box, Ringed Mail, Banded Helm, High Heels, Reverse Doll

Initial skills: Craft                      LV1  
Metal Casting                      LV1  
Functionality                      LV1

Favourite Food: Apple Cider (Cook with Fruit)

Favourite Instrument: Piano

Favourite Quotes:

- "Easy targets!"



- "You'll die, wanna bet?" (This one's okay, her other ones make her sound like a slut)

Favourite PA Moment:

- The "Guess the next-person-who-comes-out-of-that-door's gender" game in Salva.

Opera is my favourite character in the game. She is THE weakest fighter in terms of pure strength (not Chisato!) but what makes her such a great team member is that she has some of the most effective long range projectile Killer Moves in the game. Although you do have to trade Ashton for her but I think she's just as good as Ashton, but in a different way.

Opera carries around a giant bazooka attached to an energy pack that she calls "Kaleidoscope", which shoots out dangerous wave particles such as positron or X-ray, as well as mimicking material or elemental forces such as fire or lightning. In order to power up the Kaleidoscope, Opera use special "Boxes" which resembles floppy discs with special programs on them to command her Kaleidoscope. Likewise, all of Opera's Killer Moves involves shooting special beams or lasers from her Kaleidoscope.

Opera's normal attacks has to be the best in the game. Versus ground enemies, Opera will smack them with her bazooka, which is probably the fastest both to come out and recover from, and has decent range. Her air attack is even better. Unlike most characters Opera need not jump into the air, as she'll just shoot a pocket of energy up into the air at the enemy. She can shoot them UNBELIEVABLY fast BTW, and since the enemy will be stunned from her prior attack, she can keep shooting until they're killed. Opera can easily finish a flying enemy (even bosses) all by herself with only normal attacks!!!

Opera starts with a VERY weak weapon but she'll soon get an extremely powerful weapon, making all her Killer Moves do tremendous amounts of damage. However, towards the end of the game, her weapon power wains and at the end, even magicians gets more powerful weapons than she does! Like Precis, Opera's weapons are strange and must be found, or made through Customize or Machinery. She has the lowest STR among all fighters, it barely rises to around 1000 at level 255! Opera cannot wear the best armor either, but since all of her Killer Moves are long range missile attacks, she can fight safely at back without much trouble. Opera has fairly low STM too, for a fighter.

My only other complaint about her is that her running speed is pathetic, barely faster than a magic user.

Opera has the most elemental Killer Moves of all fighters, and she has a wide variety of them as well. However, if you choose the wrong one at the wrong time, you can be in trouble! Always try to keep a non-elemental Killer Move equipped. Most of Opera's KM attacks has a very long range, making her the official long range fighter but most of them require her to be some distance away from the enemy to execute. Some of them also hit many times and can hit multiple targets. Opera's best Killer Moves are Alpha on One (definitely one of the most useful KMs in the game as it HOMES IN), Lightning Blade (very nice and dependable at short range), Hyper Launcher (strong and hits many times) and the most unique Healing Star (good substitute when you want to ditch the bitch, Rena.)

#### #####Killer Moves#####

##### ---Photon Prison---

<Opera fires a pocket of energy at the enemy>

<<Exactly the same>>

MP Cost: 10MP  
Range: 2, 3

LV Gained: NA  
Elemental: ??

Quote: "Photon prison"

This Killer Move is not of a damage-based nature, but instead, it'll freeze the enemy for a short period of time. However, its accuracy is questionable as it only seems to work half of the time. If it hits, the enemy will be enveloped by a white barrier, unable to move for a few seconds, otherwise, a "Miss" message will come up. It is pretty fast both to shoot and to recover.

Upon further examination, this KM does have a long and a short range, but there's very little difference between the two. Opera will stand slightly further away for the long ranged version.

At first, this KM won't last long enough to be very useful, two seconds is what you get. At each P(90) interval, a bit under one second is added to the enemy's state of stasis and P(270) is the maximum, I think. Also, it seems that the chance of scoring a successful hit is raised as Proficiency raises.

An enemy bound by Photon Prison cannot move or act in any way, and cannot retaliate in anyway during the full duration. You can hit the enemy as many times you like and it will still stay frozen, very cool. Also, an enemy cannot block during the period it is frozen, which may provide assistance in defeating later enemies. Photon Prison does not work on bosses though, but it might be worthwhile to build up and use against certain enemies in the Cave of Trials. Since it can be shot in quick succession, building Proficiency is a piece of cake, especially later in the game where Opera has tons of MP. So just ignore this move until later in the game and build it up then.

##### ---Flame Launcher---

<Opera fires a short blast of flame from her bazooka to burn any enemies standing in front of her>

<<Opera launches ball of flame in an arc into the air, which scorches the enemy at long range>>

MP Cost: 7MP  
Range: 1, 5

LV Gained: NA  
Elemental: Fire

Quote: "Flame launcher" (Sounds a bit like Dharma.)

Flame Launcher is Opera's first damage dealing KM, it's not all that great at the beginning but it's actually a lot more useful than it seems, you'll find out soon.

The short version of Flame Launcher requires Opera to stand very close to an enemy, about 1 width away. (It's also THE shortest ranged KM Opera has, not counting uni-range ones.) She fires a very slim puff of flame from her bazooka, enough to hit one or maybe 2 enemies if they're bunched together. Opera stays in that position for about 2 seconds and the flame will be active and can damage any enemies comes close enough during that time. It has only passable speed and recovery though. Faster than a speeding bullet, Flame Launcher can actually hit up to 8 times (!!!!!) that goes way too fast for our eyes to detect, pretty cool for a thin beam huh? Each hit is of normal attack damage, but it tends to push most enemies away after about 3 or 4 hits, except maybe slimes. Make sure you don't overlook this, because it's rather powerful, especially when evolved. It does Fire elemental damage.

The long version of this attack can truly be called "long"! Because Opera can almost shoot from one side of the screen to the other! A fireball is fired in an arc into the air which rains onto a distant enemy. I'm not too sure if this has an area affect though. The speed the flair travels isn't all that great so it can miss quite. Often the enemy will move towards Opera, causing the ball to fall behind them and miss, quite frustrating. It only does about 2 hits at normal attack damage, so the short ranged is better. (Although its range kinda makes up for it.)

At P(100), the a much bigger puff of flame will be fired from short range, which reaches almost an extra character width over the original. This means even MORE hits can be scored (although I don't know how many, best guess is about an extra 2-4 hits) and can hit more enemies. The long ranged version is mostly the same, except it seems to hit 3 or 4 times!

At P(200), Opera fires an even bigger puff of fire from her rifle, somewhat resembles Chisato's Flamethrower. At this stage, Opera's flame can reach enemies standing 2 character-widths away. It will also hit a couple more times, especially if they're up close. At long range, it remains mostly the same. The bullet will cover the enemy in a light inferno when it hits but maybe a little stronger than before.

---Alpha on One---

<<Three pockets of energy are released from the Kaleidoscope and homes in on the enemy>>

MP Cost: 23MP  
Range: 5

LV Gained: 24  
Elemental: None

Quote: "Fol"

Since Opera and Ashton cannot be in the same game, Alpha on One is probably Opera's equivalent of Ashton's Leaf Slash. She gets this at a relatively low level, it costs a lot (at first) and is possibly one of her best (if not THE best) KM.

Alpha on One is a great, although sorta weak, Killer Move. Three pockets of energy released will attempt to home in one the enemy with good speed and each does equivalent damage to Opera's normal attack. The speed of this move isn't all that much relevant since Opera can keep a good distance away from the enemy. The best feature about it

is that Alpha on One automatically homes in on the enemy, very useful. The speed is also pretty fast, so it's hard for the enemy to escape this move. Against those mages that phase out, the bolts will follow them around and whack them the instant they rematerialize. I am not sure if the energy bolts can be blocked though, but it's most likely so. (Make sure she has good HIT!) Alpha on One is the most useful later in the game against great bosses that moves around the battle field with insane speed, and since Opera can stay in the back with this move, she can hit with little fear of being hit/countered.

At P(220) and P(440), another bolt of energy will be released, doing a maximum of 5 hits for a good MP consumption. Do not over look Alpha on One, as it'll become Opera's best friend in the long run.

---Spread Ray---

<<Opera springs into the air and shoots 2 rays of dangerous energy down at the enemy, which explodes upon making contact with the ground>>

|               |                 |
|---------------|-----------------|
| MP Cost: 16MP | LV Gained: 34   |
| Range: 5      | Elemental: None |

Quote: "Spread ray"

Another fairly useful KM I use near the end of the game. At first, Spread Ray doesn't appeal too well in neither damage, appearance nor usefulness, but it can all change with Proficiency.

As with all KMs of this types (ie, "aerial missiles"), it's kinda hard to hit properly. The "area blast" of Spread Ray don't seem to be overwhelming, and seems to miss often. Each ray deals about as much damage as a regular attack from Opera. However, since Opera leaps so high into the air (hey, she should be in an all-girl basketball team with Chun Li and Morrigan!) and stays so far away from the enemy, this move is a great away of staying out of trouble! It's almost a necessity when you get below the 9th level of the CoT, as the enemies can run around the screen at insane speed, shooting hard-to-dodge missiles and does tons of damage with each.

At P(180), P(360) and finally P(540!), another ray will be fired, for a maximum of 5 hits and a VERY long air time. An excellent way of trying to avoid hits inside the Cave of Trials. The only real disadvantage is the HUGE number of Proficiency required to power Spread Ray up to the max level and that the missiles are hard to aim. But if you look at it from a pure defensive point of view, you've got nothin' to lose!

---Cold Wind---

<Opera shoots a large cone-shaped blast of cold wind with sharp shards of ice from her Kaleidoscope>

|               |                  |
|---------------|------------------|
| MP Cost: 25MP | LV Gained: 41    |
| Range: 3      | Elemental: Water |

Quote: "Cold wind"

Another good KM from Opera, will it never end? The length of the cone produced by Cold Wind is about 5 character-widths long. Translation? GREAT range! The end of the cone is also fairly wide, so you can hit multiple enemies when they're bunched together. Cold Wind does about 3-6 hits per enemy that gets caught in the blast, the closer they are the more number of hits. It will also hit aerial enemies with no problems. Each hit is about half as strong as Opera's normal attack. Cold Wind is Water elemental.

At higher Proficiency, more hits will be generated by Opera's beam of ice. The exact amount is hard to measure, like all beam-type KMs. At P(300), Opera can hit the enemies for around 5-8 hits and the beam will appear to be thicker, therefore, maybe able to engulf more enemies in its path.

---Gravity Shell---

<Opera launches a black bolt at the enemy, which opens a large dark sphere of compressed gravitational energy to crush the enemy>

MP Cost: 20MP                                  LV Gained: 54  
Range: 4                                          Elemental: Void

Quote: "Gravity shell"

Gravity Shell is not bad IMO. Opera's bullet stays in mid air but the sphere of darkness does not appear for a second or 2. Opera also stays in her "launching" animation for that time, so it's kinda slow. The orb in mid-air is of significant size though, but that's not what really hits the enemy. The sphere releases golden lightning bolts and strike the ground, so anything that gets caught within the lightning will be damaged. The damage is great, about twice as strong as Opera's normal attack. It does only one hit but it seems to momentarily stun the opponent. Of course, since it's quite slow, Gravity Shell is not as useful as Opera's other KMs. Gravity Shell is of Void elemental, I think.

I am not too sure if this is how Gravity Shell evolves but at P(200), the vortex that opens up increases in size. It does not seem to do anything to damage nor hits, but it does seem that the flare bolts hit a slightly wider radius.

---Lightning Blade---

<Opera aims her bazooka up to the sky to charge it with electrical energy, then she releases the energy in the form of electrical pillars that spread out by moving in a circular pattern around her>

<<Opera aims her bazooka up to the sky to charge it with electrical energy, then she points her bazooka at the enemy and releases a beam of light green colored lightning>>

MP Cost: 20MP                                  LV Gained: 69  
Range: 2, 4                                      Elemental: Thunder

Quote: "Lightning blade"

Lightning Blade is a great KM for Opera and is quite versatile. At

short range, Opera will stand in her "charging" animation for about 2 seconds before releasing the electric pillars. The pillars does move in high velocity though, generating an energyfield or some type that pushes all enemies away from Opera. Since there are 3 pillars, each enemy will likely to get hit 3 times before getting pushed completely out of the pullar's range. This is a great defense move that clears crowds like no other. I will also give Opera some room for breathing space, or time to escape a pursuit. One thing to keep in mind is that there's a little lag at start up, try not to get caught close to the enemy.

At long range, this move is a bit of a mixed bag. Its execution is faster than any other "beam-type" attack (eg, Cold Wind, Hyper Launcher etc), which is great. It hits about 3 times per enemy that stands within the blasting line of sight. The beam itself is not very thick though, and it seemed a little shorter than the other "beam" KMs. You've also gotta run a distance away from the enemy after every usage just to get back into the "Long range" field, which is kind of a bother.

At P(100), Opera will now release 4 pillars of lightning in the short version, doing an extra hit per enemy as well as an added security feature. While the long range bolt will flicker for a second longer, doing an extra hit as well. At P(200), the short version is about as good as it gets, with 5 pillars and the long range get another hit added. Good one. :)

---Healing Star---

[Opera aims her Kaleidoscope up to the sky and fires a rocket, which explodes to form streams of stars that travels back down to the ground to heal all party members]

MP Cost: 9MP

LV Gained: Machinery Item Creation

Range: U

Elemental: Star??

Quote: "Healing star"

Perhaps the most unique KM Opera has. Opera must use Machinery to make a White System, which upgrades her Kaleidoscope to include this move. White System is easy as hell to make, it shouldn't have any problem of popping up at level 30 or so. (Make sure she has a good Machinery level.)

The speed of Healing Stars is average if you count it as a KM, but if you take it as a spell, it's about as fast as Rena's Fairy Light with Motormouth PLUS a high Proficiency!! Thus, it makes a fine healing KM. The amount healed works like this:

Healing = 200 + (Prof. \* 5)

It heals by 200 the first time you use it and 5 points will be added per each point of Proficiency. However it's strange 'cuz the amount healing it does will not upgrade DURING battle. So if you started battle with this doing 1000 points of healing, it'll still heal for 1000 every time you use it during that fight! You will only notice the upgrade if you enter another battle.

At max Proficiency, Healing Stars will heal for 5150, thus 2 pops

will get everyone up to maximum for a VERY cheap MP cost! Great huh?  
To build up the Proficiency quickly, look under the tips section.

I think Healing Stars is especially useful later (like the Cave of Trials) where Rena's magic isn't enough (ie, too slow.) It's also really cool if you want to have a 4 fighter party, Healing Stars will provide a semi-reliable source of healing for a very cheap price. (Claude, Opera, Ernest AND Chisato, OOH YEAH!)

However the disadvantage of this is, like any healing KMs, you do have to give up one slot out of two for it. In Opera's case it might be worth it since all her other KMs are pretty similar. But you can also equip the Link Combo accessory to gain 2 more slots. Link something like Alpha on One after this would be ideal.

---Laser Bit---

<Opera throws a glass sphere prism and shoots a pulse of energy into it as it explodes into 3 balls and impales its surroundings>

MP Cost: 8MP  
Range: 4

LV Gained: Machinery Item Creation  
Elemental: ??

Quote: "Laser bit"

I dunno what to think about Laser Bit, but for all the trouble you have to go through into making this, it almost seems like it's not really worth the trouble. You need to make a Black System from Machinery. I was able to get one when Opera was about level 60, with Orchestra playing in the background of course.

First word I've gotta put it through to ya is "slow"! There are way too many frames at the start, such as Opera throwing the prism, aiming and firing her rifle and THEN it explodes. Quite risky later on in the game y' know.

Anyway, the advantages. The 3 energy spheres released by Laser Bit ascend into the air in an arc before crashing down. They're split into a 120 degrees angle and each is disbursed a fair distance from the center, so this move can have a very large blasting radius. Oh yeah, what's quite strange about Laser Bit is, even though Opera stays 4 character-widths away, the glass prism is only thrown 2 character-widths away from the enemy. Each energy sphere hit for normal attack damage and each sphere may hit multiple opponents. So if there are a LOT of enemies on screen, this attack may actually be useful. You CAN actually get all the orbs to impale a single target, but it's more luck than anything. If and only if the enemy steps into the space where the glass prism is held at the time Opera's bullet hits the prism, as it explodes, all of the orbs (including the original glass prism, which usually drops to the ground after exploding) hits the enemy for a 4 hits combo.

At each P(100) until P(300), another energy sphere will be released from the explosion. Each of the spheres are divided so they are released at equal angles from one another. So it is pretty cool to look at a final charge Laser Bit with 6 orbs each released at 60 degrees from another. At that stage, the orbs will cover a lot of ground! So even though Laser Bit is slow, it works extremely well on multiple enemies.

---Hyper Launcher---

<Opera slams her Kaleidoscope onto the ground, sits on it and fires a huge purple beam of laser>

MP Cost: 34MP

LV Gained: Machinery Item Creation

Range: 5

Elemental: None

Quote: "Hyper Launcher"

Hyper Launcher is EXTREMELY difficult to obtain. You need to make a Green System through Machinery with a HIGH level Opera. The chance of obtaining it is very rare though, as I've heard of people who still couldn't get hold of this even with a level 160+ Opera. Playing the Violin or Orchestra helps a lot. I was able to obtain this with my Opera at level 113, which is fairly early. Keep attempting Machinery without reloading, it seems to raise the chance of this appearing by a little.

Hyper Launcher is fairly good though. The start up is fairly long, but it's slightly better than Tear Gas. The length and thickness of the laser fired is also identical to Tear Gas. However, instead of a generating MANY rapid but weak hits, Hyper Launcher only hits for an average amount of times but each hit is significantly stronger than Tear Gas. It can hit about 6 times per enemy and each hit is around 50% damage of a normal attack from Opera.

The higher the Proficiency, the longer the period of time Opera can generate the laser blast, which in return, yields more hits. Hyper Launcher's improvement can be seen all the way 'til P(500), as each P(100) generates another hit. This is one of the most damaging KM from Opera and is especially effective against enemies bunched up together, specially in a straight line. It does not push the enemies as far away from Tear Gas though. You may also want to trap an enemy in a corner with this, making sure that they can't escape easily.

===Cancel Ability===

Yes Opera has a good normal attack, but since all her best Killer Moves are projectile based that requires her to be at long range, Cancelling would be both pointless and useless. The only Cancel I sometimes use is the upgraded Flame Launcher, although Opera does need to take one step back, but since Flame Launcher is quite reliable, this is not half bad. The only other short range Killer Moves Opera has are Lightning Blade and perhaps Photon Prison, they can work but not all that well.

===Link Combo Ideas===

Opera is too, a long range attacker like Precis, but instead of missile attacks, Opera has mainly projectile and beam type of attacks that are quite hard to link. Also, unlike Precis, Opera has no specific close ranged attacks. It's not that great giving Opera Link Combos since she's gonna stay at the back firing her gun and all of her Killer Moves works in similar ways.

\* Flame Launcher - Alpha on One

Rating: 4

MP Cost:

Gravity Shell - Alpha on One

Rating: 3.5

MP Cost:



Spread Ray - Alpha on One                      Rating: 4              MP Cost:

Hyper Launcher - Alpha on One                  Rating: 4.5            MP Cost:

Why have I only chosen these 4 starters? It's because all the other ones put Opera too close to the enemy and hence, she has to run away afterward to execute Alpha on One. #1 is excellent since Flame Launcher has a very long range, #2 is a bit slow, #3 is great since it puts Opera out of danger and #4 is her best and strongest attacks chained together.

\* Flame Launcher - Lightning Blade            Rating: 3.5            MP Cost:

This is Opera's only short ranged combo. Works ok.

\* Photon Prison - [anything]                    Rating and MP varies

This is one pointless combo, I don't know who possessed me to put this in. Anyway, Photon Prison paralyzes them so you can follow up with anything. This combo is great for Flame Launcher as you can get the maximum number of hits out of it. It even gives you time to run away to execute long range KMs, but if Photon Prison does not work... (you'll probably be safe if you're following up with a long ranged attack, like Hyper Launcher.)

\* Gravity Shell - [anything]                    Rating and MP varies

This is pretty good as Gravity Shell stuns the enemies temporarily, allowing you some time to follow up with another attack. I like Alpha on One, Spread Ray and Hyper Launcher. It's slow though.

\* Alpha on One - Healing Star                  Rating: 4              MP Cost:

I use this when I need healing. Put it the other way around if you prefer to heal first, which is a better idea.

\* Lightning Blade - Healing Star                Rating: 4              MP Cost:

What? Another one? This is good mainly for healing yourself. Use Lightning Blade at close range will generate the force field and pushes away all the enemies, which gives you time for Healing Star.

#### ERNEST RAVIEDE

-----  
Ernest is a Tetragenes archaeologist who travels to different planets searching for ancient and interesting stuff. He travels to Expel to explore some ruins. He is also the man in Opera's heart, but he seems to be more interested in exploring ancient ruins though. Ernest is very individual.

#### Initial stats:

|       |       |      |     |       |     |
|-------|-------|------|-----|-------|-----|
| HP:   | 1600  | STR: | 100 | LUC:  | 121 |
| MP:   | 160   | CON: | 37  | STM:  | 23  |
| LV:   | 25    | DEX: | 60  | GUTS: | 45  |
| EXP:  | 31183 | AGL: | 50  |       |     |
| NEXT: | 4782  | INT: | 0   |       |     |

Initial equipment: Leather Whip, Brigandine, Boots

Initial skills: Herbal Medicine    LV5  
                  Patience            LV5  
                  Whistling            LV4

Favourite Food: Hassaku Tea (Cook Grains with someone over 20)

Favourite Instrument: Cembalo

Favourite Quotes:

- "I don't feel like losing to somebody like this." (Again, not many good quotes.)

Favourite PA Moment:

- The ones where you can steal Battle Suits from him! \*Evil grin\*

Again, I don't see why not many people like Ernest. Sure he's quite a boring person in the story, but he's completely different in battles. Also note you can steal the second best armor, Battle Suits, from him in 2 different locations (Linga and I think the other one is in Mars) which could be a reason to get him in itself.

Being an explorer, a whip would be Ernest's natural choice. Ernest's Killer Moves all involves the use of the whip and he has the power over ultra-dimension matters too. When you first get Ernest you might be really turned off because of his existing KMs (I know I was) but wait a while and you'll see a few good ones.

Ernest uses the natural length of his whip to his advantage, making his normal attacks reaching the furthest in the game, about 1.5 character widths! Although he swings his whip a little slow. Ernest's air attack is pathetic. He jumps to whip the enemy but it takes ages to come out, so don't use his jump attack. See below for a better substitute.

Like Opera, Ernest also gets very powerful weapons earlier on, but unlike Opera, his weapons stay strong throughout the game. Also, whips are common so you can just buy them in stores, very convenient. Ernest can equip some of the best armor too, like Claude and Ashton, which is a huge advantage over the sissy fighters like Bowman and the girls. Ernest's STR is only average though. However, his STM is soooo low that even Celine's might be higher!!

Ernest is basically a mid ranged attacker, with few good mid ranged attacks. His first few Killer Moves are not very useful at all, but some of his latter ones are okay. He tends to have lengthy lag times in many of his Killer Moves like Ashton. A good advantage that Ernest has is that his KMs takes the least amount of MP to use, even his most expensive KM costs only 25MP. His best KMs are Thousand Whips (a good mid ranged attack hitting many times) and Broken Heart (fast and powerful, and lets him stay away from the enemy). I really like Dimension Whip as well.

#####Killer Moves#####

---Dimension Whip---

<Ernest sends his whip into a vortex, another vortex opens behind the enemy and the whip extends to hit them>

|              |                 |
|--------------|-----------------|
| MP Cost: 5MP | LV Gained: NA   |
| Range: 2     | Elemental: None |

Quote: "Dimension whip"

This may not look like it, but Dimension Whip is really really useful! One of my favourite KMs for Ernest. So ok, Ernest is

vulnerable when he extends his whip into the vortex and the whip takes a second to appear, but the whip tends to surprise the enemy quite a lot. Not your conventional KM that's for sure. Dimension Whip is also excellent VS aerial creatures that are a pain to hit for many characters. Plus the fact that it's cheap, makes it a fair KM at the start.

Don't be disappointed yet! Because at each P(80) interval, another vortex will open and another whip will thrust out of it to attack the enemy, for a total of 4 hits at P(280). Sometimes not all of them will hit though.

I use Dimension Whip most of the time as a Link Combo ender. Well, having something like Thousand Whip as a starter will keep Ernest from being defenseless. While the former attack pushes the enemy back enough for Dimension Whip to connect successfully. An excellent LC indeed.

---Spiral Whip---

<Ernest winds his whip into a loop, then whips it out and brings forth a whirlwind>

<<Just like above>>

MP Cost: 7MP

LV Gained: NA

Range: 1, 3

Elemental: Wind (Special)

Quote: "Engulf... everything.."

An ok semi-up-close KM. At close range, Ernest can hit while he winds his whips in a loop the cowboy way. This phase of the KM is a little slow, but if it hits, the enemy will usually not be able to retaliate until Ernest completes the whole Killer Move. The whip will hit an extra time when Ernest whips it out, while the whirlwind itself counts as an extra separate hit, for a total of 3 hits, each at normal attack damage. Only the whirlwind is of Wind elemental damage mind you.

At long range, the Killer Move is similar, except since Ernest stays a little further away, the first 2 whip hits probably won't connect. You'll usually end up with only the whirlwind hitting, but if the enemies closes in on Ernest, the second whip lash may connect as well. The damage distribution is the same as the short ranged version. Note, the whirlwind won't juggle the enemy as well as Ashton's Hurricane Slash or Bowman's Whirlwind Fist, and it dissipates once it hits an enemy. It will also dissolve after traveling a distance without hitting anything.

Spiral Whip is an ok attack early on in the game and its dual-range nature is quite versatile. Later in the game however, when enemies starts moving around the field at headspinning speeds, you're better off using Ernest's other KMs so he can stay away and hit multiple times as well. Also, this KM does not seem to get better with Proficiency, so it's a little disappointing.

---Arc Attack---

<Ernest lashes his whip into the air then swings on it and kicks the enemy. Tarzan or Indiana Jones or Spiderman?>

MP Cost: 7MP

LV Gained: 32

Range: 5

Elemental: None

Quote: "Arc attack"

I am trying really hard not to vomit at this attack, really! Arc Attack is the most worthless piece of banana peel in this game! Where can I start? Ok, its range is 5. Most of the time, Ernest will have to run away from the enemy to execute this KM, which is a pain. Since this is a body projectile, not a projectile projectile, if anyone is in front of Ernest, he'll slam into that person instead, unable to progress any further to attack the enemy. Ernest will not start kicking until the later part of the swing, which is plain dangerous since the rate he moves is so slow, the enemy will just smake him before he can attack!

The range is also pathetic! Let's say the the enemy is standing at "point zero". You wanna execute this move, Ernest will run back 5 character-widths and start the animation. When Ernest reaches "point zero" in the air, he will start kicking. If he misses (which is 99% likely), he'll land a TINY distance past "point zero" after the kicking animation. So if the enemy moves away, he'll miss. Gee, saw THAT one comin' a mile away.

At P(100) and P(200), Ernest will start kick twice and thrice, respectively, each are at normal attack strength, if you ever get them to connect that is. But my advice is, don't bother! This is even worse than Ashton's Norther Cross!

---Thousand Whip---

<<Ernest's whip multiplies into many strands and thrashes the enemy with them>>

MP Cost: 10MP

LV Gained: 41

Range: 3

Elemental: None

Quote: "Thousand whip"

Thousand Whip is Ernest's first decent Killer Move. When you first get this, Ernest's whip will multiply into 3 strands, each dealing a seperate hit, but sometimes not all hits will connect. The start up is fairly good and if the enemy closes-in on Ernest, they'll get some whippin' as well. Not much else to say except that it doesn't work that well on airborne opponents either, so use Dimension Whip instead. As a matter of fact, Thousand Whips acts more like a beefed up version of his Cat O'9Tails weapon.

As Thousand Whip grows in Proficiency, its effect and damage will improve. I think at every P(40) interval, Ernest's whip multiplies into an extra lash to a maximum of 6 lashes at P(120). It sure does built up quickly for a maximu of 6 hits. Since Thousand Whip is fast and reasonably cheap, Thousand Whip is a great KM that will last Ernesta long way, if you use him.

---Cloud Dust---

[Ernest swings his whip around his body and coats himself in a light fog]

MP Cost: 18MP                                  LV Gained: 49  
Range: U                                                  Elemental: ??

Quote: "Cloud dust"

Well, it certainly ISN'T useless, but it's POINTLESS. Cloud Dust works like an evasion enhancing spell and its lag is on par with most spells of that type. If you're planning to use this, stay away from the foes. The best time to use this is at the beginning of the match before advancing on the enemies. The effect actually seems pretty good, as Ernest's evasion rates will be dramatically enhanced. However, like all non-damage-dealing type Killer Moves, it all comes down to one question. Is it worth taking up one of the slots? Probably not, I'd say. Even though its effects are desirable, it will only work once in a fight, and Ernest cannot use it to affect another ally. So you'll be stuck with a single damage-dealing KM for the entire match. This move is promising and disappointing at the same time.

---Broken Heart---

<Ernest extends his whip into the ground, the end of it reaches out beneath the enemy and thorns sprout>

MP Cost: 17MP                                  LV Gained: 58  
Range: 3                                                  Elemental: None

Quote: "Broken heart"

Broken Heart is GOOD, no arguements there. The thing that makes Broken Heart so effective is that it's fast, somewhat of a rarity for Ernest. It only takes a second from there point Ernest thrusts his whip underground to the point where the thorns starts sprouting. It hits about 2 or 3 times at the start, which is not bad. Each hit is of normal attack damage.

Like Thousand Whip, Broken Heart also grows rather quickly. At P(50), Broken Heart becomes a lot cooler looking. A rose will blossom at the tips of the thorns. Unfortunately, I can't see much, or any, damage bonus at this point. The thorns does seem to hit an extra time or so. Improvements are hard to tell beyond this point as the numbers tend to bunch up tightly together, but it does seem to hit about 5 times at least.

Broken Heart is effective on most enemies, unless they move around the screen at insane speed. It is fast and damaging, making it Ernest's best KM in the game. Note that is DOES hit airborne enemies, but instead of the thorns reaching high enough into the air to hit them, the thorns will appears beneath them in thin air! It's somewhat of a scary sight.

---Thunder Whip---

<Ernest holds his whip upright into the air and charges with thunder then he whips the enemy with it>

MP Cost: 22MP

LV Gained: 65

Range: 4

Elemental: Thunder

Quote: "Thunder Whip"

<Under construction>

---Sonic Whip---

<Ernest's whip rips into the very fabric of space, conjuring up a vortex of hyper condensed matter that travels along the ground>

MP Cost: 25

LV Gained: 73

Range: 5

Elemental: NOT Vacuum, maybe Void?

Quote: "Sonic Whip"

Sonic Whip is Ernest's "macho" skill. The start up lag is very significant, but since Ernest can stay far away from his targets, it doesn't matter much. The vortex conjured up travels at snail pace, but it's huge! It acts has a limited area-effect skill because once a target is hit, the vortex disappears. If multiple targets are caught at the same time, they'll all be hit, but it's somewhat difficult to get it to hit anything more than 1 enemy. The damage is great! Double normal attack damage, but it only does 1 hit.

At P(100), the damage grows to 2.5 of normal attack damage while at P(200), the damage does equals 3 times the normal attack damage! An instant 9999 later in the game, but since it does only 1 hit, a multiple hit KM is preferrable later on. The vortex covers a decent radius, which maybe useful if you want Ernest to stay away from the opponents. It also reaches a reasonable height in the air, enough to hit most flying enemies, which is always a plus. A good move and a good Link Combo ender.

===Cancel Ability===

Ernest's normal attack reaches the furthest but he does move in quite close to attack and it tends to push the enemies away so they're a little close for attacks like Thousand Whip and too far for Spiral Whip. It does work though, but make sure Ernest has a pair of Bunny Shoe for that big leap. In that case, any of Ernest's Killer Moves can link fairly well off a normal attack, except maybe the ultra short ranged Spiral Whip. Broken Heart, Thousand Whip and Dimension Whip seems to be the most effective though. Thunder Whip and Sonic Whip actually work ok despite the little lag at the start.

===Link Combos===

Since Ernest's Killer Moves takes up the least MP to use, giving him Link Combos would be a good choice, although his MP don't recover very quickly due to his low STM.

|                                  |             |          |
|----------------------------------|-------------|----------|
| * Thousand Whip - Dimension Whip | Rating: 4.5 | MP Cost: |
| Thousand Whip - Broken Heart     | Rating: 4   | MP Cost: |
| Thousand Whip - Thunder Whip     | Rating: 3   | MP Cost: |

Thousand Whip - Sonic Whip                      Rating: 3              MP Cost:  
I REALLY like the first, as Dimension Whip has perfect timing, does 4 hits and is cheap. Also works exceptionally well on flying enemies. Broken Heart is not bad either but the last 2 are just a bit too slow for my liking, works on slower enemies.

\* Broken Heart - Dimension Whip              Rating: 4              MP Cost:  
Broken Heart - Thousand Whip              Rating: 3.5              MP Cost:  
Broken Heart - Thunder Whip              Rating: 3              MP Cost:  
Broken Heart - Sonic Whip              Rating: 3              MP Cost:

Similar to the above but not as good. Although Broken Heart is fast, it offers no protection against advancing enemies (and can miss.) It may also push the enemy too far back to get many hits off Thunder and Thousand Whip. Sonic Whip is ok though, as it has infinite range but is slow, Dimension Whip is still good.

You can basically combine the above 5 Killer Moves in any order you like, but I think the slower ones are quite dangerous.

\* Spiral Whip - any of the above              Rating and MP varies  
Only works well if you're not pushing against an enemy in a corner, and works better if you're in long range.

#### BOWMAN JEAN

-----  
Bowman owns a pharmacy in the town of Linga. He knows a lot about medicine and is respected in his town. He was offered to become a professor at the university but he declined, saying he'd rather be with his wife. Bowman knows many important people so he's definitely the person you want to talk to if you want someone to pull some strings for you. He's kinda sarcastic and tries to be funny but I don't find him funny.

#### Initial stats:

|       |       |      |    |       |     |
|-------|-------|------|----|-------|-----|
| HP:   | 1500  | STR: | 90 | LUC:  | 118 |
| MP:   | 170   | CON: | 50 | STM:  | 35  |
| LV:   | 25    | DEX: | 62 | GUTS: | 36  |
| EXP:  | 31183 | AGL: | 5  |       |     |
| NEXT: | 4382  | INT: | 0  |       |     |

Initial equipment: Cestus, Brigandine, Suede Boots

Initial skills: Herbal Medicine      LV5  
                  Mental Science        LV2  
                  Biology                      LV4

Favourite Food: Daikon Miso Soup (Cook from Grains)

Favourite Instrument: Harmonica

#### Favourite Quotes:

- "Looks like I'll be popular with the ladies again" (It's GOTTA be the funniest quote in the game. I wonder what Nineh's gonna think.)  
- "Hey.. HEY!"

#### Favourite PA Moment:

- Bowman's excuse when Rena caught him and Claude rating the girls.

Bowman's certainly not my favourite character when it comes to

combat. None of his Killer Moves really stands out and most of them are about the same, so you'll get bored with him quickly. He fights with his fists since he passed martial arts in the university, and he'll throw some ready mixed bombs at the enemy in some of his KMs.

Bowman's normal attack has the least range among the fighters (and he makes these weird noise when he attacks) and has average speed, but Rena's normal attack is more effective. His air attack suffers from the same problem, and can easily get hit out of.

Bowman's weapons are gloves but they're quite average, nothing too spectacular. What's quite disappointing about him is that his best weapon is Fire elemental, making him completely useless in fights where the enemy is resistant to Fire. Bowman can't wear the best armor like the other guys, which is quite dangerous since his normal attack must be executed right next to the enemy. Try not to use his normal attack if you use him. He always seems to be the one who dies the most in battles.

Any advantages that Bowman has? Well yes, his Killer Moves do take up very little MP to use, and he can throw most of his KMs in succession very fast like Precis, but like I said, they're quite weak. Bowman has probably the boringest set of KMs, most of them are just some kinda projectile: either a herbal bomb or some ki attack. His non-projectile KMs are EXTREMELY hard to connect with, making Bowman a not a very effective character overall. For this reason, it is better to use him as a mid ranged character, since his missile attacks are quite okay. His best Killer Moves are Sakura Attack (half decent, but hard to hit) and Explosion Pills (a good missile attack with a fair radius.)

#####Killer Moves#####

---Spirit Attack---

<Bowman releases an energy bolt from his fist>

|              |                  |
|--------------|------------------|
| MP Cost: 4MP | LV Gained: Start |
| Range: 2     | Elemental: None  |

Quote: "Spirit Attack"

Spirit Attack is not very original and it's fairly average in terms of usefulness. This missile attack has to be done quite close to the enemy though (compared to similar ones like Rocket Punch) and it's quite dangerous. It is kinda quick to come out and it has fair recovery, but you'll get hit out of this a lot since you have to be so close to the enemy. The damage is normal attack, which is not that great, considering that you have to be so close to the enemy to use this KM. However, you can through this out in quick succession like Precis, which is quite good.

At P(100), Bowman will throw a bigger, yellow colored ball after his initial energy bolt for an extra hit. The damage for the second ball is, again, normal attack damage. The follow-up projectile's speed is pretty good too, so if your first one hits, the second one will too. At P(200), Bowman will fire a third and last, pink colored fire ball at his enemy, for a quick 3 hit combo. It's quite good considering the cheap MP cost but remember if the energy balls do not hit a



target, it will dissapate really soon. So don't expect this to hit if the enemy runs away from Bowman at top speed! I find that Bowman's pill attacks make better projectiles.

---Poison Pill---

<Bowman throw a handful of poisonous chemical capsuals beneath the enemy's feet>

MP Cost: 5MP

LV Gained: Start

Range: 3

Elemental: None

Quote: "Poison Pills"

Poison Pill is quite good, even for Bowman. :P It's a lot quicker than Spirit Attack and has no recovery time. The pills will hit about 2 times and a small puddle of poisonous gas will be present on the ground near the target, so it has a small area effect as well. Each hit is of normal attack damage, so the damage is pretty good also. You can repeatedly throw pills at the enemy if they're slow. The pills also has a small chance of inducing the Poison status on the enemy, but it's quite rare.

At P(125), Poison Pills gets better as Bowman hurls more pills. The area effect will be bigger and after the capsual lands, a cloud of poisonous gas will actually rise and swirl about the area, damaging any enemies that it comes into contact with. The cloud needs a second to form though, so the enemies can run away from it. Bowman can now do about 3-4 hits with the pills alone. The cloud acts as a big area effect though, so it will not hit the same enemy twice, but the radius is pretty good so if you use this on a tightly packed enemy group, it'll get every single on of them.

At P(250), Bowman throws even more pills, 6 to be exact! They hit the enemy for a quick multi-hit projectile with a chance of status change. However, the cloud will not always appear at this point. I am not sure why, but the damage at this point is very good so you won't really have to worry about the cloud.

The primary use of this projectile is hit-and-run, since it's so quick. Note that Poison Pill does not work in the same way as his other projectiles, such as Spirit Attack. Instead of a horizontal projectile, that can hit any enemy that comes into contact with at anytime, Poison Pill is released and travels in a small arc in the air. Its effects are released once it hits the ground or an enemy, but if an enemy makes contact with the pills while it's still travelling in the air, it'll have no effect. In a way, Poison Pill functions like a mini-version of lobbing projectile attacks like Opera's (long range) Flame Launcher.

---Pillery---

<Bowman leaps into the air and lands up-side-down on top of the enemy and break their neck>

<<Bowman sink into a black shadow on the ground, reappears up-side-down above the enemy and break their neck>>

MP Cost: 6MP  
Range: 3, U

LV Gained: Start  
Elemental: None

Quote: "Pillery"

More pills? Nah, Pillery is something completely different. The short ranged version is similar to both Head Splitter and Hop Step, except that Bowman is as slow as hell. Also, the Execution Point for the short ranged Pillery is fixed, so it's not as flexible as neither of the other KMs. The damage is good, doing twice as much as a normal attack. Because it is so slow, it's a pain trying to get it to hit so use it on slower enemies.

The long ranged version is worse. The sinking animation takes forever to complete and so, it'll almost never hit unless the enemy is immobile or occupied. The damage is still the same. The long ranged version maybe ok to cover grounds without having to run. Both versions has limited invincibility properties that makes it sorta worthwhile.

At P(200), Bowman gains 2 shadow images not unlike Precis' Hop Step and the damage of Pillery goes up to the 300% of normal stage. The damage is very worthwhile, but it's still a pain trying to it to hit. If you really want to stay defensive, then perhaps you may want to try this move.

---Firebird Attack---

<Bowman concentrates and releases a swirling ball of fire at the enemy>

MP Cost: 10MP  
Range: 4

LV Gained: Start  
Elemental: Fire

Quote: "Firebird attack"

One word, Firebolt! Firebird Attack is basically Bowman's sorry rip off of the Firebolt spell. Bowman's fire even has that pause effect where it pauses for a second before launching at the enemy. The traveling speed of the fire is also quite slow. If you look closely, Bowman actually hurls 2 fireballs, closely tucked together, but this move will only hit once for normal attack damage. One good thing is has is that Bowman can actually stay a decent distance away from the enemy. Firebird Attack does Fire elemental damage.

At P(200), the fireball will explode upon impact. While it does not cause any extra bonus (boo!), it does create an explosion area affect that covers a fair radius so it can hit multiple enemies. At P(400), the damage is upgraded to twice the normal attack damage, which is very strong. Since it's so slow, Bowman's other projectiles are more effective. Note however, Firebird Attack will travel a lot further than Spirit Attack if an enemy is not hit.

---Secret Medicine---

[Bowman throws a capsule into the air and supposedly, catches it in his mouth]

MP Cost: 8MP

LV Gained: 28

Range: U

Elemental: None

Quote: "Secret Medicine"

Secret Medicine is a healing KM, like Energy Sword and Healing Star, but it's not very effective. The amounts it heals is quite low to be effective.

HP Restores =  $100 + (\text{Prof.} * 2)$

So at maximum Proficiency, it restores 2098HP, much MUCH lower than the 60% (or 5999) of Claude's Energy Sword or the 5150 to EVERYONE of Opera's Healing Star.

Secret Medicine is a uni-ranged KM, so you can use it anywhere. Try keeping away from the enemy if you want to use this though. Secret Medicine is the fastest executing healing KM out of the 3, but the pill needs about 2 seconds to travel back from the air, so you need to keep Bowman safe during that time. He could be killed before his pill even takes effect. Note that you do not have to stay at the same place to get the pill to take its effect. If you let Bowman run away, the pill will actually FOLLOW him!

---Death Siege---

<Bowman leaps back, disappears and splits into 2 mirror images that runs through an opponent from opposite ends of a diagonal>

MP Cost: 13MP

LV Gained: 35

Range: 1

Elemental: None

Quote: "Die!"

Death Siege sure is a weird, very weird KM. First of all, the range is 1. Bowman has to run all the way up to the enemy before leaping back about 2 character-width, THEN disappears to form his shadows. Well, it can be dangerous but it can also be pretty cool as the leap-back effect can cause the enemy to miss their attack. Bowman splits into 2 and each image is capable of inflicting a hit at normal attack damage, but since it travels so slowly, it'll rarely make 2 hits. The speed Bowman's images travels ain't great, so it can miss the enemy quite often. The hit detection for Bowman's images are also quite bad, because a hit will not register unless the enemy is right between the 2 images. Anyhow, Bowman is invincible towards regular attacks while in his split-body animation and it lasts quite a while, so it will be quite useful later in the game to avoid attacks. Note that the place where Bowman will rematerialize after the execution of this move at exactly the point where he disappeared to form the images.

At P(100), Death Seige gets better as Bowman learns to split his body into 4 forms, running into the enemy in an "X" shaped formation. It's pretty good as it can deal up to 4 hits now. Since there are more images, it makes the enemy easier to hit. It's still insanely easy to avoid though. Bowman stays in his split body form even longer now, which means even longer duration of invincibility frames, whoohoo! I think he's also immune to magic damage.

After toying around with this a little, I discovered that the speed which Bowman's shadow travels are the same as his battle running speed. It all points to one thing - the Bunny Shoes! With Bunny Shoes equipped, Bowman's shadows travels a LOT faster and makes it almost impossible for the enemy to escape! On the other hand, it greatly reduces Bowman's invincibility time. Otherwise, Bunny Shoes makes an excellent footwear for Bowman.

---Whirlwind Fist---

<Bowman starts shaking his bootie for no reason and eventually, a tornado appears in front of him, launching the enemies high up into the air. I just hope the whirlwind didn't come from where I thought it came from... scary thought>

<<Exactly the same>>

|               |                 |
|---------------|-----------------|
| MP Cost: 15MP | LV Gained: 43   |
| Range: 2, 3   | Elemental: Wind |

Quote: "Whirlwind fist"

Ugh... Bowman, what ARE we gonna do with you?!?! Didn't yo momma ever taught you to learn USER FRIENDLY KMs? Whirlwind Fist has some nifty effects... if ONLY you can get it to hit. Ok, Bowman will shake his bootie (DANCING QUEEN!) for FOUR seconds before the whirlwind comes out. At a range of 2, Bowman almost ever be able to pull this off in time before the enemy thwacks him back! So IMO, this move is more useful at long range, where you can stay back a little.

When you do get the whirlwind to hit though, it'll launch any enemy within its path right up into the air for an instant 4 hits, each at half normal attack strength of Wind elemental damage. This sets up tons of juggle oppotunities. For example, Explosion Pill will hit the enemy on their way down, making it an effective Link combo. The whirlwind will travel a short distance before disappating though. Also, avoid using this attack on floating/flying enemies, as when they get launched up high, they'll stay there! You will not be able to hit them unless you cast a spell or use a homing KM. Very annoying.

Also, if you didn't know, Whirlwind fist is UNBLOCKABLE!!! Yeah that's right! It'll launch the enemy right off their feet into the air, no questions asked, except against big enemies. Try this on this enemies with the full-bodied shields.

Whirlwind fist doesn't REALLY improve with Proficiency though. From what I can tell, the radius of the whirlwind gets wider, that's it. With a bigger radius, the whirlwind will be able to launch more enemies within its path and clearing out bigger groups. At P(100), another mini-tornado will form within the eye of the bigger whirlwind which causes it to expand its radius. It seems to get even bigger at P(200) but I can't really tell.

---Burst Fist---

<Bowman surrounds his body in a forcefield while he tackles the opponent>

<<Bowman fires a forcefield as a missile at an enemy>>

MP Cost: 28MP

LV Gained: 51

Range: 2, 5

Elemental: None

Quote: "Burst Fist"

Burst Fist is pretty good. At short range, Bowman's tackle attack is fast, but if the enemy retreats, he will likely miss his attack. The damage done is twice that of a normal attack, making it a strong hit if it connects. I'm not sure if the forcefield can act as a partial-defensive barrier though.

At long range, it's even better. The missile attack is fairly quick with a little lag at the start. There are no damage penalties, so it becomes a very strong missile attack. Good if you've gotta stay away but you need the damage. Also fairly good as the follow-up attack of another missile attack (Firebird Attack, for example.)

At P(100), both version's forcefield will grow bigger. The damage for both version will also be boosted to 250% of a normal attack! Also, the missile version of this KM starts gaining a small area effect, making it even better! At P(200), the damage is boosted to 300% of normal attack and the forcefield is even bigger, almost as big as the globe conjured by by Opera's Gravity Shell! The area effect of the long range version is great, not to mention powerful! This is one of Bowman's strongest KMs. Later in the game however, when your powers increase, multiple-hit KMs will do more damage. So until then, stick this on Bowman and watch him go!

---Explosion Pill---

<Bowman throws a handful of firebomb capsules at the enemy's feet, which explodes upon impact>

MP Cost: 20MP

LV Gained: 66

Range: 3

Elemental: Fire

Quote: "Explosion Pill"

Explosion Pill is one of the most effective mid-ranged missile attacks in the game. It's almost identical to Poison Pill except it's Fire elemental and has a much bigger area of blast. Bowman throws 2 pills at the ground and when they explode, each capsual will send explosive sharpels in a wide radius and causes flame to burst into the air, not unlike a grenade. The explosion is more than enough to hit most airborne enemies, which is a great advantage. Explosion Pill will score about 2 hits per enemy caught within its blasting zone, each inflicting a good normal attack damage. It has great start up and non-existant recovery! Remember though, the missile is sent into the air in an arc, like Poison Pill, so it cannot cause any harm until it hits the ground and detonates.

---Sakura Attack---

<Bowman leaps into the air, punches twice and performs what looks like a hurricane spinning kick>

MP Cost: 36

LV Gained: 74

Range: 0

Elemental: None

Quote: "Sakura Attack"

I don't like Sakura Attack very much. It does hit multiple times but the way it works is next to worthless. Basically Bowman's cheap show off after seeing his teammates' Mirror Slice, Sword Dance and Illusion.

First of all, the first hit will not come out until Bowman leaps into the air. Meaning you not only have to run up close to the enemy, but also survive long enough without getting hit to leap into the air! 90% of the time I used this, Bowman gets snuffed out before the first hit. A better way to use this is through Canceling, but considering Bowman's normal attack range, you're better off sticking to his missile attacks!

Second of all, lighter enemies will be launched into the air along with Bowman, while larger ones won't. Some hits of Sakura Attack will miss a launched small opponent, unless they're in a corner, greatly reduces the damage potential. While against larger opponents, the hit stun from each single hit seems almost non-existent! Translation for non-fighting gamers? The enemy can act while you're hitting them!

Third of all, each hit of Sakura Attack has no range, just like his normal attack! (Even his kicks!) Sakura Attack is also TERRIBLE against flying enemies. What's the point in leaping into the air if you can't even hit air enemies?! Even though Claude's Twin Slash has flaws, it still works against them.

If you do get Sakura Attack to work, it can hit a maximum of 6 times, each at normal attack strength. The damage is worthwhile but it's hard to get Sakura Attack to work in a satisfactory manner. Its MP cost is also a little on the high side, but you'd be surprised how fast it drains when you stick Sakura Attack on Bowman!

At P(240), Bowman will throw 3 energy bolts (Spirit Attack) after he lands for 3 extra hits and good damage bonus. These projectiles work exactly like Spirit Attack. Sadly, Sakura Attack is still one of Bowman's better attacks. THAT just shows you how useless Bowman really is.

===Cancel Ability===

No thanks. Bowman has terrible range in his normal attack, moving so close to the enemy is dangerous. Cancelling to Sakura Attack is probably the only decent option has all his other close range attacks are really slow.

===Link Combo Ideas===

Bowman is a lot like Precis in that he has lots of missile attacks that can be combined in various ways. He also has some weird close ranged attacks that I really cannot get used to and therefore can generate some weird combos.

\* Poison Pill - Explosion Pill                      Rating: 4                      MP Cost:  
Pills, pills and more pills. This is actually my favourite attack as

both pills are quite fast and hits an area. The other way works too but it's not as good because Explosion Pills sends the enemies high into the air and only the cloud from Poison Pills will connect.

<Under construction>

LEON GEESTE

-----

At just 12 years of age, Leon became the head Heraldry researcher and scientist of Lacour. Bless with his super-human intelligence, Leon was praised by everyone around him, except for his parents. His IQ bought him maturity quickly, but the lack of experience leaves his emotional state fragile, like that of a child. Arrogant as he is, his ego often leads him to more trouble than he can handle. Treating everyone like if they're less superior creatures, Leon believes he can handle everything, but he soon realizes that he needs friends and cannot hope to survive on his own. Note Leon is the ONLY Fellpool in this game, weird huh? (He probably came from another planet and got adopted like Rena.)

Initial stats:

|       |       |      |    |       |     |
|-------|-------|------|----|-------|-----|
| HP:   | 1600  | STR: | 40 | LUC:  | 120 |
| MP:   | 300   | CON: | 30 | STM:  | 23  |
| LV:   | 30    | DEX: | 35 | GUTS: | 10  |
| EXP:  | 56883 | AGL: | 5  |       |     |
| NEXT: | 6307  | INT: | 0  |       |     |

Initial equipment: Thick Book, Amber Robe, Suede Boots

|                 |                    |     |
|-----------------|--------------------|-----|
| Initial skills: | Mineralogy         | LV3 |
|                 | Scientific Ability | LV4 |
|                 | Fairyology         | LV1 |

Favourite Food: Carrot Juice (Yuck!!! Cook with Vegetables)

Favourite Instrument: Violin

Favourite Quotes:

- "Thanks to me"

Favourite PA Moment:

- The one in Fun City where he has a crush on every girl in the team.

Even though Leon is a little spoiled brat, he is a good contender for the best magic user in the game but I think he's just slightly behind Celine, just slightly!! When Leon first joins you, his collection of spells ain't really great, since he doesn't have any all-targeted spells. However, Leon gets exceptionally powerful spells later on in the game that are in general, more useful than all of Celine's spells, but it takes a while to get there. Leon has a very narrow choice of spells, which don't make him as versatile as Celine and the enemy are rarely weak against the elements he possesses. The majority of Leon's offensive spells are of Water, Dark and Void elemental, with a few Star and Vacuum spells. Leon is fantastic at spell absorption though, with 2 very unique spells and some unique effects.

Leon has a surprisingly effective normal attack for a magic user, where a ghostly purple armored knight pops out of his book and slices

the enemy. It takes place in under a second and Leon can stand one character width away from the enemy, making his normal attack tied with Opera's as being the best in the game. The only drawback is that his attack power is very weak, and if you haven't got him a good weapon, he'll sometimes do no damage with his attack! Also, his recovery isn't all that good, so the enemy can counter. As for his air attack, a ghostly Valkyrie materializes from his book and extends her spear into the air, piecing any enemy that makes contact with it. It's equally as fast and Leon is subject to less danger afterwards compared to his ground attack, fairly cool as well.

Despite his age, Leon has the highest MP maximum than anyone else and his spells tends to cost a lot less than the other characters. The BIGGEST advantage Leon has over Celine, IMO, is that some of his best spells takes FAR less animation time than equivalent ones from Celine, Noah in particular.

In terms of equipment, Leon is like that of Celine, being able to equip only the worst armor so concentrating on a good MAG boost with Robes is essential. His books ain't bad but don't seem to give him as much of a MAG boost as Celine's Rods. Try make better weapons for him through either Authoring or Customize. The same drawback stated under Celine's section also apply here (slow, never move etc..)

Although Leon is pretty good at stand alone magic, it's quite a waste if you do not try to combine his spells with another magician team member given the special effects of his spells. I HATE putting him in the same team with Rena though, as they don't like each other very much for some reason and keep cancelling each other with Star Flare and Shadow Flare. Leon + Celine is not too bad of a choice, but it leaves your team without a healer, and 3 mages is more than I can handle. So Leon's natural partner would be Noel, since he can heal and has a \_few\_ good spells. Leon + Rena is no problem though, as long as Leon has gotten his best spells so he doesn't have to use Shadow Flare all the time.

#####Heraldry#####

---Ice Needle---

[Leon forms a shard of ice and launches it at the enemy]

|                      |                  |
|----------------------|------------------|
| MP Cost: 2MP         | LV Gained: Start |
| Target: Single enemy | Elemental: Water |

Quote: "Ice needle"

Basically the Water version of Firebolt. It does not seem to have the pause effect though, but it's traveling speed is equally as slow. Damage done is also low (22 at first). Cast this but don't expect to hit anything.

---Wounds---

[A TINY-reaper materializes from the shadows and slashes the enemy with its scythe]

|              |                  |
|--------------|------------------|
| MP Cost: 4MP | LV Gained: Start |
|--------------|------------------|



Target: Single enemy

Elemental: Darkness

Quote: "Wounds"

Wounds is a non-static spell. The damage it does is pathetic (about 60 at first, but it's still better than the other weak spells) so just cast it once to get the voice sample.

---Word of Death---

[A skull appears above an enemy]

MP Cost: 18MP

LV Gained: Start

Target: Single enemy

Elemental: Darkness

Quote: "Word of death"

Word of Death attempts to instantly kill an enemy but I have NEVER gotten it to work at all. This spell is non-static and needs about 2 seconds of casting time. Perhaps your chance of success rises with Proficiency? I dunno. If anyone can make the success rate of this spell rather significant, I'll be dying to know, 'cuz it'll be useful in the Cave of Trials.

Apparently, the Iseria Queen has this spell and casts it a LOT! She also has about 50% chance of success, which is just plain unfair!

---Shadow Bolt---

[A ring of mist encases the enemy and shadow bubbles around the enemy]

MP Cost: 7MP

LV Gained: Start

Target: One enemy

Elemental: Darkness

Quote: "Shadow Bolt"

Quite weak (120-200) but it's worth casting. Why? Because time is paused and the camera rotates while this spell animates, so you can have a good look at some of the character's KM effects in 3D!!! Yes, most of them has 3D enhancement that looks REALLY cool. (Try Opera's Cold Wind for example, you'll see the entire cone in 3D and its hollow center. How cool is that?!)

---Deep Freeze---

[Snow flakes fall from the sky and 3 large icicles comes down crushing the enemy]

MP Cost: 15MP

LV Gained: Start

Target: Radius

Elemental: Water

Quote: "Deep freeze"

Deep Freeze is not too bad, it does about 330 damage at the start, which is useful for a little while and it's good against those Salamanders in the Hoffman Ruins.

On a side note, my characters got Frozen when the enemy cast this spell but I've never froze any enemies with Leon before.

---Black Saber---

[Leon sends a black disc which cuts the enemy]

MP Cost: 14MP  
Target: Line of Sight  
LV Gained: Start  
Elemental: Darkness

Quote: "Black Saber"

This is Leon's only dependable spell when you first get him. It's ok does decent damage (550) and may hit multiple enemies. The AI is quite dumb at targeting though. If you cast this spell manually, aim it at the furthest enemy so anything in between Leon and the target will get hit. The casting time is about 3 seconds.

---Acid Rain---

[Red colored rain falls from a stormy heaven]

MP Cost: 7MP  
Target: All enemies  
LV Gained: Start  
Elemental: Water

Quote: "Acid rain"  
"Oh burning rain!"

Acid Rain is one of the most useful spells in the game. Leon gets this already when he joins and it has a cheap MP cost. Acid Rain will attempt to lower all enemy's Defense and the rate of success is actually quite fair. It doesn't work well on bosses though. You don't really have to seal it because the AI hardly ever casts this spell anyway.

Of course, Acid Rain has other uses. It is fantastic at Spell Absorption, even though it does no damage by itself. Acid Rain will always get absorbed by another spell though, but its Water elemental will only work with Fire, Earth and Lightning spells. The result is an instant 9999 damage to all the enemies that are hit using the dominant spell target. Careful though, because if the enemies are strong against that element, they can actually gain 9999 HP! Also, be very weary of enemy mages, because if you accidentally cast this at the same time as them, it can actually wipe your whole team out by doing 9999 to everyone of you! Also, the defense lowering effect of Acid Rain will also accompany the damage dealt.

The best spell to combine Acid Rain with is Noel's Earth Grave. They're both cheap, fast, easy to time and gives you the most bang for your bucks! The second best spell (if you don't have Noel) would be Celine's Thunder Storm, giving you good value as well. Unfortunately, none of Rena's spells goes well with it.

---Deep Mist---

[Clouds appear near the target to obscure their vision]

MP Cost: 11MP  
Target: All enemies

LV Gained: Start  
Elemental: Darkness

Quote: "Deep Mist"

Exactly the same as Rena's version and I prefer to cast it with Rena, if I ever need it that is. Usually by the point I get Leon, I'd already have 100 Proficiency built up for Rena. The choice is yours though, but seal this if you want.

---Protection---

[A shield falls from heaven to protect an ally]

MP Cost: 28MP  
Target: Single ally

LV Gained: 32  
Elemental: None

Quote: "Protection"

Exactly the same as Rena's spell. Have them both cast this spell during a boss to cover everyone quickly.

---Starlight---

[Leon sends a chain of stars into the air, which in terms shines beams of light down at the enemies, causing an explosion]

MP Cost: 10MP  
Target: All enemies

LV Gained: 34  
Elemental: Star

Quote: "Starlight"

Exactly the same as Celine's version, but by the time you get this, Celine would've gotten some really powerful spells like Thunder Storm. It's sad as this is Leon's first all-target spell! Use Starlight to disrupt enemy mages' concentration because it's fast.

---Delay---

[Leon calls forth a large pocket watch, it hang over the target and resets itself]

MP Cost: 18MP  
Target: Single enemy

LV Gained: 36  
Elemental: None

Quote: "Delay"

Just like Rena's Delay, use it if you want.

---Shadow Flare---

[Pockets of burning dark shadow rains onto the enemies]

MP Cost: 32MP  
Target: All enemies

LV Gained: 39  
Elemental: Darkness

Quote: "Shadow Flare"

Leon's first really good spell and remains so even near the end of the game, since the animation is so fast. Shadow Flare will do around 1900 when you first get it and later its damage can go beyond 4000. Combine this with Rena's Gravity Press for around 2800 when you first get this spell to take down enemies. Leon learn this at about the time where you explore the Eluria Tower, and around the time where Celine gets her Thunder Cloud. He casting time is about 5 seconds, but it's worth it.

---Haste---

[A pocket watch appears above the ally and fast-forwards itself]

MP Cost: 20MP                      LV Gained: 42  
Target: Single ally              Elemental: None

Quote: "Haste"

Exacty the same as Rena's, you might want to seal it.

---Growth---

[An orange sphere of energy clouds one ally and enlarges them temporarily]

MP Cost: 22MP                      LV Gained: 50  
Target: Single ally              Elemental: None

Quote: "Growth"  
      "Power up!"

Exactly the same as Rena's version, seal it.

---Noah---

[A tidalwave sweeps across the screen, threatening to drown all foes]

MP Cost: 35MP                      LV Gained: 54  
Target: All enemies              Elemental: Water

Quote: "Noah"  
      "Be washed away!"

Now you are really starting to get Leon's good spells. Noah is the most powerful Water elemental spell. It will do about 2200 to all enemies on screen, on par with Shadow Flare. However, unlike Shadow Flare, Noah's power can be boosted by wearing a Water Ring (not Aqua Ring) which enhances Water elemental spells. Noah also animates EXTREMELY quickly so if you're sick of Celine's Explode, Noah is an excellent replacement!

---Gremlin Lair---

[A dimensional vortex opens before Leon as a Gremlin appears. He summons forth a swarm of mystic projectiles and attacks the enemies with its paws]

MP Cost: 26MP                                      LV Gained: 60  
Target: All enemies (special)                      Elemental: Void

Quote: "Gremlin Lair"

Gremlin Lair is definately the strongest spell in the game. While each single hit is rather weak, Gremlin Lair in the only multiple-hit spell in the game. If you can wreck up enough hits on an enemy, the combined damaged will be pushed over the 9999 mark, which is the maximum damage for all single hit spells. The closer Leon is to the enemy, the more times the enemy will be hit by the Gremlin's sickles. Similarly, if the enemy is at full screen length from Leon, they'll only get smacked by the sickles a couple of times. After the sickle hits, the Gremlin will also smack each enemy upto 4 times, unless they're killed by the sickles. If an enemy is almost overlapping with the Gremlin, they'll usually get hit 15-20 times by the projectiles! So even if each hit does 700 damage,  $(20+4)*700$  will be enough to boost the total damage well over the 9999 mark! Because of this, it is actually worthwhile to have Leon run up close to the boss before casting this spell.

Note however, the sickles will miss some enemies completely! The mages that are out-of-phase during the casting of Gremlin Lair will be immune to the sickles. It also misses sometimes against other types of enemies, such as the Succubuses.

As if it weren't enough, Gremlin Lair can also be combined with another spell for even more fun. Y' see, if you combine Gremlin Lair with another spell, the damage of the spell absorbed for EACH hit of Gremlin Lair for an unspeakable total damage! Even if you absorb say, Rena's Press, it will still add 200 to each and every hit, making the difference in total damage by the thousands! However, due to the Void elemental nature, you can only combine it with other Void and Star types of spells. Rena is especially effective due to her decent Void and Star spells (Gravity Press and Tractor Beam), Celine's best Star spells (Southern Cross for example) cannot be combined, making her less useful.

---Daemon's Gate---

[A gaint hell's gate appears on the battle field as its door opens to reveal a daemonic sorceror. He waves his wand and attacks the enemy with mystic energy before departing]

MP Cost: 37MP                                      LV Gained: 66  
Target: All enemies                                      Elemental: Void

Quote: "Daemon's Gate"  
"Oh monsters of the mysterious world, answer me!"

Another pretty good spell. The daemon will inflict about 5000-6000 damage to all enemies. The animation time is also fairly good, better than Explode IMO. Leon's most powerful spell through regular means, unless you're into spell Absorption. Void elemental isn't very useful though, I'd admit.

---Dark Circle---

[Pink energy flares gather together to open up a hyper-velocity black hole, which attempts to suck in all weakened enemies]

MP Cost: 65MP                                   LV Gained: 68  
Target: All enemies                           Elemental: Void?

Quote: "Dark Circle"

Dark Circle is not bad. It is an instant death spell and it will ONLY work on enemies who are low on HP, 25% or less of their maximum to be exact. If it fulfills this requirement, the enemy will get sucked into the vortex. It does not seem to fail if the requirements are met, but it does not work against bosses, obviously. It can be useful in the Cave of Trials, where the enemies have a lot of HP. But sometimes it's more of a bother than it's worth, because you have no way of knowing how much HP the enemy has remaining. It's sometimes easier to just hit them to finish weak enemies off.

---Extinction---

[Numerous pockets of material spheres crashes in on the battlefield, causing a dynamic explosion, or something like that]

MP Cost: 90MP                                   LV Gained: Found in Cave of Trials  
Target: All enemies                           Elemental: Void

Quote: "Extinction"

Well, it IS the most popular single hit spell in the game. Extinction will almost always yield an instant 9999 damage on all but it takes about 8 and half seconds to cast without Motormouth, so it can be a little annoying. The animation time is a little on the long side as well, on par with Explode but better than Meteor Swarm. Actually, I only leave this on to get the alternate spell quote, then I'd turn it off because the animation time is a little long. Noah, Daemon's Gate and Gremlin Lair are almost as good.

DIAS FLAC

-----

Two years ago, Dias was like a common towns folk, living happily with his family in the village of Arlia. Then one unfortunate day, his parents and his little sister were slaughtered by a group of bandits. Dias was seriously wounded but still alive. He then left Arlia to wander around the world, training his sword skills and became as cold as steel. Dias was Rena's big "brother", he cared about her a lot. Like Ling from Ally McBeal, nothing nice ever comes out of Dias' mouth. (No offence to Ling fans, as I think she's cool.)

Favourite Food: Chicken Skewers (VERY economical! Cook with Meat)

Favourite Instrument: Cembalo

Favourite Quotes:

- "Hmm, they're good."

Favourite PA Moment:

- None, since all he ever does is sleep...

Although the game makes you think that Dias is really powerful, he's actually not too useful. I mean, yes he has very good stats and equipment, but most of his Killer Moves will only hit once and are quite boring IMO. He's very powerful at the start of the game though, especially if you give him a good STR boost, even if he only hit once, he can dispatch enemies quickly. However, since the maximum damage of a single hit is 9999, his use wains later in the game where a character can do 9999 damage with each hit in their multi-hit Killer Moves like Claude.

His fighting style is very similar to Japanese ninjas and samurais, favouring speed, stealth and pure strength. His weapon is a typical katana, used to strike and resheathed very quickly. Yes, the swinging action of the blade in his normal attack is very fast, but it takes a very long time for him to draw his sword, actually making his attack the slowest in the game! (Surprised?) Any advantages? Yes, there are 2. Dias' attack has a very good range. Although it's sometimes hard to notice, but he can also hit multiple enemies and even ones who are standing behind him! (That's if you manage to pull off his attack.)

Dias' weapons remains strong all through the game, especially when you reach the bottom of the Cave of Trials where the game gives you the ultimate weapon - the Levantine Sword! His Crimson Diablos also doubles his STR as well. Another good point, since Dias is one of the "heavy duty" characters, he can equip the best armor as well. Dias' has very high STR, like Claude and very high STM.

One final note though, if Dias gets Peeped, he'll stay Dizzied longer than any other character for some reason, making the Peep Non a good contender for one of his accessory slots.

Dias has the weirdest set of Killer Moves, as most of them hits the enemy in awkward angles or with unusual timing. Speed is his priority but some of his Killer Moves are quite slow and so are hard to use. He seems to have 2 styles in his Killer Moves, one is to utilize the power of the Japanese legendary bird, the Suzaku (or Phoenix) and the other one is the moon. I think Dias is more of a short ranged character, since his missile attacks can only hit once, but like I've said before, many of his KMs hits in awkward directions so you might have to adjust to his style if you want to use him. His best KMs are Illusion (VERY fast and powerful), Hawk Scream Blast (powerful and can be used as a missile attack) and Firebird Shock Wave if used correctly. I found his earlier KMs to be extremely effective though, especially Crescent Wave and Chaos Sword.

#####Killer Moves#####

NOEL CHANDLER

-----

Noel is a zoologist of some type in Energy Nede, who's job is to monitor and protect the endangered species. He's calm and quiet, who'd rather take the easy way out like running away rather than fighting. In other words, Noel is a big sissy. He loves animals

though, who won't forgive anyone who threatens them. Noel also hides a dark and mysterious past, as he's of a different breed compared to all other Nedian. Sounds like Noel is a bit of an "endangered specie" himself. :)

Initial Stats:

|       |        |      |    |       |    |
|-------|--------|------|----|-------|----|
| HP:   | 2700   | STR: | 61 | LUC:  | 87 |
| MP:   | 340    | CON: | 55 | STM:  | 30 |
| LV:   | 40     | DEX: | 50 | GUTS: | 28 |
| EXP:  | 151862 | AGL: | 5  |       |    |
| NEXT: | 12808  | INT: | 0  |       |    |

Initial Equipment: Metal Fangs, Mithril Coat, Suede Boots, Poison Check

Initial Skills: None

Favourite Food: Big Tuna (I'd expected him to be a vegetarian.)

Favourite Instrument: Illusive Shamisen

Favourite Quote: "What shall we do?" (He has a nice voice.)  
"Whooooo..." :)

Favourite PA Moment: Can't think of one

Noel is a sissy, everybody knows that, but he's also a sad sad character. Ok, so he is a "bit of everything". Noel, being Nedian, can cast healing spells that are not found on Expel. Does that really make him more useful? A little, marginally. His AI is completely screwed up though. Y' see, even though Noel possesses most of Rena's healing spells, his battle strategies are exactly the same as attack mages like Celina and Leon. Of course, it does not mean that Noel's AI won't cast any healing spells at all, but it's just that he puts more priority on attack spells. So often, you'll see a comrade getting injured and the next thing Noel does is cast Foehn. Also, unlike Rena who liked to keep everyone in the team healthy, Noel slacks off often and will ignore a character who's HP is say, above 60%. To make Noel useful, you'll have to control him manually, but we have all learned that controlling a mage isn't much fun. So why bother when Rena gets the job done just like that? \*Click fingers\*

Oh, please don't misunderstand, I have REALLY tried to make Noel useful. But the bottom line? He is useless. Attack spell-wise, Noel falls short compared to all the other mages, Rena included! Do we REALLY need 5 wind spells, when none of them can do more than 2500 damage? In any case, Noel controls the elements Wind, Earth and Vacuum, with come healing and support spells to compensate. Due to spell distribution, Noel isn't very good at Spell Absorption either, except his Earth Grave with Leon's Acid Rain. Out of Rena's spell collection, Antidote and Raise Dead are both missing. Out of all his spells, only Earthquake and maybe Foehn is decent enough to deal constant damage.

Noel's normal attacks are pathetic, perhaps even more so than Bowman's! He is supposed to punch the enemy, but it looks more like Noel slaps the enemy with his sloppy hand. With those quotes and that attitude, I really wouldn't be surprised if he did. Heck! Tri-Ace should've given him a handbag instead, as at least he'll have more range! Even standing right next to the opponent, Noel's attack will



miss more often than not, unless the enemy walks towards him. There!  
Non-existent range! Air attack? Don't make me laugh.

Noel can however, equip weaker fight-type armor, but faces a trade-off of not being able to equip most of the robes. IMO, this is a very bad sign. So yes, he does have a better defense than the other mages, but does this really matter later in the game where enemies can kill you outright regardless of defense? Not being able to equip robes seriously hinders the powers of his spells, which shows.

Noel's stats are equally as pathetic. Being a mage, his INT was a lot lower than Ernest, even though Noel is about 10 levels higher! What's this about?!?! So, Noel really is as bad as they (and I) say he is. His healing spells gives him some value and if you want a second support mage, Noel is your man, although I'd say Opera can take on the part of healer better than Noel.

#####Heraldry#####

---Wind Blade---

[Noel fires a slim tornado at the enemy]

MP Cost: 2MP                                   LV Gained: Start  
Target: Single enemy                       Elemental: Wind

Quote: "Wind Blade"

Exactly the same as Celine's version, except it's weaker as Noel is weaker. Not much use. Non-static.

---Grave---

[Stone spikes raises from the ground to hurt the enemy]

MP Cost: 4MP                                   LV Gained: Start  
Target: Single enemy                       Elemental: Earth

Quote: "Grave"

Non-static but since the spikes appear beneath the enemy, it'll hit most of the time. Not like you really need this or anything, as it only does about 80 damage. An interesting fact about this is that, if the enemy is airborne, the spikes will actually appear beneath the enemy in the AIR!!! A scary sight, you've gotta see it!

---Tetnus Wind---

[Numerous wind sonic-booms gather and slams at the enemy]

MP Cost: 10MP                               LV Gained: Start  
Target: Single enemy                       Elemental: Wind

Quote: "Tetnus Wind"  
      "Oh wicked air!"

Noel's unique spell. The damage is pretty pitiful at this point,

around 370 or something. Not much use other than casting it a lot to get the alternate spell quote.

---Sonic Saber---

[A wind disc is launched at the enemy at high speed]

MP Cost: 11MP                                   LV Gained: Start  
Target: Line of Sight                        Elemental: Wind

Quote: "Sonic Saber"  
       "Oh blade of atmosphere!"

Another wind spell, slightly stronger than the last. It works exactly like Leon's Black Saber except it's Wind elemental. Still, weak.

---Magnum Tornado---

[A tornado forms a dome of wind around the enemy]

MP Cost: 18MP                                   LV Gained: Start  
Target: Radius                                Elemental: Wind

Quote: "Magnum Tornado"  
       "Oh vortex of atmosphere!"

Another Wind spell, do we REALLY need it? Wind spells are useless as they cannot be combined and they just happen to be in Noel's possession, who's weak as hell at magic. The damage is around 500, which is still not good.

---Earth Grave---

[Sharp blades of stone raises from the ground to hurt the enemies]

MP Cost: 16MP                                   LV Gained: Start  
Target: All enemies                         Elemental: Earth

Quote: "Earth Grave"  
       "Oh tusk of earth!"

Well, it's still a weak spell, around 400 damage, but at least it hits all enemies. The best use for this spell is to combine with Leon's Acid Rain for an instant 9999 damage to all. They're both cheap and relatively easy to time. The blades raises really high out of the ground though, so it'll hit all air enemies without any problems.

---Energy Arrow---

[Numerous purple energy darts accumulates and explodes about the enemy]

MP Cost: 16                                    LV Gained: Start  
Target: One enemy                            Elemental: Vacuum

Quote: "Energy Arrow"

Exactly the same as Celine's, except for the fact that she has gained it half a centuary ago while this is Noel's best spell when he joins! Scary though, and now you finally come to realise how weak Noel is! Not much good now, as it still can only do about 600 damage.

---Mind Absorber---

[A red/orange bubble of energy is sucked out of the enemy and gets absorbed by the caster]

|                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| MP Cost: 1MP      | LV Gained: Start  |
| Target: One enemy | Elemental: Vacuum |

Quote: "Mind Absorber"

Exactly the same as Celine's. With a good MAG, this can actually absorb about 70-80MP! It's pretty good for Noel, except by that time, you're probably much better off in using a Black Berry instead.

---Heal---

[Green sparks swirls around a character from head to toe]

|                     |                  |
|---------------------|------------------|
| MP Cost: 3MP        | LV Gained: Start |
| Target: Single ally | Elemental: None  |

Quote: "Heal"

Exactly the same as Rena's first spell. Do I really have to write an evaluation for it? The only good it'll do now is a piece of the Voice Collection.

Healing =  $100 + (\text{MAG} * 1/4) + (\text{Prof.} * 0.7)$

---Cure Light---

[A sphere of light appears above the target's head and heals them]

|                     |                  |
|---------------------|------------------|
| MP Cost: 11MP       | LV Gained: Start |
| Target: Single ally | Elemental: None  |

Quote: "Cure Light"

Stronger than Heal. Useful for a little while but it's not enough.

Healing =  $800 + (\text{MAG} * 1/2) + (\text{Prof.} * 1.3)$

---Cure All---

[Noel conjures up a large cross and a light blue dome, all allies are covered in blue sparks]

|                    |                 |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| MP Cost: 18MP      | LV Gained: 41   |
| Target: All allies | Elemental: None |

Quote: "Cure all"  
"Oh healing light!"

Noel's strongest healing spell for a while, until he gets Fairy Heal, which Rena should have already.

Healing = 1200 + (MAG \* 1) + (Prof. \* 1.7)

---Silence---

[Noel summons a 4 armed spirit, and the spirit extends 2 of her arms out]

MP Cost: 14MP                      LV Gained: 41  
Target: All enemies              Elemental: None

Quote: "Silence"

Exactly the same as Rena's spell. If you don't have Rena, then use this, but it will not be very effective at all. You're better off casting Noel's weak weak spells to disrupt the enemy mage's concentration.

---Neutral---

[The character gets dazzled by brilliant blue showers]

MP Cost: 17MP                      LV Gained: 45  
Target: Single ally              Elemental: None

Quote: "Neutral"

Exactly the same as Celine's spell and it's probably more useful on Noel. Gets all those nasty spell effects like Delay off. Use it if you get the chance.

---Blood Sucker---

[A green bubble of energy is sucked out of the enemy and gets absorbed by the Noel]

MP Cost: 12MP                      LV Gained: 49  
Target: One enemy              Elemental: Vacuum

Quote: "Blood sucker"  
"Mind if I borrow that?"

Ugh... Blood Sucker is not as useful for Noel as for those annoying mages. You'll only ever get around 400 HP sucked out of the enemy, which is never enough. It's kinda fun though. However, if you combine this spell with another spell, say Tractor Beam or Eruption, Noel will get a lot of HP back.

---Foehn---

[A rapid air current sweeps across the battle field]

MP Cost: 25MP                                          LV Gained: 52  
Target: All enemies                                      Elemental: Wind

Quote: "Foehn"  
       "Oh burning air!"

Finally, a somewhat decent spell for Noel! Sick of those demons who keeps casting it? Now you'll have fun with this. Foehn is, sadly, the most powerful Wind elemental spell in the game except it's not very powerful, even for Noel's standards. Foehn will only do about 1200 to all enemies, which is quite low for an ultimate spell, even for Noel's standards. An ok spell for ok damage. Heck, even Rena can do better!

---Fairy Heal---

[A beam of light shines upon a character from the heavens and angels descends.]

MP Cost: 30MP                                          LV Gained: 55  
Target: Single Ally                                      Elemental: None

Quote: "Fairy Heal"

Great spell as it's the strongest healing spell in the game. Don't expect Noel to heal as much damage as Rena though, as Noel has laughable MAG stats. Build it up and it can be equally as good.

HP Restored = 2800 + (MAG \* 2) + (Prof. \* 4)

---Dispel---

[A large runic green circle appears below the character and gets showered by blue sparks]

MP Cost: 24MP                                          LV Gained: 60  
Target: Single ally                                      Elemental: None (?)

Quote: "Dispel"

Another great spell. However, Noel gets this at a ridiculously high level when you're supposed to go explore the 4 Fields. If you can level Noel up to this point, then good on you, because Noel will start to become more useful in battles.

---Curse---

[The target is engulfed in a beam of blue light as skulls pounds the target]

MP Cost: 20MP                                          LV Gained: 66  
Target: Single enemy                                      Elemental: None

Quote: "Curse"

Exactly the same as Celine's spell. Not very useful since the situation for this spell to be useful hardly ever arises.

---Bless---

[A light embraces the character as rings of rainbow resonates about them]

MP Cost: 18MP                               LV Gained: 72  
Target: Single ally                       Elemental: None

Quote: "Bless"

Exactly the same as Celine's. It's probably more useful on Noel though. Still, cast this during tougher fights when the enemy blocks your attacks a lot. Especially useful later in the game though.

---Fairy Light---

[Many beams of light shines upon the allies from the heavens and multiple angels descends.]

MP Cost: 40MP                               LV Gained: 77  
Target: All allies                         Elemental: None

Quote: "Fairy Light"

HP Restored =  $2200 + (\text{MAG} * 2) + (\text{Prof.} * 4)$

The same as Rena's. Noel is not as strong at magic as Rena so this spell is not as effective for him, but it's still insanely useful. If you ever want to replace Rena with Noel for some reason, then this spell is a must.

---Earthquake---

[A stone golem rises from the ground, beats the earth 3 times with a large hammer, sending shockwaves across the battle field]

MP Cost: 65MP                               LV Gained: 82  
Target: All enemies                       Elemental: Earth

Quote: "Earthquake"

Noel's last and best spell. Earthquake is extremely powerful, even for Noel's standards. It will do about 4000 too all targets. Considering Noel has low MAG, the potential of this spell may actually be on par with Extinction and Meteor Swarm! It has a heavy casting price tag too, but it's worth it. The casting time is terrible, around 8 seconds without Motormouth. Definately Extinction standards!

However, Earthquake is not without its flaws. Unlike Grave and Earth Grave, the ripples of Earthquake will NOT hit flying and airborne enemies, which severely hampers its usefulness. Enemies who are momentarily launched into the air by fighters will not get hit either. The AI is also quite stupid as he'll cast this spell on a

bunch of birds or something. I had to eventually turn this spell off because Noel's AI is so bloody dumb.

CHISATO MADISON

-----  
Chisato is a carefree newspaper reporter from Central City in Energy Nede. She is very smart, charismatic and talkative. Chisato is always on the run for the biggest scoop she can get her hands on, and she'll do anything to get it. Although she's somewhat clumsy, she can defend herself in a tough situation. Better be careful, because her next scoop could be you. \*Gasp\*

Favourite Food: I have no idea what her favourite food is. It's supposed to be a Fruit Sandwich but I heard that the programmers were on drugs and forgot to program it in. Hmm, a badly polished game just got worse.

Initial Stats:

|       |        |      |     |       |     |
|-------|--------|------|-----|-------|-----|
| HP:   | 3000   | STR: | 104 | LUC:  | 119 |
| MP:   | 310    | CON: | 60  | STM:  | 32  |
| LV:   | 40     | DEX: | 150 | GUTS: | 42  |
| EXP:  | 151862 | AGL: | 50  |       |     |
| NEXT: | 12808  | INT: | 0   |       |     |

Initial Equipment: Stun Gun, Mithril Coat, Jeanne's Helm, Gale Earring

Initial Skills: Copying LV4

Favourite Instrument: Organ

Favourite Quotes:

- "We'll manage"

Favourite PA Moment:

- The one with Leon, ends with Claude saying "(Once a reporter, always a reporter.)"

- In the church of Cross where she's praying... for another big scoop!!!

Tied with Opera being my favourite character in the game. Chisato is one of the weaker fighters in terms of strength, but like Opera, she's has excellent Killer Moves that makes up for it. It is kinda sad since Chisato joins last, so you have to power her up a bit to make her truly useful. She also has fewer KMs than other fighters.

Chisato carries around with her her trusty stun gun, although she never really uses it (doesn't it sound a bit like Sharon from SFEX2? Chisato looks a LOT like Sharon!!) except for 2 special occasions. Don't let her feminine image fool you, she's actually a Blackbelt in Shingu style Jujutsu! She has a variety of different Killer Moves, from utilizing her own body as a weapon to a "special delivery" from the Defence Force.

Chisato's normal attack is a back kick but it's very slow to come out and recover. (If you look closely, electric sparks can be seen coming from her feet! Hmm, does she wear her gun on her feet or something?) I don't use it, as her martial arts Killer Moves are MUCH faster and more effective. Her air attack is also fairly average. She pulls out

her stun gun (looks like some kinda baton charged with electricity on both ends) and jumps into the air, shocking her enemy in the process. She doesn't have very good ways of dealing with flying enemies though, so you'll have to use this to hit airborne enemies most of the time.

Since Chisato joins very late in the game, her weapons are already outdated. Even the new weapons you can buy for her are extremely weak compared to the other characters'. Unfortunately, her weapons will never go pass 1000 points of attack power. Her normal weapons will either have an elemental effect attached to it or drains her MP like hell. It's not until the Cave of Trials where she can pick up the Weird Slayer, a fairly good weapon. Defense-wise, she's just like the other girls, can wear the weaker fighter type armors. She does have one advantage though and that is she's the only other person who can wear the useful Algol shield.

Chisato has below average strength, but it's higher than Opera's. She does however, have the highest DEX out of all characters, which definately helps out during her multi-hit KMs. One other thing to note, I think Chisato has the highest HP out of all characters and highest MP out of all fighters at equal levels! It's true. When she was like 2 levels below Claude, she had about 100 more HP!!! (Not like that it matters very much.)

Chisato has a truly awesome set of Killer Moves to say the least. She has some unbelievably effective long range KMs as well as solid short range attacks. No matter what range she's in, her Killer Moves will hold the award for hitting the most number of times, as well as Peeping the enemies easily. She also uses some very sophisticated tools in her Killer Moves like business cards and the cell phone. However, the problem with her is that she's quite a weak character to put in the front line and she's not a very good stand-alone long range fighter, since her projectile KMs are extremely slow. She's an excellent member for aiding/when aided though. Chisato's best Killer Moves are Rising Dragon (strong, very fast and hits very many times) and Tear Gas (long range and hits \*MANY\* times.)

#####Killer Moves#####

---Twister---

<Chisato jumps back and rolls into a ball, then she rolls along the ground, tackling the enemies in the process>

|              |                  |
|--------------|------------------|
| MP Cost: 5MP | LV Gained: Start |
| Range: 3     | Elemental: None  |

Quote: "Twister"

Twister is an ok KM for starters, but it gets better in the long run. At first, it's a little hard to hit. It kinda resembles Ernest's Arc Attack though, but it's nowhere is as bad.

It seems weird because Chisato runs towards the enemy, then jumps back (like Bowman in Death Siege) which can either be dangerous or can evade enemy attacks. Twister also has the trait of a "body projectile", so if an ally is between Chisato and the enemy, Chisato will slam into the ally instead, just like Arc Attack. Chisato also



does not roll too far, like Arc Attack, so if the enemy moves away, she'll miss.

If she does connect with this move however, it'll hit up to 3 times, each doing normal attack damage. It also pushes the enemy back significantly, so you can trap an enemy in a corner with this.

As you gain Proficiency, Chisato will start spinning faster and gains more momentum. At P(100), Chisato can hit about 7 times if the enemy is in a corner and travels a little further. At P(200), Chisato will spin so fast that it can hit like 10 or so times, no kidding!

#### ---Burning Cards---

<Chisato reaches for her pockets and brings out 3 business cards, then throws them in 3 directions towards the way she is facing>

|               |                  |
|---------------|------------------|
| MP Cost: 10MP | LV Gained: Start |
| Range: 4      | Elemental: None  |

Quote: "Burning Cards"

Burning Cards can be a deadly KM if built up and when she does, NOTHING is safe from it! It doesn't seem to be that great at the start, but like almost all of Chisato's KMs, it gets a LOT better each time they evolve.

The start up is rather slow, around 3 seconds or so. The cards travel fairly rapidly after she throws them though. One card will fly straight ahead of Chisato, while the other two will travel about 30 degrees away from each side of the center card. So if there are many enemies ahead of Chisato, they'll be in for a big surprise. Each card causes normal attack damage. It's also a good KM to use to clear out large groups. Since Chisato can stay a fair distance away from the enemies, she will usually be safe from counter attacks. The recovery of this move is good.

At P(100), Chisato will pull out and throw 5 cards. Even better still, at P(200), Chisato will first throw 3 cards, then 5 cards in a quick succession, perfect for crowds. So you can see, it's next to impossible NOT to get hit by a card at this time, unless you're behind Chisato! Bigger enemies can actually get hit by multiple cards, especially if they try to advance on Chisato. Once a card hits, it disappears so it cannot travel through multiple opponents. Use this KM to clear out large groups of enemies for a very low MP cost. It does not, however, work well against aerial enemies.

#### ---Whirlwind---

<Chisato nails the enemy with a spinning kick combo'd into a low trip kick>

|               |                  |
|---------------|------------------|
| MP Cost: 14MP | LV Gained: Start |
| Range: 0      | Elemental: None  |

Quote: "Special Attack: Whirlwind"

Whirlwind is extremely fast to come out, almost no lag at all. I

usually use this instead of Chisato's normal attack. The first hit will launch lighter enemies into the air and the rest of the attacks misses. Against larger, heavier enemies, Whirlwind will inflict 3 hits, each at normal attack strength. Since Chisato barely moves during this attack, a successful Strong Blow will push the enemy out of her thrashing combos, so turning Strong Blow off is mandatory.

At P(100), Chisato's onslaught continues with an added-on axe kick for an extra hit at normal damage. At P(200), Chisato will throw in a flash kick at the end of the combo, adding another hit or two. Again, this move is better used on bigger targets as some hits will push smaller enemies away, preventing further damage.

---Ten Thousand Volts---

<Chisato pulls out her stun gun and releases 3 electric pillars that travels along the ground>

|             |                     |
|-------------|---------------------|
| MP Cost: 22 | LV Gained: 44       |
| Range: 3    | Elemental: Thunder? |

Quote: "Ten Thousand Volts"

Good to see Chisato finally uses her weapon. Ten Thousand Volts works really similar to Burning Cards. It seems a little faster but the pillars travel at a much slower rate. It will also disappate after traveling a short distance. The pillars are a little more bunched up together than Burning Cards though. Each hit does normal damage and is electric/lightning elemental, I think.

At P(100) and then P(200), Chisato will release 5 then 7 pillars, forming a WIDE arc that clears out the path before her. Since its traveling speed is quite slow and that it disappates after a while, I find Burning Cards to be more effective most of the time. However, each pillar reaches high enough to hit flying enemies, which is an advantage that Burning Cards does not have. Better still, chain both of them together in a Link Combo for big crowds, to REALLY make sure that no one gets away from Chisato!

---Flame Thrower---

[Chisato pulls out a heavy Flamethrower and fires a short burst of flame]

|               |                 |
|---------------|-----------------|
| MP Cost: 20MP | LV Gained: 53   |
| Range: 3      | Elemental: Fire |

Quote: "Flame Thrower"

Flame Thrower is a cool tech. At first, Chisato's flame has a very short range for a beam attack, only reaching as far as about 4 character-widths. The number of hits generated are kinda hard to count, but if the enemies are close, you can probably wreak about 6 or so hits, each are worth a quarter of Chisato's normal attack damage. The timing at the start is a little long (and the animation is pretty cute) but since you can stay a distance away from the enemy, it won't really matter. Usually, the lag time actually lets the enemy get in close to you so you can connect more hits!

At P(50), P(100) and P(150), the range of the fire will increase slightly and each evolution brings in about 2 extra hits. It's a great KM to use on pursuing enemies and works on multiple opponents. Since Flame Thrower generates so many hits, Guts, Mental Training, Below The Belt and Feint are checked for each and every hit. So if your stats and skill levels are high, you can wreak up a LOT of damage bonuses through these support skills.

At P(200), Flame Thrower faces a DRAMATIC change, it almost works like a completely different tech! Now, the start-up is a lot longer, as Chisato has to lift and aim the heavy Flamethrower in the air, firing a vertical burst of flame. A second later, pockets of fire will rain down on the enemies and covers a fairly large radius. At first, I was surprised, even enraged by this change! I LOVED Flame Thrower but this change made it absolutely worthless. However, there are a few advantages to this change. First of all, Chisato is ill equipped when dealing with flying enemies. Flame Thrower II is a good anti-air attack. The radius that the falling flame covers is also fairly good, capable of hitting multiple enemies. The damage also seem a little different. Instead of doing many weak hits, Flame Thrower II will hit about 4 times for most enemies that gets caught in the blast and each hit is at normal attack strength, much stronger than the quarter of Flame Thrower I. I still like the former though.

---Raising Dragon---

<Chisato punches the enemy twice then hits them with a lunging elbow>

|               |                 |
|---------------|-----------------|
| MP Cost: 17MP | LV Gained: 62   |
| Range: 0      | Elemental: None |

Quote: "Special attack: Raising Dragon"

Raising Dragon looks like a rip-off of Karin's (from Street Fighter Alpha 3) Gourenken series, but anyhoo. Raising Dragon is a great up-close-and-personal kinda move and is great for beating the crap outta the enemy, the things that fighters like Claude and Ashton does best. The punches seem to have little range by themselves, and the whole move does not carry Chisato that far. Sneaking up behind an enemy with this move will most likely to score a miss. There's no start-up, like Whirlwind, so head-on is a little better, or so it seems. I used this to replace Chisato's normal attack. It also has the properties of Whirlwind, in that it will knock lighter enemies away unless they're in a corner. Each hit does normal attack damage, obviously.

While not much by itself, Raising Dragon is fairly good for punishing the enemies in close range. At P(100), Chisato will tag-on a backflip after the elbow for 2 more hits and it will also knock lighter enemies into the air, allowing for juggles perhaps? At (P200), Chisato will then jump into the air and follow up the combo with a classy elbow drop for another 2 hits. Lighter enemies knocked into the air by the backflip will be caught by the elbow smash, so no worries. Note that Chisato's combo will take quite a while to finish, so if the enemy gets caught by her combo, they will be disabled for quite a while, allowing your reinforcements to aid Chisato. At this stage, Raising Dragon makes a fine close up KM that complements the likes of Claude and Ashton. It is also great with Cancel and Link Combos.

---Tear Gas---

<Chisato calls her agent on her cellphone and up pops a machine with a skull resign. Chisato pulls the lever and releases choking gas>

MP Cost: 32MP                      LV Gained: 68  
Range: 4                            Elemental: None

Quote: "Tear Gas"

Tear Gas seems to be a lot of people's favourite KM. It hits the most number of times out of any KM in the game. So many that, in fact, it's impossible to count.

There's a lot of start up delay, similar to that of Ten Thousand Volts. The beam of gas reaches fairly far, on par with most beam attacks like Hyper Launcher. Any enemies getting caught into the choking smoke suffers the consequences, a rapid hit effect that does tons of damage. If an enemy is fairly close to Chisato, it seems Tear Gas can hit them about 15-20 times! Combat skills and Guts are checked for every hit, boosting the damage up high. The damage of each hit seems to be a little weird, about 40% of Chisato's normal attack. Uh well, the bottom line is, boost Chisato's attack power to dramatically increase the power of this move.

Since it hits so many times, it Peeps the enemies that're hit with insane ease. It also reaches high enough in the air to hit most airborne enemies. Trap the enemy against a corner so they can't escape to abuse Tear Gas. Or sandwich them between Tear Gas and Opera's Hyper Launcher. Mmmmm... nifty. :)

---Preparation---

[Chisato pulls out her cellphone to ring up Nede Defense Force. She waits and ducks as bombs come bombarding the enemy from the air]

MP Cost: 25MP                      LV Gained: 76  
Range: U                            Elemental: None

Quote: "Uh... 3A? One missile please."  
      "Defense Force, can you read me?"  
      "One missile please!"

Preparation is a wacky move that only the Japanese nutcase can think up, but it works well. Preparation can be Chisato's most powerful move if used well.

Ok, I've gotta put it to ya. Preparation is the SLOWEST thing in the whole game, spells counted! The frames where Chisato rings up the Defense Force takes about 6 seconds. It's so slow you can actually see Chisato punching in the numbers on her cellphone!!! You'll have to wait another 4 seconds, while Chisato does her funny animation, before the bombs arrive. However, I'd say that the wait is worth it. It's kinda hard to count the number of bombs that gets dropped on the battlefield, but there's a LOT of them! Preparation also has limited homing properties. The bombs will always drop from where the enemy is standing and that makes this move useful for bosses. The bombs blasts

in a HUGE radius (I'd say even wider than Precis' Barrier, the biggest radius blast in the game!) so it's next to impossible for the enemy to escape. The bombs also seem to be unblockable.

I said "limited" homing properties because if the original target that Chisato selects is dead before the bombs arrive, Chisato will NOT choose a new target. The bombs will fall at the place where the original target died.

Preperation also does GREAT damage, like it should. The targeted enemy usually gets hit about 3-5 times, each at TWICE the normal attack damage! Surrounding enemies also take a couple of hits too.

As it grows, even more bombs will be delivered. At P(240), the center target will get hit about 8 times (it's kinda hard to counter). So the high damage, large radius, homing capacities and unblockability outweighs its huge lag by a mile! In that case, put Chisato somewhere at the back and play her like a mage character, and stick the crowd-killer Burning Cards on her other slot. It's also a good idea to have 2 other fighters holding the enemies back while Chisato does her thang. ;)

#### ===Cancel===

Cancel works well for Chisato too, but her normal attack can be hard to pull off successfully since it's quite slow. She has very fast close ranged Killer Moves though, so it Cancels nicely. Rising Dragon and Whirlwind are both good choices, Twister can work too, but the enemy can recover and block since she has to step back a little.

#### ===Link Combos===

Chisato is the queen of Link Combos?? She certainly seems to be, since Chisato has many Killer Moves that works in similar ways, and can be chained into greater effects. The down side of her Link Combos is the fact that since many of her Link Combos has delays at the start, it can be quite hard to target faster enemies properly. Stick to her short ranged Link Combos if you're fighting fast enemies.

\* Whirlwind - Rising Dragon                      Rating: 5              MP Cost:

This is probably Chisato's best Link Combo. Both Killer Moves are insanely fast, hits many times and are quite damaging. The link in between is perfect. Like the normal Killer Moves used by themselves, both of these Killer Moves have certain hits that pushed away lighter enemies, preventing scoring the maximum number of hits. Turning off Strong Blow is mandatory! The combo works the other way around too.

\* Twister - Whirlwind                              Rating: 3.5              MP Cost:

Twister - Rising Dragon                          Rating: 4              MP Cost:

I don't like Twister very much since it's hard to hit the enemy and has a start up delay, but once you do manage to get it to connect, the rest is sweet.

\* Ten Thousand Volts - Burning Cards          Rating: 4              MP Cost:

Two similar Killer Moves with similar effects. I simply love this combo, it's almost impossible for the enemies NOT to get hit by it! Use it to clear up large groups of enemies. It works the other way too, but either way, it has some start up delay so be careful.

\* Tear Gas - Flame Thrower                      Rating: 4              MP Cost:

Oh my, now here's a goodie. The Tear Gas has a big start up delay but once you pull it off, you can basically land at least 30 hits! Both version of Flame Thrower will work, although you do need to move to get closer after Tear Gas. The reverse also holds, but I don't like it as much since the break between Flame Thrower and Tear Gas is too long, the enemy can move out of the way unless they get Dizzied by Flame Thrower. For a challenge, count the number of hits you've scored!

|                                  |           |          |
|----------------------------------|-----------|----------|
| * Burning Cards - Preparation    | Rating: 2 | MP Cost: |
| Ten Thousand Volts - Preparation | Rating: 2 | MP Cost: |
| Flame Thrower II - Preparation   | Rating: 3 | MP Cost: |
| Tear Gas - Preparation           | Rating: 3 | MP Cost: |

I must admit, this is not a very good combo, since Preparation takes forever to come out! But this is the only way I know how to link Preparation, since it cannot be used as an LC starter (be nice if it could though.) Not good at all during random fights but can come in handy during some boss fights, if you keep the boss busy by having another member attack them. Use the #2 or #3 (evolved) on flying enemies.

\* Ten Thousand Volts - FlameThrower II Rating: 4 MP Cost:  
Nice, it's also the only decent combo for Flame Thrower after it evolves. Excellent on flying enemies but is fairly good on group enemies too.

#### TIPS

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Just bits of useful stuff here and there. There isn't all that many here but just you wait.

=> Quick Proficiency for healing Killer Moves

This is easy, even better near the end of the game when your MP is high. Take the character you want to build up healing Proficiency (Bowman, Claude or Opera) and equip them with the best equipment. As for accessories, 1 Fairy Ring and one that regenerates MP would be ideal, plus a pair of Bunny Shoes. Equip the healing KM (Healing Stars, Secret Medicine or Energy Sword) and another reliable KM. I recommend Lightning Blade for Opera, Ripper Blast for Claude and Explosion Pills for Bowman.

Now go to the arena and select Bully Battle! I think that's the one that you have to beat a hang of enemies with a single ally, so select the ally you wanna build up. Now kill off all enemies except for one and keep running away from it and use your healing KM non-stop. Your MP will last for an EXTREMELY long time because of the Fairy Ring and MP regen. When you run out of MP, use a Blackberry until it runs out. Then just die or try to finish the fight. I once gained 200+ points of Proficiency for Opera!

=> I hear voices arrrggghhhh!!!

Thanks to FeralNoa <FeralNoa@aol.com>

You can listen to the voice sample that you didn't register in the voice collections with this, but only if you've registered an adjacent voice sample. All you gotta do is move the cursor to the adjacent panel and press the X button, then almost immediately (before it loads that voice sample) press left or right on the D-pad, it'll load the panel you moves the cursor to and not the adjacent

panel. You've gotta get the timing just right though, else you'll hear the wrong voice sample.

This is also the only way to listen to those voice samples that are impossible to get, such as Leon saying "Firebolt" or Noel's "Thunderbolt". Also note that Rena's "Tractor Beam" is not in the voice collections! I've heard that it was the original voice sample from Japanese version of the game! Weird!

=> Musical thieves

Having problem with Pickpocketing? Something you really want but the victim keeps discovering you? Well, if you have your "thief" play the Violin, Hail the Goddess, your chances for stealing are increased as well, just like Item Creations. However, remember that the music will immediately change if you enter a new screen, so do this only in rooms with many people or people with really good items that you want.

Wearing a Beret may also increase PickPocketing chances.

## TALENTS

=====

I really want to start on this section because I feel that most people are getting the wrong idea about talents.

Talents are supposed to be certain thing that a character is good at, which will help in certain Item Creation skills. In theory, a character with the necessary talent(s) but with lower speciality level will be more successful at Item Creation than someone trying to do the same thing with a higher speciality level but hasn't got the necessary talents. However, in practice, it becomes more like: a character will basically never succeed without all the necessary talents, since the Item Creation system is cursed.

There are 10 unique talents and each character will start with some as they join your party. Fortunately, the missing talents can be gained by doing related activities. For example, the Pitch talent can be learnt by practicing the Musical Talents speciality command. Upon acquiring a new talent, that character will be rewarded with 100SP to spend.

These are the 10 talents in this game and when they're used:

- \* Originality: To be creative and use one's imagination.
  - Used in Customize and Metalwork
- \* Sense of Taste: Sampling food and judge their taste.
  - Used in Cooking
- \* Dexterity: Nimble fingers and can be moved freely in any way.
  - Used in Metalwork, Pickpocketing, Compounding and Machinery
- \* Sense of Design: The urge to create new things.
  - Used in Art and Machinery
- \* Writing Ability: Can express your thoughts in words.
  - Used in Authoring
- \* Sense of Rhythm: Can handle beats and rhythms well.
  - Used in Musical Talents, I think the composing playing part
- \* Pitch: To be able to grasp musical tones well.
  - Used in Musical Talents, does not seem to affect composing
- \* Love of Animals: Getting on well with animals.
  - Used in Familiar
- \* Sixth Sense: Your natural instinct

- Used in Scout
- \* The Blessing of Mana: Can channel magical energies through body
  - Used in Alchemy

Anyway, reading the various FAQs about this game tells me that many players takes talents as restrictions, being bound from doing certain activities. However that is not the case. I take talents to be "tools" that helps me in this game, as well as giving me various bonuses. To an extent, you should be able to use them to your advantage rather than being constrained by it.

#### ---Acquiring new talents---

This is what I mean. To me, a lack of talents is a blessing. Why? Because I can learn the undiscovered talents manually and gain the special SP bonuses, that are extremely useful and helps me to get all the skills I want earlier. For each hidden talent that you uncover for a character, he or she will immediately gain 100SP to use.

Acquiring new talents are actually quite simple, if you know how, but it can be boring and time consuming. (It took me about 4 hours to learn most of the talents for 6 characters.) Some of the talents are SOOOOOO easy to learn that I feel kinda cheated by the characters in that they probably had that talent but didn't tell me so!!!

To learn a new talent that your character does not already know, simply repeat the necessary activity until they learns it. Save before you do it though, but you don't necessarily have to reload after a few tries. I usually use up all the ingredients in my inventory, and if they still haven't learnt it, reset (or in certain situations, give up.)

#### ---Preparation---

You don't have to prepare too much but hey, you HAVE to know the right skills right? It's for this reason, you cannot usually learn all the talents until you get to the Lacour continent so you can purchase the level 3 skills. I ALWAYS start learning new talents when I arrive at the new continent, since the game can get a bit hard during that time and there are usually too many skills that I want to learn.

Anyway, Sense of Taste and Sense of Design can be learned earlier, as the necessary skills and ingredients can be bought in Herlie. Celine can also learn Dexterity or Originality when she first joins.

Now the ingredients. How am I going to afford the ingredients you ask. Well, there are certain ways to make it easier.

- 1) Steal the Mischief from Filia. That way, you can just walk around to obtain countless numbers of raw gems or metal ores necessary for Metalwork.
- 2) The Mischief will also give you Pet Food, which are used for Familiar.
- 3) The Survival command can net you some free cooking ingredients, but it's much easier to buy them from the shops because hey, the eggs only costs 10Fol each!
- 4) The other ingredients can only be bought in Hilton or Lacour. They're not that expensive. If you don't have enough money, invest in the Playfulness skill (cheap!) and you can earn TONS of cash!!!



Now what? Learn the skills of course! Having one level of speciality is enough to learn all the talents. You should (as always) master Perseverance first, so most other skills need only 1SP!

- \* Learn Craft, Esthetic Sense and Mineralogy if you want Originality and/or Dexterity (total 3SP)
- \* Learn Kitchen Knife, Recipe and Good Eye if you want Sense of Taste (total 3SP)
- \* Learn Writing if you want Writing Ability (total 1SP)
- \* Learn Esthetic Sense and Sketching if you want Sense of Design (total 2SP)
- \* Learn Musical Instrument and Musical Notation if you want Pitch and/or Sense of Rhythm (total 2SP)
- \* Learn Whistling and Animal Training if you want the Love of Animals (total 2SP)

Sixth Sense is learnable but it's very unreliable. Learn Danger Sense if you want to attempt it, but since it's a useful (and cheap) skill you may wish to give it a try. The Blessing of Mana cannot be learned though.

---Putting it action---

Below are the easiest ways of learning each talent:

- \* Originality: Easy! Simply use Metalwork and start working on the gems. You might want to start from the cheapest ores though (Iron or Silver) but since you can get unlimited number of them through the Mischief, it doesn't really matter. You will fail and make either a Gaudy Earring, Weighty Ring or Useless Decoration but don't worry about it. You should be able to do it in under 10 tries.
- \* Sense of Taste: Not my favourite definitely. Try your hands at Cooking and any ingredient, but don't waste your rare ingredients though, as it's not worth it. Some characters do this well while others are terrible at it. If you feel they're taking too long (over 30 tries) then stop! Don't waste your time!
- \* Dexterity: Do the same thing as for Originality and it's equally as easy. Alternately, you can try Machinery but it's MUCH more expensive!
- \* Sense of Design: Fairly easy but quite expensive. Buy Magical Clays as they're cheaper than the Canvas and use Art. Shouldn't have too much of a problem. Alternately, you can try your hands at Machinery but they're more expensive so I recommend Art.
- \* Writing Ability: I think I like this the least. You must have one skill over level 5 to attempt to write a book in Authoring. I usually attempt this last after I've earned enough SP through the other talents to learn all the important abilities like Kitchen Knife and Scientific Ability. If you really want to get on with this then I suggest you invest 5 SP on a cheap ability like Mineralogy or Recipe. Now keep trying and you'll eventually acquire this talent, however, most characters are not very good at that so if you've tried about 40 times and still doesn't work, reset and give up.
- \* Sense of Rhythm: One of the top 3 easiest talents to learn, there are 3 stages.
  - 1) Buy 20 Feather Pens and 20 Conductor's Batons.
  - 2) You have to first write a song. Try using a character with both

music talents, if not, use someone with the Sense of Rhythm as it seems to affect the composing part. If you still don't have such a character, try using Rena to write a song for the Lyre. It will take many tries but since you don't have to go through that annoying "morphing" animation, you can actually do it very fast. If you've used up all 20 Feather Pens then reset and try again. It shouldn't take too long, usually a couple of minutes at worst.

3) Now try to play the song with the character who wishes to learn this talent, it should sound out of tune. Keep playing it until you learn the talent. If you use up all 20 Conductor's Batons, reset. You don't have to wait until the song is over or anything, just keep playing "over it" and a window will eventually pop up saying that your "Sense of Rhythm worked." Like I said, this is extremely easy, it should take you a minute at worst!

\* Pitch: The other REALLY easy talent to acquire, learnt by the same way as the Sense of Rhythm above. The best thing about these 2 musical talents is that nobody, and I repeat, NOBODY will have any trouble learning them!

Note: I do not know if you can learn either of the music talents through the composing part, as I've never done so. If you can confirm this please e-mail me.

\* Love of Animals: The final REALLY easy talent to learn. It can be either a piece of cake or impossible for 2 of the characters. Simply use the Familiar command over and over again, keep trying to call the bird and press the button like crazy. If you've used up all 20 Pet Foods, reset and repeat.

\* Sixth Sense: HARD!!! You have a slim chance of learning it when you change your Scout setting. If you select a Scout setting (don't even have to change it, I think), you'll have a chance of learning it. However, it seems that the chance for learning is the highest the first time you select a setting, and anything after that, the chance of success drops significantly. You'll have to exit the menu in order to get the relatively high chance back. So, it is possible to learn Sixth Sense if you just keep tapping the X button, although it takes a LOT of time. (I've heard that it takes about 15 minutes for Ashton, who's actually good at the talent.) If you have a turbo controller, fire away. But there are more effective and easier ways to acquire Sixth Sense.

Also few other things to note. It's been confirmed that Sixth Sense can be learned by any character in any slots, not just the first as I previously suspected. However, you may have a higher chance of acquiring Sixth Sense for the character in the first slot, since I've only ever been able to acquire this talent for my first character.

Now the last note. I have only learnt this talent while on the world map. I do not know if it's possible to learn this in dungeons or towns.

Anyway, a good way of learning Sixth Sense is wait until disc 2 and use Orchestra. Go into the menu and select to play Orchestra, then go to a character's Specialty menu and select a Scout option. If you learn it, great, if not, you have few options.

- a) Scroll down to the next character you want to learn and alter his or her setting.
- b) Keep selecting the options until you do learn it. (Low chance.)

c) Exit Specialty and use the remaining music to create a couple of items. I found this useful because the chance for the top 2 options to happen are both quite low. Using Orchestra and option c, I've been able to learn Sixth Sense for everybody in 1-4 plays, pretty good huh?

The Blessing of Mana: No this talent CANNOT be learnt no matter what. Only magic users start with this talent.

---Those impossible skills---

Some talent may seem to be impossible to learn, but some character does actually have talents that they can never learn, fighters and The Blessing of Mana talent is a good example. Look below for those talents that are impossible to learn, as well as the really really hard to learn ones.

For the really really hard to learn talents, I recommend you forget about it until the beginning of disc 2, since they're REALLY THAT hard (I remember spending about an hour going through all 80+ of my cooking ingredients multiple times to try to get Claude to learn the Sense of Taste) and are not worth the time you put into them. What you need to do is to have at least 6 different musical instruments in your inventory (you can buy new ones in North City in disc 2), 8 different songs and learn the Orchestra super specialty. Now use the Orchestra command and try the Item Creation skill. Not only will Orchestra highly increase your Item Creation chances, you'll also have a much bigger chance of discovering a talent. Use this method for those hard to learn talents. Yes, the Orchestra will even raise the chance of learning Sixth Sense!

---Talent traits---

Now before you start, let me tell you about the talent traits of each character. All characters will have traits in their talent acquiring pattern. For example, a character may always join with a certain talent already learnt, or they learn certain talents much easier than others. There are good traits as well as bad one, such as the fact that some character cannot learn certain talents. These traits are the only thing keeping you from utilizing the talent system to the max.

In my experience, the boys are in general, MUCH better than the girls at acquiring new talents, especially Bowman, Leon, Ernest and Dias!

Claude: Claude either starts with many talents or very few. He comes with the Writing Ability a lot, and if he doesn't, he can learn it easily. He learns most talents very easily, except for Sense of Taste, which is next to impossible without Orchestra. Claude can learn Sixth Sense but he will never start with it, although the chance of him discovering it is quite low.

Rena: Rena almost always comes with Dexterity and she always has The Blessing of Mana. She learns the Sense of Taste VERY easily, often with just one try! Sense of Design is pretty hard though, but not impossible without Orchestra! She learns Writing Ability easier than most but learns Originality slightly harder than most.

Celine: Celine almost always start with the Dexterity talent and she always has The Blessing of Mana. She's good with most talents, but

not too hot with Writing Ability and Sense of Taste. It's impossible to learn Love of Animals! Don't even try! I remember trying for thousands of times without success.

Ashton: Ashton often starts with Sixth Sense and/or Sense of Taste. And if he doesn't, he can learn them easily. Good to average at most talents but cannot learn the Sense of Design at all!

Precis: Has very good chance of starting with Sixth Sense (and quite often, the ONLY talent she has when she joins!) However, if she does not start with it, I don't think you can acquire it through Scout. Learns Originality, Dexterity and Sense of Design extremely easily, but is not good at Sense of Taste and Writing Ability.

Opera: Always starts with the Dexterity talent. She's pretty bad since she cannot learn neither Sixth Sense nor Love of Animals (like Celine, I've tried it even more times with her!!) Not too hot with Writing Ability nor Sense of Taste either, making her a fairly bad character talent-wise!

Ernest: Ernest was the best! He mastered ALL his skills without much trouble (not counting The Blessing of Mana, since no fighter can learn it.) He has a good chance of starting with Sixth Sense and will learn it easily if he doesn't. I don't think he's too great with Sense of Taste, but most characters ain't. (He usually don't start off with many talents either, which is a good thing. :)

Bowman: Another character who masters every talent easily! Great at acquiring Sixth Sense! Actually, he suffers from Sense of Taste as well, and acquiring the music talents for him seems to be more difficult than other characters. (And Dexterity is really hard if he doesn't start with it. \*sign\*)

Leon: Always has Writing Ability and The Blessing of Mana. Actually Leon's the best character at acquiring new talents, nothing he can't do well.

Dias: Always has Originality for some reason, and start with Sixth Sense quite often. Good at Sense of Taste but sucks at Writing Ability, as usual.

Noel: Always have The Blessing of Mana but does NOT always have the Love of Animals!!! Yes, it's strange but it's true!!! His other talents would be a piece of cake to learn by now, since you'd have access to Orchestra already.

Chisato: Chisato does NOT always start with Writing Ability talent and like Noel, you can get her other talents really easily since you'd have access to Orchestra when you get her. She learns Sense of Taste easily though, as predicted since she's supposed to be a good cook.

#### THE UGLY SIDE OF THE GAME!

=====

So you've seen the good parts but have you seen the bad? There are 3 horribly annoying features in this game that keeps it from being a perfect classic. If I was to write a review, SO2 will only score 8 points out of 10, simply because of these 3 things!

### ---#1 The Bugs---

There are WAYYYYY too many bugs in this game, they happen to me almost on a daily basis. Here's some of the bugs I've encountered:

#### 1) Hanging up

This is the most common bug in the game, I'm sure you've all met with this. For some reason, the game fails to load up after a battle and freezes, with no sound and no visuals. Even the analogue is dead! The reset button is probably the only way out. This happens throughout the game but seems to be the most common at the Sanctuary of Linga, I've had 5 crashes there already! Be careful and try not to gain experience at that cursed cave and save every few minute if you can.

Happens a lot in the Hoffmann Ruins, Fienal, and the Cave of Trials as well, or so I've been told. The Fields too.

#### 2) Variation of hanging up

Like above, only this time with music. I've encountered this twice and there's still no way out. (That I know of.)

#### 3) Screwed up combats

There are also 2 variations of this I've encountered. The first is when it froze and an error message popped up saying "Cannot read data from disc" and almost immediately it went away and combat continued as usual. And no my PlayStation is not too old, I bought it at the beginning of the year.

The second variation is at the end of the combat (ie, experience screen), where the game pauses for about 5 seconds to load every frame of animation, or something like that. Then when the combat ended, it hung up like #1!

#### 4) Where's my ring?!?!

Thanks to FeralNoa for this one. She told me that if you de-equip the Mischief that I'm sure that you've worked very hard to earn in the Battle Arena, it will disappear from your inventory forever!!! So don't do it, you don't want to loose your 3 hours of hard work!!!

#### 5) Freezing portals...

Gosh it's cold!!! I HATE this one!!! This happens when you use a teleport portal like the ones in Fienal. During the sequence where your character vanishes in the beam of light, the game freezes and cannot be defrosted. The sounds/analogue, everything goes dead like Absolute Zero. I've encountered this once on the 7th floor of the Cave of Trials when I made through seven floors in one go WITHOUT exiting to save! You can probably tell without having me to tell you that I was furious! Be careful of this in places with teleport portals, and either use the stairs or Go Home Frog!'s in the Cave of Trials if you can.

#### 6) Bugs or Sprites?

So basically, the sprites seen in the save screen are screwed up and turns into another character every other frame. I've seen Leon turning into Ernest and back again and Ernest and back again and.. you get the idea. FeralNoa said she's also seen Ashton turn into an Opera look-alike, Precis turn into a Bowman look-alike, and Bowman turn into a Dias look-alike, all strangely colored. There's also rumored that there's a Marianna look-alike too.

#### 7) No foxy ladies

Thanks for Happy Matt for this one. I've never encountered this one but Matt said that the game will freeze occasionally when you use any of the portraits for the female characters, that's Celine, Precis, Rena, Chisato and Opera's portraits. So save before hand.

#### 8) Analogue lock

I don't know if this is a problem with the game or a problem with my Dual Shock controller but the Analogue would just turn itself off during battle occasionally, really annoying! (I've had the same problem with FFVIII as well.)

#### 9) Speed problems and polygon clippings

Not a big deal really, just that sometimes the loading times are a bit slow and unstable. Nothing comes up for like 10 seconds then when you're about to reset, everything comes back! Also the polygon morphing animations in most Item Creation procedures will slow down and annoy you. It's most frustrating when you're playing the Violin or Orchestra in the background since the music continues at normal pace while the IC are slowed down, meaning you've wasted half of the song!

10) Sticks and stones can break my bones, but rocks can get me stuck! Well, remember those boulders in certain battle fields? If you stand too close to it and another character (enemy or ally) comes to close, they may get pushed INSIDE the rock and get suck! This is like one of the stupidest type of bugs in all of video game history. (TR4 has that problem too.)

#### 11) Good bug, bad translation team!

Remember the save-swap trick/glitch that was featured in Ian Kelley's comprehensive guides? Well, it ain't no more! Whenever you select the "Data" option in the menu while artificial music is playing in the background (by "artificial" I mean ones generated by either the "Music Talent" or "Orchestra" commands), the music will immediately stop! Pretty nasty huh? As that bug is essentially one of the most useful ones and can be "abused" in lotsa wonderful ways.

#### 12) Voice bugs

Sometimes the game will load the wrong voices. I entered Opera in the Duel Battle while she was the 5th character on my roster (ie, 1st slot of the reserve team). In battle, the game loaded Bowman's voices for Opera (Bowman was the 1st character in my fighting team) and the game loaded Bowman's L1 KM when I used Opera's LI KM.

#### 13) Whhhhhaaaaahhhh!!!

Thanks to Happy Matt for this.

Happy Matt said that he encountered this bug once in North City. When he entered that town, he couldn't exit it without the game crashing, every single time. However, it proved that staying a night at the inn solved the problem. So if you're having this problem, stay at the local luxurious hotel and you'll be all fine.

#### => Solution?

This is Happy Matt's bug fixer and it actually has some effect. Just tilt your PlayStation at a 45 degree angle or just flip the whole thing up side down. Things will start clogging up when your Playstation heats up and this helps your PS by emitting more heat out of the system. If you have a fan, feel free to use it as well. It

won't completely fix the problem but it does help!

=> Solution #2?

Another one I've heard is that loading the voice samples will also clog the system. If you tap the buttons too quickly, the game may not have enough time to load the samples and may lock up. Don't be so aggressive and give both your joystick and yourself a break.

---#2 Item Creation---

Yes yes, the Item Creation system is very innovative and so, but the success rates are INSANELY LOW!!! You basically have no chance of success with most Item Creations if you have no talents. Even with maximum specialty skill, the right talents, aiding items and the Beret (without Orchestra), your chance of success would only be about 60% or so at best!!! At this rate, the people in the game will NEVER have anything decent to eat! (Bitter Juice for breakfast, Smelly Ricecakes for lunch and Rotten Sashimi for dinner.)

This makes music skills extremely important in the game, but hey, who's bothered to play those boring tunes EVERYTIME you want to make something? It just gets extremely tedious over time.

Fortunately, your Item Creation chances will increase as your level increases and some IC commands have a higher likelihood of succeeding than others. For example, all my characters (with talents, level 150+) will succeed 95% of the time at Cooking, Identify, Compounding and Art. However, other IC specialties like Reproduction, and Super Specialties like Reverse Side will still fail about half the time without Orchestra. This is nice but it's level 150+ I'm talking about. That's enough to complete the game and go halfway into the Cave of Trials, where you don't need to create many items except maybe duplicating stuff.

There are 2 commands that rarely fails though (thank god!) and they are Pickpocketing, which works most of the time and playing the music with Musical Talents which never fails as long as you have the 2 necessary talents.

---#3 The AI---

The ally AI, while better than most other games that implements AI controlled allies (eg, FFT), is still quite incompetent! For example, the magic users will NEVER move unless they're approached too close by the enemy, which makes enemy missile attacks extremely dangerous. The fighters are better though, but often won't properly both Killer Moves you've assigned for them and will ALWAYS use regular attacks on flying foes even if they have something better. Also, certain characters have their "favourite" attacks, meaning they'll use nothing but that attack throughout the whole fight!!! (Like Claude's Head Splitter, Ashton's Leaf Slash and Precis' Hop Step.)

This is bearable in Earth difficulty setting, but once you get to the harder ones you'll realize how useless those characters are. The combat is running in real time, but, if the enemies can become more intelligent in the harder difficulties, why can't the allies?

The terrible AI and the awkward combats system makes a deadly combination.

I've spent hours typing this up and having to deal with migraines and OOS all the time so please do not rip off my FAQ. The best things in life are free and free stuff ain't very common nowadays y' know, so feel "free" to use this "free" FAQ for all "free" purposes.

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Excuse me for an insanely incomplete FAQ but I'm really busy. I'll try to complete it as fast as I can. Thanks again for reading and have fun with this, as well as up and coming games! I know I will!

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