

RMXP

The E-zine!
.org

RMXP.org's Official E-zine!

Issue #7 November 2006

Impact by Remote

Magic Part 4B

Page 24

Rye's "#77"

*"They were not
allowed to show
their faces in public..."*

The Process: Sovay's Thoughts on Game Design

WORLDS OF FATE

EXPLORE...

QUEST...

LEARN...

FATE...

EXPLORE VAST LANDS, COMPLETE HUNDREDS OF UNIQUE
QUESTS, LEARN THE WAYS OF THE WARRIOR...
CHOOSE YOUR FATE.

TEEN



CONTENT RATED BY
R M X P

Mild Violence
Strong Language
Suggestive Situations

★ starsoft

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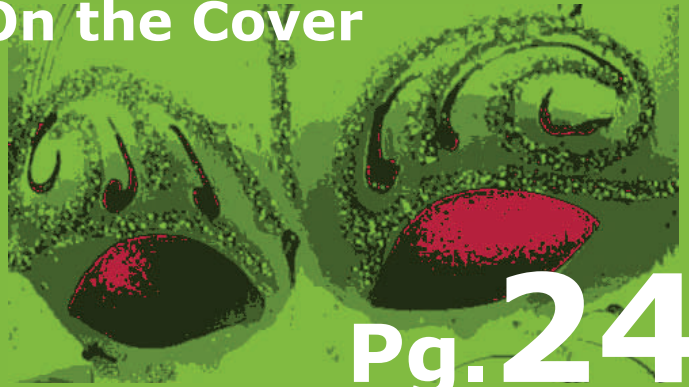
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Fiction

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By Rye

On the Cover



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RMXP *The E-zine!*
.org **Submissions now OPEN!**

The e-zine is always looking for new submissions for future issues. If you have an idea for a feature, tutorial, or you just want to show off your latest story, be sure to stop by at the E-zine forum at the forums on RMXP.org for more information on how to get your articles in the next issue!

Submissions will be accepted beginning

TODAY!

Submission Deadline

December 17th

Apostrophic Labs

(http://www.dafont.com/apostrophic-labs.d128?nb_ppp=50)
for the use of the font "Scriptina"

Sovay Jennifer Fox (aka Soavifox) for generously allowing her experience to be shared with the rest of the community.

Dauphine for the stock image of "a Raven in Flight".

The regulars at **#rmxp** on EsperNet for their answers and encouragement.

The **Master of the Wind** team, for allowing the use of their artwork to be featured on the cover.

Erk and Ccoa for providing the RMXP.org E-zine a new home.

All the **Readers and Contributors**, who are the lifeline of this publication! Thanks for patiently waiting.

Corrections:

The RMXP.org E-zine Staff would like to credit Enkur for drawing the art for the October cover.



About the Cover



Issue Seven's cover is a quite an experiment on the Layout Director's part. Described as "lovely, like a watermelon", the reception of this layout, is a tossup, but hopefully a daring one. The picture featured on the cover is Stock Photography from Sxc.hu. The photographer of "Venice Carnival Masks" is Assiewin.

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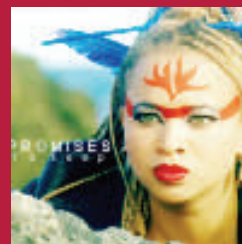
Project Watch

Draken

Interviews

TREG

RMXP.org The E-zine Staff Spotlight!



Name: Lene / Charlene

Age: 19

Joined RMX.net/org: March, 2005

Date you joined the E-zine: July, 2006

Currently Working On: An Untitled Project with the *Let's Do This!* Team.

"I am a broke college student that is currently alternating between employed and unemployed in random odd jobs. Nigerian American, I was born in Miami and I've lived there all my life.

My interests are the arts (includes performing and visual), writing, reading, computers, and anything creative in general.

A self-proclaimed project whore, if the idea sounds good, there's a good chance that I'll try to do it. Whether I follow through with it, is another story and I have quite the heap of unfinished projects (from craft projects to radio plays).

I have my contact info in my profile, but you won't find me on Instant Messengers much. The best way to find me, real time, is to check #rmxp on EsperNet. I'm always willing to talk so don't be a stranger.

Answers on Last Page

RMXP Ezine Wordsearch Puzzle

T	H	C	H	S	T	G	Y	J	Z	F	E	I	T	E	M	S	P	Z	P	E
S	M	V	I	P	I	F	G	L	H	W	S	K	I	L	L	S	M	O	R	N
R	P	R	L	R	L	A	N	V	F	X	E	V	E	N	T	S	O	W	U	E
Q	N	X	D	I	E	A	C	T	O	R	S	K	S	E	U	L	U	X	D	M
P	B	B	A	T	S	S	A	Y	G	X	L	S	Z	V	P	W	M	U	Q	I
O	R	Z	H	I	E	H	O	E	L	U	B	M	B	M	C	I	A	V	E	E
H	F	N	J	N	T	S									L	N	T	J	R	S
M	R	P	G	G	S	E									A	D	E	I	U	I
L	T	O	X	S	X	Y									S	O	R	S	B	R
K	R	A	O	Z	L	H									S	W	I	L	Y	K
J	O	F	R	M	X	P									E	S	A	Z	R	S
I	O	E	U	S	B	K									S	K	L	F	S	C
B	P	X	V	K	Y	X									A	I	B	V	P	R
G	S	X	N	P	P	H									R	N	A	N	O	I
F	I	M	P	O	R	T	K	D	N	M	U	S	I	C	M	S	S	C	C	P
E	C	J	N	D	G	L	O	R	I	A	D	B	H	N	O	F	E	M	K	T
D	O	M	A	N	I	M	A	T	I	O	N	S	A	C	U	S	N	S	X	I
C	U	Y	L	B	A	S	I	L	T	J	I	M	L	F	R	D	E	K	N	N
B	C	D	A	T	A	B	A	S	E	C	O	P	R	O	G	R	A	M	R	G
A	V	D	P	A	C	H	A	R	A	C	T	E	R	S	E	T	S	R	H	K
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20

DATABASE
 RUBY
 CHARACTERSETS
 TILESETS
 ANIMATIONS
 WINDOWSKINS
 SPRITING

SCRIPTING
 MUSIC
 EVENTS
 RMXP
 PROGRAM
 ACTORS
 HILDA

GLORIA
 BASIL
 MATERIALBASE
 CLASSES
 SKILLS
 ITEMS
 ARMOUR

ENEMIES
 TROOPS
 IMPORT
 RPG

Nepthe



Character of the Month
November 2006

Age: 43

Profession: Former Intelligence Agent

Weapon: Nepthe cannot use weapons

Before the onset of his schizophrenia, Nepthe was an intelligence agent of some repute. His information successfully prevented an attack against Kravit economic infrastructure. His knowledge may later help Syeull on his adventure. While his schizophrenia has left his speech and thoughts somewhat disorganized, it has also awakened his latent Psychoshaping talents. Nepthe can learn new skills by controlling the chaotic neurotransmitter activity that is responsible for his schizophrenia.

What other fans of Nepthe from RPG Advocate's Phylomortis Avant-Garde had to say:



"In a world where every message box is plagued by overspecialised dialogues, Nepthe's poetic metaphors bring a bit of relief. He tries hard to help Syeull in... well, I'm not exactly sure of what they're supposed to be doing, but he helps, despite the tragic loss he encountered early in the game. His shaping (magic) skills are the most proficient of all the characters.

VOTE FOR NEPTHE! "

- Flash (nominator)

"I have to go for Nepthe- his poetry was the one bit of dialogue in Phylomortis that wasn't self indulgent bullshit."

-Myonosken

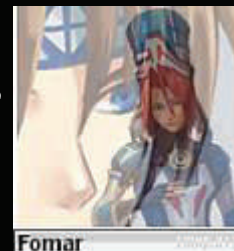


"Nepthe. His power brings all the girls to the yard."

- Yeyinde

"Nepthe was the best of the main four (I'm not counting Mersault), he made the game more fun."

- Fomar0153



Fomar

Sparrow



Character of the Month
November 2006



Sparrow, a dark, earth magic using, assassin of the night, is [somewhat] of a "Hob-goblin" in the MotW universe. Orange and all! He seems to have a [grudge] with Cade/Shroud. He is also a bad-ass."

- Powerdude247 (nominator)

What Volrath has to say about Sparrow's Popularity

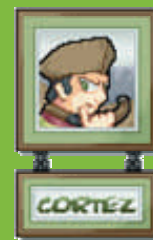
What makes it all a bit of a surprise is that Sparrow probably has the fewest lines out of any character in Arc II. His appearance at the end was meant to bring home the point that the game's light tone up to that point was now in question. Sparrow comes within inches of killing Cade/Shroud, which I hoped would make players a little anxious about what was coming next.

Oddly enough, when the game first came out, there wasn't all that much talk about him. Most of the feedback was justifiably centered around ArtBane's sprawling mine dungeon and the new addition of Enkur's artwork. The interest in Sparrow began to coalesce when people played through the arc again with his appearance in mind. They started to see some of the clues I had dropped and then the speculation started.

Another Fan Mention

"I love his design and artwork, and that is still a significant part of the character. The sprite was just a frankensprite, but the battler that was made for it was really great and well-deserving of a vote."

-Cortez

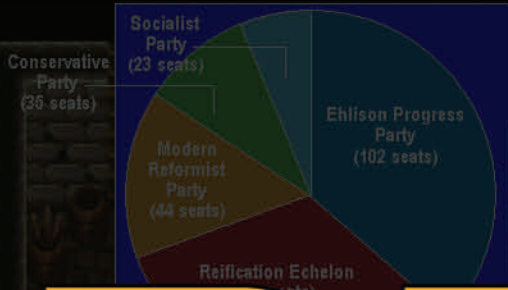


Maia

You were introduced as an "NGO Representative" at the summit. For what NGO do you work, and in what capacity?

Malodorous Bloom 50%
Nefarious Gel 70%

Syeull HP 88 / 88 EX 0%
Nepthe HP 64 / 74 EX 90%



4876889

EX 0%

RRRB

on the Ezine!

- Battle System **NEW**
- Command Abilities
- VESS System
- Status Effects
- Succor Interfaces **NEW**

Status Effects

Reduced character's m. rate (decreases dramatically). Can be cured with a Motion Facilitator or at the end of battle.

- Sluggish Acute Course
Afflicted character's fatigue recovery rate is halved, and command execution is delayed. Can be cured with a Motion Facilitator or at the end of battle.
- Plague Chronic Course
All of afflicted character's stats are lowered and damage is dealt at regular intervals during battle, and on...



Game : Psychopolitical Drama Phylomortis : Avant-Garde

Author : RPG Advocate

Reviewer : Flash

Introduction :

If there is one RPG Maker XP game notorious through the entire community, it is definitely RPG Advocate's Phylomortis. That name is able to spark fear or controversy whenever and wherever it is pronounced, and with good cause. The Phylomortis series has always been known for its complex dialogues, ingenious yet torturous battle systems and puzzles. It is one of those games everyone loves to hate and yet, very few have made it past the introduction.

" [Phylomortis] is able to spark fear or controversy whenever and wherever it is pronounced, and with good cause."

For those wondering what happens after the first message box (which is likely to be when they've closed the game), keep on reading.

Story:

[Rating: (2) POOR. The storyline itself is complex but enjoyable, using semi-realistic political and economical structures. However, the difficult dialogues might turn a lot of players off].

The general storyline of Phylomortis is deeply rooted in politics and economy. Set during an uneasy era, in which political tension is very high, the plot follows Syeull,

the standard strong warrior hero-type from the backwater cave city of Beckweth, who is recruited by force by the Kravit government to infiltrate, along with Nepthe, an ex-intelligence agent who has become schizophrenic, a building under the control of a controversial political group know as the Reification Echelon and then travel to the country of Ehlison. The old demo concluded after this mission, but the new demo brings the player inside the Echelon's headquarter by acting as the lawyer Rhiaz, as he and the Paralegal Wayde try to escape from the Echelon, a deed not so easy accomplished due to the group's sect-like attitude. The demo concludes by reuniting Syeull, Nepthe and Rhiaz as they investigate Specterragon Industries, the Echelon's weapon supplier.

None of the plot points seem to be very impressive, especially considering the game's reputation. The

storyline is very straightforward, and plot twists are very few. However, the overall presentation is so well-researched, well-designed and realistic (for a fantasy world) that it rivals some commercial games' unbelievable twists.

Due to the unique nature of the dialogues (see below), the protagonists are often believed to be bland and impersonal. This couldn't be further from the truth. While everyone, except for Nepthe, talks in a very elaborate and specialized way, their actions and reactions quickly help to discern their personalities. Characters are ranged from clichéd to very original. Syeull is the typical shrewd warrior, Rhiaz is the ex-villain on the

(Continued on page 11)

"The game still remains nice visually, perhaps because the graphics haven't been seen in every other RPG Maker XP game."

(Continued from page 10)

path to redemption and the enigmatic Mersault, met at the demo's very end, is the morally ambiguous stranger. Nepthe remains the only special character: being able to express himself in metaphors alone, except once. Having this kind of character is risky, and will seem ridiculous in most games, but works well in Phylomortis.

Stylistic avant-garde choice, parody or critic of the political and economic world? RPG Advocate only knows. Everyone has heard about the complex dialogues of Phylomortis. Every message box uses a highly specialized vocabulary, to say the simplest things. This kind of dialogue will, and has turned a lot of player off from playing this game. The dialogues feel especially heavy during the introduction sequence, but are slightly, very slightly, more tame later on. Even if most of them are completely understandable, they are too long and generally lack energy. If there is one aspect of the style of dialogues that is pleasant, it is the contrast it creates when the characters decide to talk normally, giving much more impact to lines that would go unnoticed in other games.

Graphics:

[Rating: (2.5) POOR. The game uses filtered Super Nintendo graphics from a variety of games. The design is poor, but evolves nicely as the game progresses].

The visual content of Phylomortis comes

from a wide range of different Super Nintendo games. Mapping tiles, characters and battler sprites are, amongst others, taken from Final Fantasy (IV to VI), Rudra no Hihou (treasures of the Rudras). Backgrounds and panorama are from Illusion of Gaia, Tales of Phantasia, Chrono Trigger and Cross, and Radical Dreamers. The styles usually match with each other in individual areas, except in some occurrences, which aren't as rare as they should be, such as Nepthe's sprite which does not look like the others. Overall, however, the graphics often clash with each other

Battle animations are worth a mention, they look incredibly good in battle.

The mapping design evolves throughout the game. During the first half, mapping is especially atrocious. Cut off tiles are aplenty, so are misplaced tiles and plain graphical problems. The world map is also very bland. Eventually, the design evolves to become to nice enough, but still shows sign of amateurism. A particularly annoying problem is that the tables and counters are too high for the characters, and only the top of their heads emerge from behind them.

The game still remains nice visually, perhaps because the graphics haven't been seen in every other RPG Maker XP game. However, due to the fact that the maps are quite large and that the same graphics are reused often, navigation can become quite complicated.

(Continued on page 12)

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Some scenes have good use of pictures of panoramas, which most game designer wouldn't think of using.

Audio:

[Rating: (3.5) GREAT. Music is nice and sounds are used very well. However, most of the audio content is from an unspecified source].

Knowing RPG Advocate's stand on music from Super Nintendo games, it is unlikely that the musical content is from a commercial game. The music is good overall, fits well everywhere in the game, but nothing is memorable.

As for sounds, they are often used to create atmospheres where most game maker wouldn't think of using them. For instance, the sound of running water is heard when you walk by a waterfall.

Gameplay:

[Rating: (4) GREAT. Battles and the menu interface are unique and enjoyable once the player has gotten used to them. Dungeon design and puzzles are very complex. The difficulty level is very high, even on normal].

There's no easy way to say it: this game is hard, even on normal mode. The game plays like a linear Final Fantasy-esque game. The

player travels from town to town, acquiring information from NPCs before setting off to complete the dungeon. Rinse and repeat. The player will often be asked to choose what the characters will answer during dialogues, to help prevent monotony.

The dungeons are especially difficult.

"As for sounds, they are often used to create atmospheres where most game maker wouldn't think of using them."

Designed as very complex and confusing labyrinths, most dungeons can take up to several hours

to finish. Thankfully, one of Nepthe's special shaping skills, Cartesian Psychoplane, can create a map of the dungeon, making overall exploration much easier.

Each dungeon is very varied. The first one, Kravit's control tower, offers basic algebra problems as puzzles to deactivate the various securities proceed. Anyone with little algebra knowledge would be able to complete these puzzles, but those who don't would be stumped. However, after finding the answer to the puzzles, traveling back to the security devices, and then traveling back to the deactivated traps can take a long time, especially when you don't know which ones have been deactivated.

The game's second dungeon could've been very impressive. However, a large number of bugs kept it from being completed. This dungeon consisted of many real-time traps, where the player had to choose a specific action from a list to evade the trap. Unfortunately, (for me, at least) the list didn't give the right keys to push, and often nothing would happen. It didn't help that the list kept on flashing between visible and

(Continued on page 13)

invisible. What could've been an enjoyable experience quickly became a nightmare.

The next-to-last dungeon offered more classical aspects. The player simply had to travel the dungeon, turn off 10 valves and defeat the boss at the end.

The final one was without a doubt the most complex. The player has to operate various devices to reshape and change the dungeon design: either by changing a teleporter's coordinate, using elements on machine, or turning off security.

Battle-wise, the game was difficult, and impressive. Actions could be taken whenever, at the cost of fatigue points. If a character accumulates too many fatigue point, that character will faint. The battles also make extensive use of status conditions during battle. At first, due to the monsters causing high damage and to the fact that healing is very difficult, battle had to be concluded quickly if the player hoped to stay alive. However, once more characters are added to the party, the battles become progressively easy. The final battle, with all four characters were present, was uncharacteristically easy. Most of the time, however, a good strategy was the key to winning battle.

A very annoying problem during battle occurred when more than 3 enemies were present during a battle. Since monsters can usually act faster than you, their actions usually tended to stack up, keeping you from acting effectively.

Menus are also very unique. Crystals known as "succour interfaces" had to be used to access items, skills, abilities and save points

in dungeons. While the concept of succour interfaces somehow helps to keep the player's suspension of disbelief intact in the world of Phylomortis, it doesn't help to keep the player's frustration down when the character's HP is low and the item menu cannot be accessed.

As for additional fun, checking a treasure box twice will often reveal very interesting Easter eggs. These Easter eggs range from shortcuts through dungeons and puzzle answer to negative comments about Xenosaga and Gaming World.

Overall:

Phylomortis is not a game for everyone. In fact, it is generally hated throughout the entire RPG Maker XP community. It's a real shame, because it is a good game. However, the dialogues come and ruin everything. For those who can bear with them, it's a must play!

Final rating:

[(3) ALL RIGHT].

Download: <http://www.Phylomortis.com>

*Flash has been a member of RMXP.org since March 2006. In addition to heading the RMXP Ratings and Review Board, he is working on **Utopian Chaos XP**.*

Impact.

Written by Remote.

How to make a sad scene tragic, a happy one blissful or an action-packed scene riveting... these are the kind of questions every developer should consider as they create their various scenes. To evoke laughter, tears, any response from the messages of sadness/happiness you want to convey, is to truly justify its inclusion.

Few scenes have managed to go beyond the creation of awareness. You knew what you are experiencing is indeed sad, but for some reason (or lack thereof) you don't FEEL for it at all. The act of evoking someone into feeling a certain way does wonders towards enhancing the experience. To journey with the characters in their emotional ups and downs helps to further the sense of involvement. To mourn and laugh together with the characters makes you feel more part of their world. This is one important factor to consider when making a game.

For those few who tried to address this, fewer still went beyond the mere utilisation of music and visuals. I have to say, throwing in a certain style of music or graphically representing the message will often be not enough to put a smile on someone's face, or bring him/her down to tears. Inducing someone into feeling a certain way doesn't end with MIDIs or charsets.

The conduct of our characters, the interactions of a scene's components and the creation of 'value' are some other alternatives that can help elaborate the underlying message of a particular scene and help give it more oomph. To strengthen a message's effect is to improve your chances of inducing some form of emotional response.

I remember a post back at .net where the poster asked how to successfully present a morbid scene of death and brutality. S/he details a scene involving a peaceful hamlet being set upon by some omnipotent evil being, with only but a single survivor managing to live through the ordeal. The poster asked how does one effectively convey the message of tragedy from such a scene.

How I responded first involved me looking at the very meaning of the word tragedy and what it stood for. Tragedy is an outcome no one deserves to go

through. Whether it is the loss of a loved one, or finding out what things you accomplished amounted to nothing, such things as these weigh heavily on the heart. Isolation and powerlessness, areas relevant to mood the poster wanted to be created, were areas I decided to tackle because they addressed what the developer had wanted to achieve, that is the feeling of sadness. Plus they were convenient, in that the scene provided for its inclusion.

Through my interpretations of what isolation and powerlessness meant to me, I used this knowledge to create the scene. I tried to show what I know. The character amidst a pile of lifeless figures screams blindly out into the distance for her mom and dad. The girl helplessly looks on, as another victim is created. Her attempts to save anyone were all but futile. Such things clearly presented the subject matter that is isolation and powerlessness, which in turn can be considered illustrations of tragedy as well. This helped make more apparent to the gamer the sad mood of the scene.

Impact can be further exacerbated through the accentuation of 'parts' (if we could call it that) that make the subject matter what it is. Look at the theme, derive meaning out of it, and then make apparent this meaning with the aim of establishing a sense of empathy. We can associate the very act of the girl blindly screaming out with ourselves in our times when we longed to be with someone who simply wasn't there. We felt what she feels now, loneliness... hence we are able to UNDERSTAND to a reasonable extent of what she is going through. Her futile struggle to save her fellow villagers could be associated with the times we discovered our own futilities in life. Stirring up past memories, such as the time of finding only meaningless in our endeavours, can reignite past feelings that had once gravely affected us.

Empathy is a powerful tool. Use it.

Remote has been a member of RMXP.org since January 2006. He is currently working on a project called "Ascendancy".

The Process

sovay's thoughts on Game Design

edited by Lene



picture of me!

sovay Jennifer Fox a.k.a. "sovaiFox" a.k.a. "Fox"

23 year old Game Designer



Marketing Designer
for

I have used RPG Maker since '95 but I rarely post serious projects as I plan to make a commercial game eventually. RMXP allows for that potential so my main project is tightly under wraps.

Recently, a card game I designed got picked up by Cambridge Games Factory, a small start-up company that works out of Cambridge, MA. I got hired on as Marketing Director and part-time Games Designer.

* My totem creatures are foxes, dragons and spiders.

* I tend to talk about girls about as much as guys do.

* I enjoy life as much as possible!

currently she has put together a concept review team feedback so that she might get somewhere with them and make a commercial game.

ENTRY #2

Today I want to discuss a little about some of the aspects of design teams.

While I am not a professional, I have talked a lot with them, and have read a lot of articles, and have a lot of books on the subject. So, please bear with me.

Often, you do not have just one person write all the ideas for a game. Often one person will come up with a basic outline of the game's story and game mechanics.

After that, a team of people often sit down to flesh out and discuss the idea, assuming it has been accepted by the higher ups. This process can take a while and the more people the better. Each person poses questions, makes comments, and puts forth suggestions.

After people discuss the story, characters, and mechanics long enough the game gets proto typed. If the proto type is then good it then continues into becoming a full fledged game.

I will probably need to put together a design team myself to sit down and analyze my ideas and help to flesh out the story. I will have to get them to sign NDA's and sit down and read over what I have before our first meeting. We would need to have a weekly meeting where people go over what I wrote the week before.

ENTRY #2 (CONTINUED...)

At the meeting people would not just talk to me, but to each other as we sit and plan what can be done with my work. As the producer/manager/lead designer I would end up with the final say, which is partly to avoid prolonged disputes.

A major thing I will end up doing that a lot of design teams do not, is making a lot of final decisions myself.

Often someone who is not the one in charge of the concept design has to decide what features need to be dropped to keep on time/budget.

You can not have everything so it is good not to get too attached to things. I know I am capable of that having re-written a lot of my story many times so that it flowed.

Story tends to have less final cuts than features in a game.

For more of the process by sovay, check out future issues. If you have any questions for sovay e-mail

[rmxpezine@gmail.com!](mailto:rmxpezine@gmail.com)



Near Fantastica's

Magic

Part 4: Ritual and Ceremonial Magic

**Magic Part 4b
Power Animals**

Very early on, mankind recognized the powers of the animals that shared the earth, and the ability to “talk to the animals” became a basic skill of shamans and magicians worldwide. Many tribes, peoples and societies trace their origins to a founding totem animal, often associated with a god, and hold that animal sacred. Animal powers are often invoked through dances intimating their movements and musical instruments imitating their cries.

Acquiring an animal guide or familiar is important in many kinds of magic and spiritualism. The Native American sought his animal spirit guide during a vision quest while alone in the wilderness, or on a spiritual journey assisted by hallucinogenic drugs, such as peyote. Western magicians gained the aid of a familiar through mediation and invocation, wearing masks and practicing shape shifting.

Alligator of Crocodile: aggression, survival, reason (Egypt)

Ant: group-minded, hard worker, wisdom (Muslim); sacred to harvest goddesses

Ass or Donkey: stubbornness, obstinacy, symbol of opposites sacred to Greek god Dionysius

Bat: good fortune, great happiness (China), rebirth, guardian of the night, cleanser, guide to past lives

Bear: power, adaptability, knowledge of the healing power of herbs, brings balance, harmony and the astral plane.

Beaver: builder, gatherer, concentration, harmony in-group work.

Bee: purity, queen ship, wearer of veils

Boar: courage, protection; fertility, symbol of the Lord of Earth; sacred to the Greek god Adonis, the Hindu god Rudra and the Egyptian god Set

Buffalo or Bison: sacredness, fertility, abundance, symbol of spirit

Bull: fertility, strength; associated with many gods and sued in rituals in many religions or cultures including Egyptian (the Apis and Serapis cults), Cretan (the Minos cult), Celtic, Sumerian, Hindu and Mithraic

Butterfly: metamorphosis, carefree, transformer, love (China)

Cat: a strong protector, seer of spirits independent and self assured, seeking for hidden information, shape shifter; sacred to Egyptian goddess Bast and Pasht.

Cow: love, abundance, nurture, contentment; represents goddess in many religions

Coyote: prankster, shape shifter, illumination, opportunist, insightful, playful

Crane: solitude, independence, intelligence, astral travel to learn deeper mysteries

Crow: trickery, boldness, prophet, shape shifter, keeper of the sacred law, omen of change

Deer: see Doe, Stag

Doe or Hind: gentleness, loving kindness, swiftness, alertness, bearer of messages

Dog: Loyalty, companionship, keen hearing and tracking skills, a guard from approaching dangers.

Dolphin: kindness, playfulness, link to ocean

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Dove: communication through spirit; messenger to spirits world; peace, gentleness, love

Dragonfly: flighty, carefree

Eagle: connection to the creator, divine spirit, wisdom, swiftness, keen sight

Elephant: confidence, patience, removal of obstacles, ability to learn

Elk: strength, agility, freedom, sensual passion

Ermine: purity

Fish: abundance, prosperity, harmony; loving companions of children



Fox: cunning, provider, intelligence, stealthy, able to make fools of pursuers

Frog: transforming, reassurance (Egypt), link to water element, beginning of new cycle; sacred to Hecate

Goat: wild energies, removal of guilt, independence, associated with Hindu Agni; Sumerian Marduk; Palestinian Ba'al; Greek Dionysius, Athena and Pan; Norse Thor; Christian Satan

Goose: new beginning, happy family life

Grasshopper: nobility (ancient Greece)

Hare or Rabbit: alertness, nurturing, hidden teachings, intuitive knowledge, transformation

Hippopotamus: birth of new ideas, righteous anger, protection for the family

Horse: stamina, mobility, strength, companion for astral travel.

Hummingbird: messenger, able to stop time, happiness, love

Jackal: seeker of mystical knowledge, explorer of past lives; sacred to Egyptian god Anubis, "Opener of the Way"

Leopard, Panther, or Cougar: leadership, courage, swiftness, perseverance, gaining confidence for astral travel

Lion: strength, courage, energy, royalty, family ties

Monkey: ingenuity, clever so-

lutions; sacred in China and Japan; symbol of Egyptian god Thoth

Moose: headstrong, unstoppable strength, longevity, shared joy, wisdom in solitude

Mouse: secrets, shyness, ability to remain inconspicuous, attention to details, stealth, trust, innocence

Otter: finding inner treasure, gaining wisdom, enjoyment of life, a trickster; sacred in ancient Peru and to the Celtic Cernunnos



Owl: wisdom, truth, patience, keen sight, guide to the underworld, clairvoyance

Peacock: all seeing awareness, dignity, sacred to the Roman goddess Juno

Pelican: self sacrifice

Phoenix: resurrection, renewal,

Pig: see sow, boar

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Porcupine: minds own business, trust in spirit, guards privacy to native American, a symbol of faith and trust

Quail: good luck, courage, victory

Ram: virility, fertility, sacred to Celts and Muslims, symbols of Indian fire god Agni and Phoenician god Baal



Raven: trickster, teacher, hoarder, spirit messenger, change in consciousness, help with divination

Salamander or Lizard: understanding dreams, mental creativity, transformation

Salmon: instinctive, persistent, determined, spiritual knowledge,

Scarab: Egyptian beetle, symbol of the sun and creation

Scorpion: keeper of the house for the dead, revenge

Seahorse: confidence, grace

Sheep: timid ness, ability to keep your balance; see also Ram

Snake: transformation, shrewdness, symbol of rebirth, immortality, associated with many gods,

Sow: female pig associated with the Crone goddess, deep earth magic, knowledge of past lives

Spider: creativity, weaver of pattern of life in both ancient Mediterranean and Pueblo Indian mythology

Squirrel: preparing for the future, foresight, warning, changes, spiritual watchdog

Stag: Lord of the underworld, understanding of the cycle of death and birth

Stork: carrier of the souls, fertility

Swallow: bird of spring time, flowering and love

Swan: grace, balance, innocence; symbol of the Muses and Valkyries

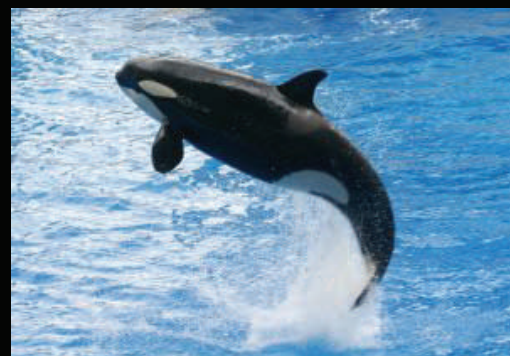
Thunderbird: North American bird of lightning, bringer of rain and other heavenly gifts

Tiger: swift action, strength

and willpower in a difficulty situation associated with gambling, the wind and the elements in the Orient

Turtle: creative source, self contained, long life, patience, spiritual shield, relaxation

Vulture: carrier and defender of the dead, prophecy



Whale: wisdom, music, long life, telepathic abilities, provider

Wolf: loyal, successful, leader of the astrak okanbem hunting and seeking, storing protection

Wren: sacred bird of the Druids, form of the Fairy Queen

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Legend said Agrippa always traveled with a familiar in the shape of a large fearsome black dog. He paid his bills with money that looked normal but later turned to worthless shell. Agrippa , it was said, used a magic glass to view distant times and places, once spying his mistress weeping over the absence of another lover. One of the most famous stories is says a boarder in his home convinced Agrippa's wife to let him enter the learned mans museum. The boarder found a book of spells and began to read. HE ignored a knock on the door and went on reading. Finally, a demon burst through the door and asked why he had been summoned. Terrified, the boarder could not answer and the demon strangled him. Agrippa returned at that moment and fearing he would be charge with the boarders murder, perused the demon to return him to life. People saw the boarder walk through the marketplace, and after he died when the demon spell wore off, they through he druid so of natural causes. Agrippa's life is a prime example of the power of stories to heighten the power of a magician, for he was actually a relatively harmless alchemist/astrologer with wide correspondence that accounted for his worldwide knowledge others attributed to his magical familiar.

Near Fantastica has been a member of RMXP.org since January 2006.



#77

Written by: Rye
Day One: Part One

It was quiet; dead quiet, pin drop quiet even. It was always this quiet. The students were not allowed to speak unless called upon unless they were given "talk-time". They were not allowed to show their faces to their peers or their teachers. They were not allowed to show their faces in public unless they were in the privacy of their own home. Teachers did not have to wear masks, but they were not allowed to be friendly with the students (or anyone under eighteen); they were not allowed to talk to the students about anything else but school matters. They could not refer to students by their real names, and students could not refer to others by their real names. It was all done in numbers. Each student received a number when they were in kindergarten and it followed them up until they graduated. In school and in public, the children wore almost identical uniforms. The girls wore long plaid skirts that went down to their ankles, brown slip-on shoes, and a black button-up blouse with a red tie. Similarly, the boys wore the same pattern on their pants, a slightly altered black button-up shirt and the same tie. Their shoes, however, were not slip-ons, but they were brown. On the shirts and blouses, there were the students' numbers sewn in with gold-colored thread, usually near the breast pocket. The schools and the public allowed the students to personalize their uniform, but only just a little bit. The students could wear one necklace, one ring and a bracelet on each wrist. Nothing with spikes was to be worn (however, some students ignored that rule, and if their teachers didn't say anything, the student got away with it), nothing with letters, no mood rings; basically, anything plain was fine. The students could have their hair almost any way they would like it; however, they weren't allowed to have "liberty-spikes". They could spike their hair, but it had to be below an inch and a half long. During passing time at the schools, the students were allowed five minutes of talk-time before their next teacher entered the room. However, if the teachers heard the students talk of anything "shallow", that student would be escorted out of the room and to the principal's office. The classes in the school were not divided by age groups. For example, if a freshman at the high school had the reading capabilities of a senior, he or she would be in a reading class with the seniors, and vice-versa.

The school was always quiet, always the same; nothing ever happened. If anything actually did happen, it was shut down in a matter of hours. Even though the students hid their expressions behind their white masks, the adults and the "higher-ups" knew that deep down inside, the students wanted more. The children wanted to be just like the adults. They didn't want to wear masks. The adults and the "higher-ups" would not let that happen. That would be disastrous. It had already been that way years and years before, back when the children's grandparents were in school. Before then, the students had been always loud, rude, and very obnoxious. Now, they were perfect little angels. Without originality, the students fit in perfectly with society. They functioned very *well*.

From early on, in kindergarten, the students were given their uniform and masks. They were told what to do and what not to do. If anyone acted out of their role, that student would be an example for the rest of the students; he or she would be given a public punishment, made to embarrass the student that acted out of his or her role and to show the other students what would happen if they did the same thing. Needless to say, the students learned quickly—of course, no one wanted to be embarrassed.

It was the perfect way to control the children. They would turn out to be perfect adults. Since there was no originality, there would be no mental problems, and there would

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be no criminals or terrorists trying to overthrow the government. They would all be the same, and that is the perfect example for a *perfect* world; it would be a utopia of sorts. Well, that was what the adults and the "higher-ups" believed, if one doesn't count the *radical* adults.

It was the last week of October. The students in room No. 227, as usual, were sitting at their desks, hands folded in their laps or on their desks, and their white masks were staring at the black board. Their usual teacher, Mrs. Adams, was taken away recently. She had been talking to the students of her views on politics, and then two men in black suits had shown up at her door. In handcuffs, she had been taken away. Her last words had been, "Fight for your individuality!" Later, the black-suited men had come back and had told the students to disregard what Mrs. Adams had said, or else they would be severely punished.

There was a new teacher standing at the black board. He had already written his name with the white chalk at the top of the board. His handwriting was very hard to read, and leaned to the left a lot. Luckily, the teacher deciphered his name for the students. His name was Mr. Reavus. It sounded as though it could be pronounced, "reap us", which made the students gulp uneasily. A teacher with the last name that sounded like "reap us" was not to be taken lightly. He was going to be teaching Philosophy. There were students of all sizes in the classroom; some were short and others were tall. That indicated that freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors shared the class.

Mr. Reavus himself was odd. He was tall and lanky, leaning over to his left a bit (like his handwriting). He had only told the class his name and the students were exchanging glances of amusement. They couldn't see each other's faces, but they knew their peers had the same impression of Mr. Reavus. He looked as though he had just woken up. He had a tired look in his eyes, his tie wasn't on straight, his shirt was half-tucked in and his pants seemed way too long. Earlier, the students had seen him down a whole cup of coffee, but that hadn't seemed to help his sleepy mood one bit.

"Okay, were did Mrs. Adams leave off?" Mr. Reavus asked as he set the piece of chalk on the teacher's desk. When none of the students answered, he crossed his arms. "Um... hello? Don't any of you know?"

27 raised her hand. Mr. Reavus looked at her with raised eyebrows. "We can't talk unless you call on us," she explained in a bored voice.

"Oh," Mr. Reavus nodded. He pointed to a student that was looking out the window. "You with the spiked necklace," he called.

77 jumped, shoved his necklace into his shirt, took his eyes away from the window and looked at Mr. Reavus. He had been occupying his mind by watching the dust particles in the sunlight that had been streaming through the window.

"Could I open the window?" 77 asked bluntly as he pointed to the window.

"Did that count as calling on him?" Mr. Reavus looked at the class. A few of them nodded. "Um... what do I call you?"

"We have numbers," 77 answered distastefully. "Now, could I open the window?"

"Yeah, it's so hot in here!" another student called out from the back. It must have been a freshman, for they loved to disobey the rules.

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"Go ahead. I don't care," Mr. Reavus answered with a shrug of his shoulders.

77 unlatched the window and pushed it open. He took a water bottle from under his desk and wedged it in the crack between the window and the school building (if he didn't do that, the window would close as soon as the wind blew). Once 77 was seated back in his seat, the class looked back at the teacher tentatively.

"What were you learning before Mrs. Adams left?" Mr. Reavus asked once again as he took a glance at the seat chart. "Um... how about, 52—do you know?"

"Something about Plato... or maybe it was something like a Republic... I don't know," 52 answered as he checked his nails for dirt.

Mr. Reavus leaned back on his desk, searching the students. He stopped once he noticed that 77 was staring out the window again. "Kid with the spikes—"

"77," the student snapped without adverting his gaze. He seemed to be staring at the opposite roof.

"77," Mr. Reavus stressed through grinding teeth. "What the hell are you staring at?"

"Another one is jumping," 77 answered in a bored voice.

Mr. Reavus' eyes widened confusingly as he made his way over to 77's desk. 77 leaned back in his seat, keeping his eyes on the opposite building as Mr. Reavus leaned over his desk, also looking out now.

On top of the opposite building was a student. She had her arms stretched out and she was staring down below. There was no mask on her face, and tears were going down her face, or at least that was what the mascara running down her face told the students. Her hair was very long and was blowing haphazardly in the wind. 77 noticed that other students in his class were now crowding his desk, and in almost all of the other windows from different classrooms, other students were looking out as well. 29 was a little too close for 77's comfort, but since he knew why the other student was so worried, he didn't mind as much. The whole class was quiet, as with any class below or above them. Then, she jumped.

She looked elegant enough at first; her hair was flowing in the wind, shining a vibrant chestnut-brown in the sun. It was a shame that she didn't have wings; that would have completed the image of her looking like a descending angel. Other than the image, it was a *real* shame that she didn't have wings. 77 looked away right before she hit the ground and then heard the unmistakable sound of a body hitting the cement headfirst.

"Melissa!" 29 screamed, making all of the students switch their masked gaze towards him. Suddenly, he tossed his mask aside, stepped onto 77's desk and placed his hands on the edge of the window.

"Hold on!" Mr. Reavus grabbed 29 by the rim of the pants and proceeded to pull him back down.

29 glared at Mr. Reavus. Now that 29 was without his mask, the girls in the class took glances at each other and stifled a giggle (for a loud giggle would be inappropriate at this time). 29 was quite handsome. His face was as tan as his arms and had a few freckles across his cheeks. He had the brightest green eyes most of the students had ever seen. His hair was spiked as usual and was a dark brown. He had a hint of a mustache above his lips. Though, since he was distressed, he wasn't as handsome as some girls would have imagined.

"Let me go!" 29 ordered as he pushed Mr. Reavus away. With no one holding him

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back, he stepped onto 77's desk (ignoring 77's pleas to not jump) and out the window he went. Luckily for him, he wouldn't have to wait long before his body was picked up. The ambulance was already on school grounds, its sirens bleating out their annoying high-pitched sound. People from the ambulance were already picking Melissa up and were not paying attention to any of the other windows. When 29 went headfirst into the cement like Melissa did, the ambulance workers jumped and looked at him with wide eyes.

77 and the rest of the class looked at Mr. Reavus who hadn't taken his eyes off of the two students who had just jumped. There was a look of pure shock in his face, and a look of pure anger.

"What the hell is *going on*?" Mr. Reavus demanded as looked at his class. Knowing that no one was going to answer unless he called a name, he added, "And anyone can answer—just freaking answer me!"

"Don't you know the rules, Mr. Reavus?" 27 asked in an obnoxious manner. "Having intimate relationships when you're under eighteen is against the rules."

"Excuse me?" Mr. Reavus' face switched to one of confusion.

"They were boyfriend and girlfriend, they must have had sex, Melissa must have gotten pregnant and the school found out," 77 snapped as he looked back out the window. He leaned his chin on his palm with a sigh. "You don't want the school to find out if you've done something like *that*."

"Yeah, the school probably made her jump," 66 mentioned from behind 77. He leaned on the back of 77's desk, looking at the class. "I heard that they stole her unborn baby and are now growing it in a test-tube down at that clinic," he gossiped.

Mr. Reavus looked back out the window as the class started to whisper to themselves. The ambulance was finally gone and the cleaning crew that the school hired was now washing away the blood. He felt furious. Looking back at the class, he clenched his fists. This was barbaric! How could the school let something like this happen?

"What is this school's problem?" Mr. Reavus demanded as he pounded 77's desk. Knowing that he had frightened 77 out of whatever daydream he was having, Mr. Reavus muttered an apology and backed off from 77's desk. All of the students' masks were turned towards him now, and they had returned to their state of being pin-drop quiet. Right now, the students in the classroom knew that Mr. Reavus wasn't going to stay as their teacher for much longer.

"Making you wear those *stupid* masks, letting students just *kill* themselves—what were they *thinking*?" Mr. Reavus walked back to his desk, grumbling to himself. He turned back to his class once he reached the desk and fixed his tie. "Did you know, that once there was a time when you didn't have to wear those stupid masks, and you could do basically whatever you wanted within reason?"

The students were barely breathing now. Adults weren't allowed to talk about a time before society changed.

"You know what this is?" Mr. Reavus punched the board with the back of his fist. "This is pure *bullshit*!" he shouted.

That was as far as he got. The door swung open and three men in black suits stood in the doorway. They were identical in every possible way. They were the same height, they

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were bald, and they all had dark sunglasses covering their eyes.

"Run! They're after you!" 66 shouted comically. He instantly shrunk back in his seat when one of the black-suited men looked at him.

"Mr. Lee Reavus, please come with us," the middle black-suited man explained as he and his cohorts walked into the class without glancing at the class.

77 looked back at 66, who was gripping his chair with shaking hands. "Stop it, 66; I don't need a vibrating chair right now," 77 hissed.

"77 and 66, please stay after school today, you know there is no talking," the black-suited man who had glared at 66 before stated.

66 released his hands and cowered back in his seat. 77 wasn't sure if 66 was mocking the black-suited man or not, for 66 never had shown any indication that he was afraid of the black-suited men. 77 however, cursed under his breath; he didn't want to stay after school today.

When the two "disruptive" students were taken care of, the black-suited men turned their attention back to Mr. Reavus.

"Please come with us, Mr. Reavus," the middle suited man said, this time sounding more hostile.

Mr. Reavus crossed his arms. "So, you don't think this is all bullshit? A student—two students just killed themselves and you're just going to pretend as though it never happened?" he demanded.

"Stop talking," the same suited man ordered through grinding teeth.

"Afraid that they'll realize that they don't have to listen to you?" Mr. Reavus kept going with a little smirk on his thin lips. He turned back to the students. "You don't *have* to be this way, you can—"

He was down. One of the black-suited men had stepped out of the line of suited men and jabbed a small device used to shock troublemakers if they didn't listen. Mr. Reavus had fallen to the floor without so much as a yelp. There went another teacher, and the class had started to like this one. Two of the black-suited men stepped up and dragged Mr. Reavus out of the classroom. The one that hadn't left yet stood before the class, pocketing his shocking device. Mr. Reavus had been the only teacher that the students had actually learned something from, and he had only taught for around ten minutes.

"He's trying to corrupt you," the black-suited man explained, gaining the students' attentions. "If you turn out like him, you'll be mentally unstable. You'll be sent to that asylum down the road—you know the one."

The students each exchanged quick glances (no doubt worrisome ones) and gulped. In freshmen year, the school had arranged a field trip to the local asylum down the street, the one that the black-suited man was talking about. It wasn't very pretty; it really disturbed most of the students. One of the female students had ran back to the bus, crying. 77 remembered that one of the female teachers had run after the student; however, later that day, that same teacher had been fired for having been getting too close to a student. That was the number one rule; none of the adults were allowed to get close to the students. As the students in classroom No. 227 were thinking back to their experience at the asylum, the black-suited man continued his "originality breeds problems" speech until the bell rang. He

(Continued from page 29)

bid the students farewell and left them with five minutes of "talk-time".

When the black-suited man left, 77 whipped around in his seat to look at 66. "What is your problem? I don't want to stay after this time!" he snapped.

66 shrugged. "Sorry! I just got freakin' nervous," he excused. "Don't worry, though. They won't ask you to roll up your sleeves, they *never* do."

77 glared at 66 through the holes in his mask before he faced the front again.

The rest of the day went on normally. Every time that the students were allowed to talk, they mourned over the death of Melissa and 29. The girls seemed to be in love with the dead 29 as well—most said that if they had known that he had been so good looking, they would have given him more thought. The girls had to be careful where they said that, however; if one of the stricter teachers heard that, he or she could send the girl down to the office for being "shallow".

At the end of the day, 77 and 66's sixth period teacher led them down to the detention hall. He took them right to the doors and left them to find which detention sector they were to go to. Before the black-suited man had left earlier, he had given both of the students a slip that had the words, "sector 2" written in large black letters. That meant that the two boys were to go to the door marked "sector 2". In rooms numbered one through ten, students were punished. Depending on the severity of their disruption, the boys either went to one of the lower numbers (a less severe punishment) or one of the higher ones (a very severe punishment). Luckily, 77 and 66 had only violated the "no-talking" rule and were to go to the door marked "sector 2". Together, they stood before the door and looked at each other with apprehensive glances. This was not their first time at this room; they'd been there a few times before for talking when it wasn't "talk-time". 77 wished that he hadn't come back; he hated to be punished. But what was done was done. If the students blamed one another, the punishment would be harder on them both.

"Come on, boys," a drawling voice emanated from inside the room as the door clicked, indicating it had just been unlocked. 77 and 66 gave each other a nod of confidence—they'd go down together, unlike most students who came down to the detention hall together. Then, they walked in.

To Be Continued...

*Rye has been a member of RMXP.org since February 2006. She is currently working on **Memento Vivere**.*

#1 RMXP Junky



RMXP Ezine Wordsearch Puzzle

T	H	C	F	S	T	G	Y	J	Z	F	E	I	T	E	M	S	P	Z	P	E
B	M	V	I	P	I	F	G	L	H	W	S	K	I	L	L	S	M	O	R	N
R	P	R	L	R	L	A	N	V	F	X	E	V	E	N	T	S	O	W	U	E
Q	N	X	D	I	E	A	C	T	O	R	S	K	S	E	U	L	U	X	D	M
P	B	B	A	T	S	S	A	Y	G	X	L	S	Z	V	P	W	M	U	Q	I
O	R	Z	H	I	E	H	O	E	L	U	B	M	B	M	C	I	A	V	E	E
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M	R	P	G	G	S	E									A	D	E	I	U	I
L	T	O	X	S	X	Y									S	O	R	S	B	R
K	R	A	O	Z	L	H									S	W	I	L	Y	K
J	O	F	R	M	X	P									E	S	A	Z	R	S
I	O	E	U	S	B	K									S	K	L	F	S	C
H	P	X	V	K	Y	X									A	I	B	V	P	R
G	S	X	N	P	P	H									R	N	A	N	O	I
F	I	M	P	O	R	T	K	D	N	M	U	S	I	C	M	S	S	C	C	P
E	C	J	N	D	G	L	O	R	I	A	D	B	H	N	O	F	E	M	K	T
D	O	M	A	N	I	M	A	T	I	O	N	S	A	C	U	S	N	S	X	I
C	U	Y	L	B	A	S	I	L	T	J	I	M	L	F	R	D	E	K	N	N
B	C	O	A	T	A	B	A	S	E	C	O	P	R	O	G	R	A	M	R	G
A	V	D	P	A	C	H	A	R	A	C	T	E	R	S	E	T	S	R	H	K
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DATABASE
RUBY
CHARACTERSETS
TILESETS
ANIMATIONS
WINDOWSkins
SPRITING

SCRIPTING
MUSIC
EVENTS
RMXP
PROGRAM
ACTORS
HILDA

GLORIA
BASIL
MATERIALBASE
CLASSES
SKILLS
ITEMS
ARMOUR

ENEMIES
TROOPS
IMPORT
RPG