

ELEMENTS II: HEARTS OF LIGHT

-Adventure Guide-

By Jeremy Zink

Hello and welcome!

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Section 0-1:

~Introduction~

Ten years ago, in 2006 (May 24th, to be precise – at 7:44 PM), I took it upon myself to make my childhood dreams of game design a reality. The result – after seven long, heartfelt years of development – was *Elements: Soul of Fire*. Released on my own personal website on December 2nd, 2013, it stood and still stands as a testament to my dedication and, frankly, the miraculous providence of God Who carried me through. And now, thanks to the help of many wonderful people, it's widely available and anyone can experience the joy of the story I wrote from my own heart; the outpouring of my very soul.

But 2006 wasn't the very beginning of it all. Much longer ago, who knows when – perhaps the year 2000 or earlier – I conceived *Elements*, born of unrestrained childhood inspiration. My ideas evolved rapidly. First there was *Elements I*, then *II*, then *III*... and that wasn't all. Before long, the framework of the entire series had been constructed. It's become much deeper and more sophisticated with time, but the core of my vision remains. And the truly awesome thing? The stories are already written. The character designs are there. All that's left – the big part – is to transform it all into reality. I did it before... I can do it again!

I'm delighted to be able to share my work with you sooner via the Early Access format. The scope of the *Elements* series is just so huge; the first game took seven years to develop, after all... and while I hope to beat that record this time around, being able to release my work incrementally definitely lightens the load. And you won't have to wait until the full game is complete to see the continuation of the plot, either! How great is that? Bear with me, and we'll tell the greatest story ever told... my word is my sword!

Well, that's enough history for now. Shall we get into the meat of it?

Section 0-2:

~Core Systems~

Your success in *Elements II* largely depends on your ability to think ahead and strategically manipulate the game's unique systems to your advantage. But the beast bites back, I'm afraid, so you'd better heed my tips.

Sleeping 24 Hours A Day Is Not Healthy For You

You may find it very easy to abuse the days of the week by staying at Inns an infinite number of times. However, this may cause more damage than you can ever recover from, as your Sloth attribute rises each time you stay at an Inn (or sleep anywhere, for that matter). I strongly discourage staying at Inns for an entire week all at once, just to make it a certain day; for example, if there's a certain thing you wanted to do on that day, but forgot about it until it was too late. Saving the game often – and keeping backup saves – can help prevent this kind of situation. You may find Filetags useful for this reason.

Instead, make a note of all that you plan to do on any given day, and wait until that day comes to do it. Days also progress naturally in the course of the plot, so staying at Inns isn't the only way to change the day of the week. Of course, this could also trip you up by throwing a monkey wrench into your carefully-scheduled plans.

It's also okay to stay at an Inn to bypass one undesirable day (e.g. if it's the Day of Fire when you're going to Mt. Loki for the first time. Yeah... don't do that), or if the next day will provide a particular advantage. It's just that multiple Inn stays will really start to rack up your Sloth, and you generally

don't want that. Of course... you could also just do whatever you want, and see what happens; just be mindful of the potential repercussions of negligence. Nevertheless, the last thing I want is for you to feel restricted while playing my game. By all means, have at it!

The Dark Side of the Attributes – An Example

I did want to note one example of how your Attributes could go wrong. A friend of mine who played the game in an unfinished state some time ago found themselves in a terrible predicament where all their stats were super-high... except for their Attack, which was single-digit. Why? They fought many, many battles with just Sky and Monique, who both naturally contribute Compassion to the party. If you're so compassionate, you're not really going to want to go around hurting things, now are you? Not only that, but they also religiously prayed at church (no pun intended, nevermind yes it was) to keep their negative Attributes at an absolute minimum, including Bloodlust – which contributes to your Attack. Without even realizing it, they had turned their characters into pacifists. The more Sky and Monique fought, the less they wanted to... until they just didn't care anymore.

Prior to that, this same friend approached me with concerns regarding the degeneration of their HP, and as it turned out, they had stayed at Inns to change the day of the week just a few times too many (see, I told you it isn't healthy to stay in bed all the time).

But these problems really illuminated something to me. They enlightened me and helped me see just how deep and rich the game really is, how balanced and even realistic the systems I've set in motion are. We all possess both positive and negative attributes that define us as individuals. There's no one who's either all good, or all bad (well, maybe). And trying to change that would destroy us as autonomous entities, just as it destroyed my friend's poor characters.

If you take anything from this, let it be that Bloodlust might be the one “negative” Attribute you don’t want to pray down. But more than that, I hope it helps you realize just how important *balance* is. I know it did for me.

The school in Cirplet has all the information you could ever want regarding the various Attributes and their complex relationships with each character’s stats.

Section 0-3:

~Guide Preface~

It wasn’t my intention to make this guide an intensive *walkthrough* so much as a collection of tips pertaining to the finer points of the game, mingled with general advisory where I deemed it appropriate.

Furthermore, I’m not 100% certain that it will encompass the final game in its entirety; rather, it may serve as a “beginner’s guide” of sorts, to help new players get on their feet and understand the way the game works, carrying their gained knowledge forward.

In any case, I hope you find the information contained herein useful and an enhancement to your enjoyment of the game!

Section 1 (finally!):

~Cloudy Skies Ahead~

Before doing anything (aside from waking up, that is), I recommend that you pop open the Options menu (just press the “O” key) and configure the game to your liking, if it isn’t already. Giving the Beginner’s Manual on the desk a look

wouldn't hurt, either (you'll carry it in your inventory later, and can access it anytime by pressing the "M" key).

Check everything in Sky's room, then proceed to explore the rest of your house. You'll come to know and love Sky's wonderful sense of humor (I think he takes after me). Granny will commission your first quest, a humbling quest indeed: A trip to the deli for some good old cow juice. Get on it, soldier! In the name of BREAKFAST!!

Circlet

The town of Circlet provides multiple opportunities for your ethics (or lack thereof) to shine, both in your conduct and the way you respond to others' questions. Be mindful of your words and actions!

There are lots of items to find lying around the town, but as you'll learn in school, *taking treasure from residential areas counts as stealing*, and will therefore not only increase your Avarice, but *decrease* your Virtue (Avarice rises a little bit when you get non-residential treasure, too, but there's no penalty to your Virtue in that case. You also gain Diligence either way). Another thing you'll learn, however, is that you can pray at churches to decrease your negative Attributes (for an ever-increasing price, of course). Therefore, I personally condone grabbing everything you can, because you're sure as heck going to need it. And if you wanna be really bad, you don't even have to go to church at all. Ha!

You can also activate a couple of Quests by talking to certain people (press "Q" to quickly access the Quest-tracking interface).

Once you've returned to your house with the milk and progressed the story, you'll be able to leave the town and get on with the game.

Seaside Cave

Technically, you can double back and go here right away (by staying at the Inn or sleeping in Sky's bed for three days to make it the Day of Water), but I recommend waiting until you've gained a few levels and maybe another party member. But it's totally up to you.

There's lots of gold to find here, if you know where to look. You'll slide down a sand stream above the cave when you try to cross it, then find **Lead Boots** in the "mezzanine" between the levels of the cave. Apart from their relevance here, they serve a useful secondary function: As they decrease your Agility to 1, you can therefore use them to engineer the execution of Combos. Not that you should walk around wearing them; equip them, mid-battle, only in the instance in which you wish to use them. Controlling the order in which Combos are executed can make all the difference and help you score bigger chains.

Once you figure out how to cross the sand stream, you'll find **Treasure Map #1** and **Time Shard A** on the other side. Follow the directions on the map (while on the *world map*) to find a whopping **1,000 gold**. Oh, and be sure to equip Sky with the shard; it'll grant him Elemental skills.

Alavon Meadow

When you're ready to move on, head north of Circlet to Alavon Meadow. I recommend fighting at least until you reach Level 2; your HP will skyrocket the first few times you level up, and that's really important. In addition to any restoratives you may have snagged in Circlet, you've been given three loaves of Fresh Bread for your journey (aren't I generous?). Fresh Bread doesn't just heal HP – it also gives your Defense a boost, which is very useful at this early stage of the game. All of the other food items at Delia's have similar stat bonuses.

If it's the Day of Water, you can find **Mr. Fisher** from Circlet by the pond. He'll give you the **Angler's Bangle**, an accessory that makes your physical attacks

extra effective versus Aquans (like the Ugly Ducklings at the meadow or Fishmen and Kappa elsewhere). More useful than you'd think!

On the Day of Air, **Sylphs** appear at the meadow. An item they drop is required for a Quest.

On the other side of the meadow, there are lots of places you can go, but that darned Alavon Safety Bureau is blocking most of them. That won't stop you from entering a secret passage on the first floor of the **Lake Cave** and finding **500 gold** and a **Purple Stone** that you can make into jewelry, though!

Also stop by the **Saint's River** and talk to the girl there. Your Attributes will shift depending on how you reply to her question.

Royal Road

I recommend that you keep fighting here until you reach Level 3 (or Level 4 if you're a bit more patient); if you're lucky, you may win some nice items. Aside from that, there isn't much to do here – just pass right on through and enter the town of Alavon. Oh, and activate the Plutonic Portal on your way in!

Alavon

The people here don't seem too friendly to outsiders... but you gain Charisma (and sometimes Wisdom) with each person you talk to, so get chatting. One guy (on the east side of town, with brown hair) will only spill his guts if your Charisma is 20 or more, so remember where he is.

There's a Quest where you play hide-and-seek with a little boy. Finding him the first two times is easy enough, but the third time is markedly trickier. I'll give you a hint: He's not actually in the main town area. Oh... was that too vague? Gee, um... I don't know how else to put it without giving it away. He's, uh... indoors. Does that work for ya?

In the school, search the bookshelves to find a **Scroll of Promotion**. This useful item raises a character's level by one. I recommend using it on Sky to boost him to Level 4 or 5 (if you've done the little bit of leveling up that I suggested).

There's lots of stuff you can steal in the church, but... that's pretty terrible, isn't it? Oh well, you can just pray away your sin at the altar in the sanctuary, so who cares. While you're at it, search the middle of the Phoenix emblem on the carpet to find an ultra-rare (and ultra-valuable) **Phoenix Feather**. And don't forget to rob the jugs lying around.

By talking to a certain person in the town, you'll discover a way into the castle. In the secret passage that leads into the castle, keep heading up and pass straight through the wall to enter a secret room with a bunch of treasure. Equip Sky with the **Bronze Sword** and **Chain Mail** (unless you were somehow miraculously able to afford the Silver Sword and Salamander Mail from Alavon's shops), then go back out into the main hallway and head left to meet a certain someone. I'll leave you to figure out how to progress through this sweet little part of the story; don't worry, it isn't hard.

During the attack on Alavon, make good use of Monique's **Tend**; it's pretty cheap to use and restores about double the amount of regular Medicine. Attacking and Guarding builds your FP (which is what Tend and all other non-elemental skills run on).



Boss: The Scourge

Whoa, this dude. He hits pretty hard, so keep an eye on your HP. You'll really want Sky to be Level 4 or 5 for this fight. Monique can deal equally good damage, but if your HP gets low, healing should be her first priority. Watch out for his multi-targeting **Tail Whip**.

Guard if he builds power for the next attack; you might not survive otherwise.



After the fight with the Scourge, you'll be given a character examination by Monique's retainer, Doyle. This isn't just about some paranoid little fat guy; your results seriously count, because they determine how your Attributes will develop from this point on. Answer honestly if you wish, or use this table to achieve your desired result:

Question 1

Yes: Valor/Imprudence/Bloodlust + 0.1

No: Cowardice/Wisdom/Compassion + 0.1

Question 2

Yes: Wisdom/Sloth + 0.1

No: Imprudence/Diligence + 0.1

Question 3

Yes: Compassion + 0.1

No: Avarice/Coldness + 0.1

Question 4

Yes: Diligence/Avarice + 0.1

No: Sloth/Charisma + 0.1

Question 5

Yes: Virtue/Coldness + 0.1

No: Bloodlust + 0.1

Question 6

Yes: Charisma/Cowardice + 0.1

No: Virtue/Valor + 0.1

Each answer adds a differential to the respective Attributes whenever they're affected, positively or negatively. These numbers aren't just a one-time thing; they're added every time an Attribute changes, and it adds up over time. Unfortunately, you've got to take the good with the bad. ~~Or just answer all "Yes" or all "No" and the Attributes will be neutralized~~ Ahem.

When you're done with the test, go to the upper-rightmost part of town, where the garden with the scarecrow was. There's now a break in the wall, and you can find a very valuable **Leaf of Life** beyond.

Section 2:

~A Royal Investigation~

After leaving Alavon with ~~Sky's new girlfriend~~ Monique, you're able to enter the lower levels of the Lake Cave, an optional dungeon like the Seaside Cave. But you may want to hold off until you grab another party member over in the village of Nanabash. You can also return to Circlet and see an optional scene with Monique there; such optional scenes typically increase the involved characters' Friendship points. Be aware that the day of the week will change after this scene.

Nanabash River Valley

Enemies are generally becoming thicker-skinned now, so watch yourself. You may want to stock up on some Antibiotics from the item shop in Alavon, as both **Fishmen** and **Kappa** can poison you with their physical attacks. Monique

learns the valuable Detox skill at Level 6, but it might be a little while before she levels up.

On the Day of Water, **Undines** appear in this area. They drop some interesting items, one of which is required for a Quest back in Circlet (the old lady who wants pieces of all the Elementals). Be aware that some enemy drops are rare.

After talking to a certain guy in Nanabash, you can find **Water Shard A** here. Walk down to the sandy riverbank and wait at the very left edge until a sparkle comes floating downstream. Grab it as it passes by the water's edge. If you miss it, leave the area and re-enter, and try again. The shard will greatly, and I mean *greatly* increase Monique's utility. How refreshing it is to flush a whole horde of enemies with a single magic spell! Just beware that some enemies absorb certain Elements (in this case, obviously aquatic enemies will absorb Monique's Water-elemental attack magic).

Nanabash

As usual, talk to everyone and check all the boxes, barrels, and so on. You can find **Treasure Map #2** here, which leads to a pair of **Silver Earrings**.

There is a sequence consisting of four things you must do in order to progress the story here (the first three can be done in any order):

1. Talk to the red-haired little girl who gives you candy.
2. Try to stay at the Inn.
3. Try to enter the house at the far northern end of the village.
4. Talk to the blue-haired girl by the well.

After doing all this, a cutscene will play out, and you'll have a new party member afterwards. Also, you can now raid that house where the crazy screaming woman was before. You can enter the well, as well - and on the Day of the Sun, the water level is lower, allowing you to descend further and find a **Blue Stone**. You're keeping a list of all these special events on each day, right?

With Cloe now in your party (buy her a Boken, by the way), you can feel pretty confident about tackling the Lake Cave. Of course, there's some other business you have to take care of first, but you'll eventually find your way back there...

You also might want to pay a visit to **Autumn Hill**, south of Nanabash. It's a nice place.

Lake Cave

Make sure you have a decent supply of Antibiotics before coming here, as several enemies can poison you with their attacks. There are a couple of ice-sliding puzzles to get through, but they shouldn't pose much trouble. Be sure to pick up all the gold, the **Iron Ore**, the **Life Elixir**, and... oh yeah, **Ice Shard A**. Give it to Cloe, and now you've got a deadly magical duo on your hands!

Mt. Loki

I highly recommend coming here on the **Day of Water**. Both Monique's *and* Cloe's magic will be powered up, and the enemies, otherwise positively brutal, will stand no chance (actually, their magic is powered up on the Day of the Moon, too, so that also works). Notably tough customers include **Golems**, who can fry you with lasers from their eyes, and **Bull Boys**, who have thicker hides than elephants. Use single-target magic against them, as it's stronger/more concentrated. Makes sense, right?

Alavon Forest

Watch out for large groups of **Bandits**; they can steal a *lot* of your hard-earned gold very quickly. **Acorn Archers** very annoyingly inflict a variety of status ailments on you, and **Chipmonks** counterattack 20% of the time (but they

only counter physical attacks, not magic). On the Day of Earth, **Gnomes** appear – another Quest-related enemy.

There's a healing spring in the middle of the forest. And a couple secret passages through the dark grass (including one that leads to a **Life Elixir**), but you really should try to find them yourself. :p



“Sorta-Boss”: Cutterpillar

Okay... it's a *Cutterpillar*... what!? But wait, hold on... it turns into a “Cutcoon” and regains all its health (and more), then emerges as a vicious **Cutterfly**. This little sucker means business.

If it's the Day of Water (or Moon), you'll probably very easily take him down with Monique's and Cloe's magic. Otherwise, you might be in for a bit of a struggle (and if you have no magic at all, you probably don't stand a chance).

The Cutterfly can attack twice per turn and absorb whatever damage it deals to restore its health, stun you with **Wing Scales**, hit everybody at once with **Leaf Storm**, and incinerate a single character with **Sunbeam**. Um... good luck!



Southport

Ahh, the big city! If you've saved up a decent amount of cash (and assuming the Bandits in the forest didn't steal all your money), you finally have the opportunity to upgrade your equipment, but spend wisely. Buying everyone a **Battle Sash** might help give your attacks more of an edge, but if you actually want new weapons, you'll have to take it up with the **Smith**.

You should have at least a couple of Iron Ores and a Silver Ore by now, more if the Golems on Mt. Loki were nice to you (be sure to pick up the ore that's glittering behind the Smith's shop, by the way). Provided you can afford it, I highly recommend making the Silver Ore into a **Silver Sword** (or a **Silver Spear**, if you favor Monique; she can equip both, but the spear is stronger – and also a lot more expensive).

The people here have some helpful information for you. One girl (blonde, south edge), like the guy in Alavon, won't talk unless your Charisma is at least 20. As always, raid every crate, barrel, and whatever else you can find; especially in the bar.

You can also sell your soul and buy **Pepp Pep** from the “dealer” in the alley next to the bar. But I warn you, it'll cost you... and not just gold.

There's a Quest to bring a homeless woman and her two children food from Delia's store, back in Circllet. Before you bemoan walking all the way back there, remember that there's a **Plutonic Portal** right outside Southport that takes you directly to Circllet. Your reward is **Treasure Map #3**, which leads to a **Rusty Sword** 20 steps south of Mt. Loki (but of course, you can't directly walk 20 steps south of Mt. Loki). This can be tricky to find, but just search the sand on the north side of Alavon Meadow, and you should find it pretty quickly. The Rusty Sword can be repaired by the Smith in Southport and becomes a Silver Sword – and it's a lot cheaper than if you'd bought one in Alavon.

When you're ready to move along with the story, talk to one of the guards near the Arena (which you can get to from the exit on the north side of town) and ask about the tournament. A cutscene will ensue.



Boss: Wreckers

This fight would be a heck of a lot tougher if your new buddy's Agility wasn't 1. Pathetic as that may seem, it actually works in your favor, because you need

to engineer your attacks to kill the Wreckers in a certain order, and if you kill one out of order, another will explode and instantly kill you by dealing 9999 damage.

So have Sky attack Wrecker #1 and the stranger attack Wrecker #2 on the first turn, and so on. Higher-numbered Wreckers hit harder, but as long as your equipment is up-to-date, it shouldn't be any trouble.



Arean Mercenary Guild

This next section is basically an interactive cutscene. Do check the drawers and bookshelves in the guild, though, whether you do it during or after the flashback. You can't open the chests during the flashback, but you can afterwards (though half of them were already plundered). As Monique, talk to both Sky and Cloe, then enter the audience chamber to progress the scene.

There's also a ghost here who asks for something warm. You don't currently have it, but you can bring back either **Fire Cloth** or **Salamander Skin**, and she'll trade either one of them for a **Ghost Sash**, which maximizes your Evasion, but creates a weakness to magic and brings your physical attack accuracy down to zero. It could be useful in the right situation, but the two items the ghost girl wants are materials that the Tailor in Alavon can use to make some great equipment. It's up to you.

You can return to the guild at any time using the Sea Behemoth (docked next to Southport after the events at the guild).

Section 3:

~For Zoe~

Now that you have four characters, you'll probably start learning Combo skills at a faster rate. Realistically, there are ten Combos you can learn with the party you have so far (but technically there are three more; however, it would take a very, *verrry* long time to get them at this point). They are:

Rose Waltz: Sky/Monique @50

Martial Waltz: Sky/Monique @50; Valor @40; Diligence @30; Charisma @20; Bloodlust @10

Serenade: Sky/Monique @50; Charisma @20

Sakura Slash: Sky/Cloe @25; Valor/Diligence @10

Sword Cross: Sky/Leo @20

Sword Trine: Sky/Monique/Leo @30

Tetra Force: Sky/Monique/Cloe/Leo @40

Freezing Rain: Monique/Cloe @50; Wisdom @10

Steam Cover: Monique/Leo @50; Wisdom @10

Cold Blaze: Cloe/Leo @50; Wisdom @10

Remember, you can check your Friendship levels at any time in the Party Ball.

There are also some useful skills that the characters can learn from each other, including:

Chivalry: Sky learns this from Monique's innate trait of Selflessness at 40 Friendship points. Leo learns it from Sky at 30 Friendship points, but you also need 20 points of Virtue.

Snooze: Sky learns this skill from Cloe if they have 25 Friendship points between them and your Sloth and Imprudence are both 10 or above (a rare case in which having negative Attributes comes in handy).

Retaliate: Sky learns Leo's innate trait as a usable skill once they have 30 Friendship points between them and your Valor is at least 20.

Ashe

Needless to say, the Day of Water is optimal for this leg of the journey. However, some treasure can only be gotten on certain days, so if you want to get everything, you'll be making a couple of return trips... including **gulp** on the Day of Fire.

The enemies here can be vicious if you catch them in the wrong mood. Ambushes are particularly lethal.

On the Day of Water, much of the lava has cooled, and you can walk across it (that's how you get the **Pyrite** near the entrance). But there's also a treasure chest you can't reach because the hardened lava has formed stalagmites in front of it (**Fire Cloth**, 4th floor west). On the Day of Fire, there's a glowing heat in Ashe that constantly causes damage to you outside battle. The west-side third-floor maze is also very different, due to new pools of lava created by the heat. It's also the only day on which you can get the treasure in the 3F W maze (a **Red Stone**).

From the entrance, there are two ways to go. Let's go right first. When you get to the fourth floor, a wall of lava will rush at you from behind, and you'll almost certainly fail to make it through on your first try (or three). But you can do it; I know you can. Believe in yourself. *You have the power.*

...

Okay, if you really can't do it, just hit "O" and flip the game over to **Easy Mode**. The lava will move much slower. You gain five points of Diligence for making it through on Normal.

Past the lava-maze is **Fire Shard A**. Equip it on Leo, but don't count on it to be of much use here. Enter the Plutonic Portal to return to the entrance, and now take the left path.

The third floor on the left side is a maze of alternating rows of flames. It's great fun, and I really, *really* shouldn't tell you the cheap trick to making it through. No... no, I won't do that.

The floor beyond is filled with lava; every step causes damage. Especially nasty when compounded with the searing heat on the Day of Fire. What's worse, the **Salamander** (one of the Elementals for that Quest) appears here – and only on the Day of Fire. You might think I'm just cruel, or evil, but I was nice enough to also put it in the bridge complex branching off this floor, where there's no damaging lava to wade in. I accept your apology.

Up from the stairs leading down to the bridge complex is another "lava chase" segment, but this time a side-scrolling one (I was feeling super classic). Again, if you can't take the heat, choose Easy Mode. You can always change back if you want. Again, you won't gain any Diligence if you don't do it the hard way.

Past the lava chase section, activate the Plutonic Portal, make sure you're fully healed and stocked, and if you dare, go on to face...



Boss: Dysis

You have to fight a group of Skullions before Dysis, but they shouldn't pose much of a threat. If you want to blow all of Cloe's FP, just use Titanic Tirade and it'll probably kill them all instantly. But then you won't have any FP going into the next battle...

Dysis has two forms (oops, spoilers), and if you're adequately prepared, you should take down the first form fairly quickly. She can inflict a variety of

status ailments on you, though – just don't give her the chance. Hopefully you've learned a few Combos by now; make good use of them.

In the second battle, you'll have an extra party member (oops, spoilers again?), and you'll need him too. As if the epic music didn't give it away, Dysis is the first real, big, "true" boss. She has a whopping 6,000 HP and a virtually limitless supply of EF to cast all her nasty spells as much as she wants. I highly recommend against facing her on the Day of the Moon, as her awful Abyss attack will be powered up double. And the Day of Fire's a no-no, for obvious reasons. But wait, Fire is stronger on the Day of the Sun, too, even though Darkness is weaker... darn you, Dysis! So, uh, any of the other four days (Water, Air, Earth, or Aether) would be good.

Here's where your **Fever Bursts** (100-FP moves) might really come in handy (except Cloe's; Dysis is impervious to it). Sky might want to keep Dysis' Agility down with his magic, and **Twin Soul** can help him stay on top of healing and maybe let him throw in an extra attack here and there, too. Dysis can also be **Stopped**, if you want to try that.

Leo's **Double Critical** is a real killer, obviously, and **Dash Attack** is always handy because it lets him go first no matter what. If you're in dire straits and Monique has 100 FP (don't know how likely that is), you could try throwing up **Last Defender** at the cost of her life to give you some breathing room while you try to get back on your feet.

Cloe's **Snooze** is very useful for healing in a pinch, even though she goes to sleep for a turn. Remember also that Sky can learn this skill from her. And they'll wake up with buffed stats to boot.

It's not likely that you'll get to use the mystery man's Fever Burst (**Death Drive**), but by some odd chance you do, it doubles his attack power (and makes him uncontrollable) at the cost of some HP each turn.

There are some critical items you'll want for this fight. Assuming you haven't already used them (please tell me you didn't), the Leaf of Life, Hyper Blend, and Radiant Soma are great for party-wide HP recovery. Also be sure to have as many Pepp Peps as you can hold.

After (or should I say “If”?) you defeat Dysis, proceed to the room beyond. Run to the back and grab the **Fafnir’s Ruby** that’s glittering on the ground, then take the **Eternal Candle** from the chest on the podium.

Following Ashe, you can take the **Arena Challenge** in Southport. And it lives up to its name. Enemies’ HP is doubled, the rest of their stats greatly increased, and they come at you in hordes of five or more. Combos (particularly Monique’s and Cloe’s **Freezing Rain**) will be integral. You might want to attempt the Arena Challenge on the Day of Water (or Moon) if possible, to weaken the fire enemies that appear while maximizing your own strength.

On the other hand, the Fafnir’s Ruby you got in Ashe is the #1 best way to deal with the final formation in the Arena Challenge (two Cutterflies and a single Cutterpillar). Remember, *one* Cutterfly served as a miniboss before. Now there are two of them. **And their HP is doubled**. Even the ruby won’t take them out in a single shot, unless maybe it’s the Day of Fire. But you don’t want it to be the Day of Fire, because the two preceding formations consist of enemies from Ashe and are nightmarish as-is. Aye.

An effective strategy, I found, is “camping”. That is, killing all but one enemy (preferably a weak one) and then sitting there and just **Guarding** with your whole party for several turns to boost your FP for the next fight. This is especially important for the last few battles. You also might want to use the opportunity to recover your HP.

If you emerge victorious, you’ll be rewarded with the **Golden Sword** (even more powerful than a Silver Sword) and a badge that earns you the right to challenge other arenas. Congratulations!

Valley of the Dead

Enemies here attack with increased power, but Silver equipment will lessen the blows. They're even stronger on the Day of the Moon, but weaker on the Day of the Sun.

In the first area just beyond the entrance, head directly left into the trees to find a chest with **White Ether**. There's also a chest with **Incense** on an island in the middle of the water.

In the second area, head straight down and pick up the **Peep Bug** from the chest, then go *right* into the trees. You'll come out on the other side near a chest with a **Spider Web** inside (tip: you might want to save it for the upcoming boss battle). The exit is in the lower-left corner.

The third area consists of islands connected by bridges. There are also a few spots where you can jump over the roots to cross the mire; just walk toward them and you'll jump automatically if you can. You can find **Ectoplasm** and a **Sleepy Flute** here.

South from the mire is a clearing where, on the Day of the Moon only, an old woman will give you a **Silver Crescent**, an accessory that prevents Charm status. West from the mire is a graveyard that serves as the entryway to the **City of the Dead**.

City of the Dead

The road that winds through the City of the Dead – both above ground and below – isn't really that complicated, with only a few branches off the main path leading to mundane treasure.

The mummified **Lazarus** can paralyze you with its attacks. **Sinturions** use Battle Cry to raise the whole enemy troop's attack power, and things can get hectic if the effect stacks up. **Undertakers** can use Dark Smoke (blind all) and Cold Fear (fear/stun all); you might remember Dysis having those moves as well.

Don't underestimate the cute-looking **Wax Maidens**, either; they're among the most fiendish of foes you've yet encountered. They can cripple you with Flameburst (that awful move used by Firebrands in Ashe; deals party-wide Fire damage, burns, and causes blindness), Soul Flame (damages your EF), and Curse (a whole host of nasty effects).

Just to clarify, enemies don't use any of these attacks on Easy Mode. Sold yet?

Citadel of the Dead

Enemies here can come at you in large packs, and it can be taxing. Be sure to stock plenty of Medicine (99 would be great if you've got the spare change). There's a Plutonic Portal just outside the citadel, so I recommend that you leave the city and restock (there's no portal at the end, so you can't leave conveniently). Antibiotics, Eye Drops, Honey Dew, and so on will be critical in dealing with the status effects enemies will be inflicting upon you. And don't forget to pack a healthy supply of **Life Elixirs**.

If you've elected to buy into **Pepp Pep**, be sure to have as many as you can hold going into the citadel, and save them for the boss battle (the dealer is in an alley in Southport).

There are two doors that are bound by the power of the imprisoned souls trapped in orbs. The orbs are in hidden rooms, and you need to destroy them to proceed. You'll be doing a lot of walking back and forth through the winding halls, so let me be your handy-dandy guide:

1F: Just walk straight up to the stairs.

2F-a: Walk straight down through the intersection and grab the **Vital Mix** from the chest if it suits your fancy. Left and down from the intersection is an **Angel Tear**. Left and up are stairs to 3F. Right and up also leads to stairs going up, but there's one of those barred doors I talked about, and you need to destroy the orb first.

3F (left): Follow the hallway down and right, and take the stairs back down to 2F. Grab the **Infernal Candle** while you're at it.

2F-b: Open the chest for a **Life Elixir**, then have a look around the room. See that funny-looking shadow on the wall, between the two coffins? It's actually a secret door, and an orb is beyond. Examine the orb to shatter it, allowing you to open the door on 3F. So backtrack to that intersection on the other side of 2F and go right this time.

3F (right): Follow the hall down and around to the door that was sealed before. Also pick up the very valuable **Hyper Blend** from the chest behind the caskets.

3F bridge: There are two of these outer-bridge areas between floors of the citadel, and it's only in those areas that the **Wolf Reaper** – a strong enemy – appears. Not only can it make use of Double Attack and drain your health to boot, but its **Lunatic Dance** transforms your characters into werewolves (**Holy Water** cures "lycanthropy" status). In addition to making the characters look a lot meaner, lycanthropy boosts Attack and Agility significantly while effectively confusing the victim – meaning they may attack either enemies or their own allies. So... it could definitely end badly for you.

4F: Starting here, you may encounter **Haunted Mirrors**, which have a nasty habit of spell-sealing you, and also use a **Moonbeam** attack that can stun a character while inflicting magical damage. They also have the unique capability of reflecting magical attacks, so don't bother trying to use Elemental magic on them (but Combos are fair game).

There are lots of ways to go here, so start with the left hallway. The right hallway leads to a nice surprise, though, so be sure to check it out (heh heh heh). Straight up and on the next floor is another sealed door, so don't go there yet.

5F (lower-left): Follow the path through the dining room (taking note of what's for dinner) and up the stairs to find a chest with a **Vampire Guard**. This accessory prevents enemies from draining your HP when they attack you, and should prove useful when fighting the boss of the citadel.

5F (upper-left): If you're deft, you can trick out the enemies here by drawing them back to the stairway, circling, and then proceeding down either path without getting into a battle. You can collect a **Rusty Helmet** and **Black Stone** on the visible paths, but at the upper-right corner of the second-to-last bend near the stone, walk straight across the void to find **Dark Tonic** and a **Death Tag**.

5F (upper-right): You can use the same drawing-and-circling strategy to dodge the enemies here if you so desire. There's a total of **1,680 gold** between the two chests here, but the real prize is through that little gap in the wall near the bottom (see it?); the second orb. Break it, then return to 4F and take the upper middle stairway.

5F bridge: Same thing with the Wolf Reaper that appears here. Just keep going...

6F: Stepping on the phoenix emblem fully restores you. Save your game (really hope you've been doing that intermittently all along) and enter one last door if you dare.



Boss: Byzou

You're down a character for this fight, so the stakes are a little higher. Going into battle with 100 FP across the board would be a good idea, so spend a little time building it up; remember, the healing phoenix emblem is close by (or just "camp" and **Guard** to build your FP).

For giggles, use **Dark Tonic** on Leo and then **Double Critical**. Or Dark Tonic in conjunction with Sky's **Twin Soul**.

If neither of those admittedly cheap strategies sound appealing to you (you may, after all, wish to save that Dark Tonic for another day), any Fire-elemental weapons you may have (by forging from the **Pyrite** in Ashe) will be

very effective (and you can get the same Elemental attribute on *any* weapon by equipping a **Ruby Ring**); the same goes for **Silver** weaponry and the **Golden Sword**.

Sky and Monique can boost their own power briefly with the Combos **Serenade** and **Rose Waltz**; you can even combine the Dark Tonic with these effects (preferably on Monique, as only she gets the “Love” effect from Serenade). And with your current party, you can still make use of **Sword Cross**, **Sword Trine**, and **Martial Waltz** on the offensive side. Don’t forget that you can equip the **Lead Boots** mid-battle to engineer the execution of your Combos for maximum effect.

Byzou’s schtick is draining your health with just about every move she makes. She can **Double Attack** and also use **Life Drain** to steal HP from all three characters at once. On the status ailment side, she can Stop a character with **Extreme Bondage** and Charm everyone with **Charm Wave**. She can boost her damage output (which means draining even more HP) with **Evil Power** and stunt your own with **Dark Guard**. Oh, yeah... and she starts off with **Song of Degeneration**, which causes you to constantly lose health throughout the battle. Are you terrified yet?

Maybe those Dark Tonic strategies aren’t so cheap, after all!



~Closing~

That’s all for now! I hope the tips and strategies I’ve provided have given you a sound understanding of the way E2 uniquely works. And I hope you’ll support the continued development of the game so that the overall message of the series, planted in my heart so long ago, can finally come to fruition.

This is only the beginning. God with us!