[THE KING OF FIGHTERS 2000]	
 	[NEOGEO]
TNITEONICTION	

Bye bye 90s, and welcome to the end of the millenium as the plot thickens. SNK decided to shake up the roster with King and Yuri Sakazaki switching teams as well as Blue Mary and Mai Shiranui. The Hero team of 99' split up and made two new teams of their own and we got Hinako as the new female team member. From KOF99, only Li Xiangfei got the shaft. As Kyo had Iori as his rival, SNK decided to give K' a rival named Kula Diamond who has ice powers. The new boss is Zero, the boss of Kryzalid from KOF99.

DISCLAIMER

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TEAMS

K': K', Maxima, Ramon, Vanessa

Benimaru: Benimaru Nikaido, Shingo Yabuki, Seth, Lin

Fatal Fury: Terry Bogard, Andy Bogard, Joe Higashi, Blue Mary Ryan Art of Fighting: Ryo Sakazaki, Robert Garcia, King, Takuma Sakazaki

Ikari: Leona Heidern, Ralf Jones, Clark Steel, Whip

Psycho Soldier: Athena Asamiya, Sie Kensou, Chin Gentsai, Bao

Women: Mai Shiranui, Yuri Sakazaki, Kasumi Todoh, Hinako Shijou

Kim: Kim Kaphawn, Chang Koehan, Choi Bounge, Jhun Hoon

Edit Only: Kyo Kusanagi, Iori Yagami

Secret: Kula Diamond

Boss: Zero

0-----STORY

It has been a while since the existence of the mysterious secret syndicate NESTS was brought to light. Since then, however, their presence still remains a mystery and they've kept their activities well under wraps.

Meanwhile, in contrast to NESTS seeming lack of action, an increase in terrorist activities throughout the world has been taking place. Heidern and his band of mercenaries have determined that these events are the work of K' and Maxima.

Heidern and his band quickly begin pursuit of these two, but just as they begin their efforts, the invitations for the latest KOF tournament are sent....!

The fighters ready themselves for the tournament to begin in various venues throughout the world. Most remarkable among the invited teams is one in which K' and Maxima are listed as members!

Moreover, NESTS whip into the second phase of their project, as if summoned into action by the two "terrorists."

Is the beginning of NESTS's activities a mere coincidence? Or, could it be...?

Once again a feeling of impending conflict stifles the air, and the curtain on the latest King of Fighters is about to rise...!!!

u=Up, uf=Up-Forward, f=Forward, df=down-forward, d=down, db=down-back, b=back, ub=up-back.

d~u=hold down, briefly then press up b~f=hold back briefly then press forward db~f=hold down/back briefly then press forward + = simultaneaous

O----O

CONTROLS

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A button is for light punch B button is for light kick C button is for hard punch D button is for hard kick Press Start to taunt opponent Dash: f, f Backstep: b, b Knockdown: CD Safe landing: AB while hit in air Striker Call: BC Dodge: AB or b + AB Taunt: Select Jump: u, ub, or uf Big Jump: d, ub/uf or uf when running Small jump: tap u,uf, or ub Middle Jump: hold u, ub, or uf Guard Cancel Evasion: AB during block Guard Cancel Blow Back: CD while blocking Counter Mode: ABC

Armor Mode: BCD

Dodge attack: attack during dodge

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SYSTEM

There are 6 fights before you face off against Zero. Depending on how well you fight, you get to fight Kula Diamond as a mid boss.

There are up to five striker bombs that can be used in a fight. You are invincible when a striker is called.

Taunting with a stock rewards you with a striker bomb if you used any.

Each fighter has an extra striker and some have a Maniac striker

Every attack fills your super bar up to 3 times. Once a bar is full, you can execute a DM. SDMs are excuted when life is in the red.

Counter Mode requires three stocks but you can do more damage, perform infinite DMs and Guard Evasion Cancel and Guard Body blows for a set amount of time.

Armor mode also requires three stocks and adds damage plus the power to be immune to special and super block damage, and interrupted attacks for a set amount of time.

Both Modes will disable the bar for a little while after they expire.

TEAM STORY AND MOVES

~~K' Team~~

"Have you finished the preparations yet?"

The woman reflected in the rearview mirror asks her driver while she touches up her lipstick.

"The arrangements for the invitations were prepared one week ago. And I've just completed the preparations for the meeting. We'll be arriving at the meeting place in five minutes. Please be ready."

"Is that all that's on today's agenda?"

"Yes. I've heard nothing of any special options. Do you have any plans with your family?"

"Yes, we have reservations for dinner. But it's okay. It looks like we can do this without having to cancel it."

The woman finishes her preparations as she looks toward the hall from her car window.

The heat of the assembled mass is overwhelming. Among these members must be one who no one foresaw coming.

In spite of the hall being able to handle two to three thousand people, it's quite overwhelming when everyone is pickled into it like this. Even more, the majority of them are crazy with excitement at the event taking place in the hall before them. Not only is it hot in here, the heat of the bodies also takes its toll. For K' (K-Dash), at least, this is the worst situation imaginable.

"Is this some sort of torture?"

Not looking anywhere in particular, ${\tt K'}$ puts the question to Maxima in his usual surly matter.

"Oh, I'm sorry. Do you want something to drink?"

Maxima, not looking particularly fazed by all this, offers the glass of beer he's taken a sip out of to K'.

It's clearly misunderstanding. But it puts an end to K''s listlessness.

"...That's not what I meant!"

"Care for another one?"

"You mean NESTS? Ah, I've got it under control. Once this little chore is over, that is."

Maxima answers K'''s queries matter-of-factly and once again takes another gulp of beer.

"Chore...?"

"A meeting with our new teammate."

A suspicious expression seizes K''s face as Maxima offers him an envelope.

"An invitation...KOF? What is this?"

"We've been invited again. It requests our participation as invited athletes on the Special Team. I was accessed by our other teammates yesterday. And they told me to meet them here at this hall."

"Are you going to enter?"

"It seems that the finals are to be held in Southtown."

"Southtown...here?"

"It's just a stone's throw from here. There's evidence of their handiwork somewhere over there. No matter how you look at it, something is just not kosher about the tournament. I think it's best to check out anything dubious, don't you? ...So that's why I've entered."

The growing cheers signal the entry of the participants in the main event. The cheers well up, as if in waves. But as the participants near the ring, the cheers turn into a steady roar. Hidden by the onlookers, K' and Maxima are unable to make out what's going on. After a short while, some masked men spring into the ring. One, then another...one wrestler after another, wearing the same mask, climb into the ring. Before one knows, the roaring cheers change to laughter.

"This is hilarious! Aw, man, that's funny!"

K' stands beside the amused Maxima. K' looks even more bored than before.

"What a yawnfest!"

A gong chimes outside the pandemonium of the ring. Among the throng of small masked men, a larger hooded figure stands out, and he jumps at the smaller combatants as he removes his mask.

IT ENDS IN AN INSTANT.

The conclusion was as expected.

An explosion of cheers is directed to the man with a patch over his eye, standing in the ring.

"How stupid."

Maxima shoots a blunt look at his companion's blunt interjection.

"Oh, pipe down. Enough negativity. Some people here are actually enjoying themselves."

"I don't have the time for such amusements."

"Amusement? That guy? He does have a flare for presentation, but quite the contrary. He's quite a piece of work that man is."

Oblivious to K' who ignores this comment, Maxima takes readings on the man wearing the eye patch in the ring. The readings that register prove the man's extraordinary capabilities. The moment he attempts to examine the other traits, an alarm appears on the monitor.

" | "

A look of anxiety seizes Maxima's face. Next to K' sits a woman, her chin resting on her hands, in the seat that should have been open.

"Hi '

"Who are you?"

"Why, your partner, of course."

"Weren't you supposed to be a man?"

"Your manager contacted me yesterday. Did I surprise you?"

"No, I'm Maxima."

Maxima extends his hand, as if letting everything slide. The woman responds.

"The name's Vanessa."

"The other...Ramon, when will he grace us with his presence?"

"He already has."

The cheers drown out Maxima as he asks where Vanessa's partner is. When Maxima looks at the stage, the monolog of the man with the eye patch begins.

"I believe I sufficiently displayed my true abilities, but I'm think all of you aren't satisfied, huh? Maybe a further demonstration is necessary, so do not hesitate to try again! ...I dedicate my next victory to all of you in the audience!"

The man with the eyepatch points to the far-removed Vanessa. Vanessa responds with a wave.

"So he's Ramon?"

 ${\tt Maxima,\ seized\ by\ amazement,\ checks\ on\ Vanessa.}$ Continuing to wave, ${\tt Vanessa\ responds.}$

"Something wrong? I think I'm on the right track."

Before their exchange ends, K' rises from his seat. Vanessa looks over to K'.

"Are you leaving?"

"I have an errand. Maxima, I'm leaving."

He brushes by Vanessa as he passes. She whispers,

"How about learning a bit more amiability? It would make you more attractive, kiddo...."

"Put a sock in it, toots."

Without looking her in the eyes, K' bids these final words of farewell and leaves. Following his lead, Maxima rises from his seat.

"Sorry about that. My partner just hates being told what to do."

"Don't worry about it. If he weren't like that, he wouldn't be interesting. Do you think this is a good idea, you and us?"

"Let's hope so."

Unlike his partner, Maxima leaves the hall with a smile.

Vanessa removes a cell phone from her waist pocket as she sees him off.

"They've left now. Don't lose them."

Vanessa, too, leaves the hall, breaking into a jog.

It is underground, where the visibility is anything but satisfactory.

Following down along a line of a number of bunched up cables, a large object that is beyond K''s understanding emits a low hum. Maxima arrives late.

"This again. Just what time does that make it?"

"Near the area of the exhibition match there's an inexplicable object that lets out a moan. This is quite a piece of work, this is."

Touching the cords, K' mutters,

But there's something different about this. It's the first time something like this has been placed in the center of a KOF venue."

Nearing the device, Maxima attempts to examine the data through the jack \min in his fingertip.

"It doesn't matter. Have you understood anything? Anything about its contents?"

"I'm working on that now. ...Hmph. It's the same. It has a transmitting device...that's all I know."

"Is it theirs?"

"No doubt. It's a product from NESTS. I recognize all the parts in it. But having one of these lying around a KOF venue.... Something must be up." $\,$

The alarm emitted by Maxima's sensors and the flashing is almost the same type.

A bullet zips by the eyes of K'. Maxima's sensors begin to count the number of enemies in succession.

"It looks like we got company today. A lot of them."

Rising up, he tugs at his thigh with his glove. The right hand of K' is burning red.

"Maybe they think if they group together they can win."

"Yeah, they just never learn; that's for sure."

Countless red points from laser gun sights light up the two.

Vanessa, returning to her car, gazes at the monitor installed in her seat.

The camera and K' continue to glare at each other momentarily.

And all of a sudden the image on the screen abruptly changes to snowy interference, and then it goes dead. The driver waiting for the end to the picture speaks,

"I'm sure you've already become aware of this. Someone came straight from the exit of the hall. He's lifted the back of this car and there's nothing I can do $\,$ "

She thinks about it a little and answers quickly.

"DO WHAT YOU CAN."

For Vanessa, this is the only option she can agree most with.

"It's OK, just go with it."

"Are you sure?"

As she tries to answer, Vanessa's voice is cut off by the sound of an explosion. The car shakes violently.

"What...?!"

The sound of the explosion is not one that occurred close by. But the smoke that climbs from the manhole visible from her car, however, indicates the force of the blast.

"Wow, that kid can really do the job."

"I was right to let him take a shot."

Maxima whispers as he returns to the arm responsible for the blast.

"Do you have anymore ammo left?" Keeping his back to him, K' responds: I have about two or three for the Vapor. What'll we do?" "Give me all you got. I still have got this baby with me." At the other end of K''s line of sight, he sees one of the objects that withstood the blast. Maxima loads the cartridge. "Be careful there...Hey, what's the big idea?!" K' shoots Maxima a sideways glance as he burns the KOF invitation. "I can't just punch it directly, can I?" "That's right, but if I don't have this..." "We can't enter? As long as that woman's around, it should be no trouble." Pondering his words for a moment, Maxima soon agrees. "Yeah, I guess you're right." They place the cartridge inside the object and fling in the burning invitation. It doesn't take long until the sound of another explosion is heard. This time around it is a little smaller, but it is sufficient enough to be heard. "Things look like there going to get pretty interesting from now on, eh?" Vanessa does nothing more than look in the direction where ${\tt K}^{\:\raisebox{3.5pt}{\text{\circle*{1.5}}}}$ and Maxima must Fighting Style : Explosive Powers Birthdate: Unknown Nationality: Unknown Blood Group: Unknown Height: 183 cm Weight: 65 kg Likes : None Fav. Food : Beef Strong Sports : None (poor in sports) Impt Things : None Hated Things : KOF tournaments 0-----0 THROWS Spot Pile: close, b or f + C Knee Strike: close, b or f + D 0-----COMMAND MOVES One Inch: f + A Knee Assault: f + B SPECIAL MOVES Iron Trigger: d, df, f + P Second Shoot: Iron Trigger, f + B Second Shell: Iron Trigger, f + D Blackout: Iron Trigger, b + K Crow Bites: f, d, df + P Secondary Bites: Crow Bites (C), f + K Minute Spike: d, db, b + K (also in air) Blackout: d, df, f + K SUPER MOVES

Chain Drive (DM): d, df, f, df, d, db, b + P

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Heat Drive (DM): (d, df, f) \times 2 + P (delayable)
Chain Drive (SDM): d, df, f, df, d, db, b + AC
Striker Move: Narrow Spike
Alternate Striker: Another K' (Narrow Spike)
Notes: Heat Drive is unblockable if delayed until forced.
Maxima
Fighting Style : M-Style fighting skills
Birthdate : 2nd March
Nationality : Canada
Blood Group : A+
Height: 204 cm
Weight: 204 kg
Likes : Cycling
Fav. Food : Sweet stuffs
Strong Sports : Rugby
Impt Things : His sideburns
Hated Things : Fermented soy-beans, people who ask for opinions
                            THROWS
                      0-----
Dynamite Drop: close, b or f + C
Chocking Vice: close, b or f + D
                           COMMAND MOVES
                      0-----
Mongolian: f + A
M9 Kata Maxima Missile: df + D
                      0-----
                           SPECIAL MOVES
                      0----0
M4 Kata Vapor Cannon: d, db, b + P
System 1 Maxima Scramble: d, df, f + A
Double Bomber: System 1 Maxima Scramble, d, df, f + A
Bulldog Press: Double Bomber, d, df, f + A
System 2 Maxima Scramble: d, df, f + C
Skull Crush: System 2 Maxima Scramble, d, df, f + C
Centoun Press: Skull Crush, f + K
System 3 Maxima Lift: f, df, d, db, b + K
Centoun Press: System 3 Maxima Lift, d, df, f + K
M11 Kata Dangerous Arch: close, b, db, d, df, f + K
M19 Kata Blitz Cannon: f, d, df + K
                      0-----
                           SUPER MOVES
Bunker Buster (DM): d, df, f, df, d, db, b + P Maxima Revenger (DM): close, (f, df, d, db, b)x2 + K Maxima Revenger (SDM): close, (f, df, d, db, b)x2 + BD
Striker Move: Maxima Gallows
Another Striker: Rocky (Atomic Burn)
+++
Vanessa
Fighting Style: Boxing
Birthday: 9th January
Nationality: Unknown
Blood Type: B
Height: 182 cm
Weight: 67 kg
Fav. Food: Beer
{\tt Best \; Sport: \; All \; of \; them}
Impt Things: Her wedding ring
Hated Things: Indecisive people, ghosts
                      0-----
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Dynamite Puncher: close, b or f + C Clinch Puncher: close, b or f+ D COMMAND MOVES One-Two Puncher: f + A Sliding Puncher: df + B SPECIAL MOVES 0-----Machine Gun Puncher: b, db, d, df, f + P, P rapidly Parrying Puncher: f, d, df + C Puncher Vision(forward): d, df, f + K Puncher Vision (backward): d, db, b + K Uppercut: Puncher Vision, f + AStraight Puncher Vision, Punch: f + C Weaving: Puncher Vision, b + P (delayable) Dash Puncher: b~f+P Puncher Weaving: d, db, b+P (delayable) Dash Puncher: Puncher Weaving, f + P Parrying Puncher: Puncher Weaving, b + P Puncher Vision (forward): Puncher Weaving, f + K Puncher Vision (backward): Puncher Weaving, b + K 0-----SUPER MOVES 0-----Champion Puncher (DM): $(d, df, f) \times 2 + P$ when near Crazy Puncher (DM): d, db, b, db, d, df, f + P Crazy Puncher(SDM): d, db, b, db, d, df, f + AC Striker: Hard Puncher Another Striker: Fio (Paracute Dive Bomb) +++ Ramon Fighting Style: Lucha Libre Birthday: 3rd December Nationality: Mexico Blood Type: A Height: 170 cm Weight: 80 kg Fav. Food: Tacos and tequila Best Sport: Pro Wrestling Impt Things: Mask his mentor gave him, 'lovely' Vanessa Hated Things: Foul play, losses outside the ring 0-----THROWS Arm Whip: close, b or f + C Flying Mayor: close, b or f + D 0-----COMMAND MOVES Low Drop Kick: df + B SPECIAL MOVES Tiger Neck Chancery: close, b, db, d, df, f + P Feint Step: d, db, b + P (delayable) Somersault: b, db, d, df, f + K Rolling Sobat: f, d, df + K Flying Body Attack: f, d, df + K SUPER MOVES

THROWS

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El Diablo Amarillo(DM): d, db, b, db, d, df, f + K Tiger Spin(DM): close, (f, df, d, db, b) \times 2 + P Tiger Spin(SDM): close, (f, df, d, db, b) \times 2 + AC

Striker Move: El Diablo Amarillo

Another Striker: Duke Edwards (Submarine Screw)

Maniac Striker: Neo & Geo (Countdown Three)

~~Benimaru Team~~

Airport...A lone man (Seth) boards a plane bound for China...He checks the seat

Airport...A lone man (Seth) boards a plane bound for China...He checks the seat number on his ticket and arrives in first class.

"Thank you for riding JAR today. This is flight 149...."

The "Fasten Your Seatbelts" sign flashes on with the announcement, and the plane takes off for China.

Shortly after, a stewardess comes over and talks to Seth.

"Excuse me. Sir, would you like to watch a video?"

Seth contemplates turning her offer down but takes the video when he notices a picture of his dog, Chinchilla, engraved on the video she holds in her hand.

He thanks the stewardess and immediately pops the video into the player. A man appears on the screen.

The man's face is digitally blurred out.

"Your mission is to take custody of the individual known as Ron.' Naturally I want you to lead him here without him catching on. The fighting tournament known as KOF' will soon begin. Since we have learned NESTS is likely to appear in this tournament and is probably involved, we want you to get inside. Two entry tickets have been prepared for you. The envelope is wedged under your seat."

Looking around to check no one is watching, he reaches down under the seat and pulls out a white envelope.

Seth opens the envelope to find two tickets and a wad of bills. He shoves it into the inner pocket of his suit.

"You are completely free to use any measures and methods you see fit. Should you make any mistakes, this agency will take no responsibility for you. This tape will destroy itself automatically."

The screen goes black, the video begins to smoke, and is destroyed.

China. The Hebei province. Two ninjas streak through the forest like a pair of falcons.

"At last...information about the inner sanctum of the Flying Brigands...!! If we strike them now...!"

The ninja in front drips with sweat and runs at full speed. A pig-tailed ninja with a black band around his arm pursues him. The ninja in front then turns back to toss a dirk at his pursuer. He senses that it hit its mark. Something crashes down in the forest behind.

"Yes...Gah...!!!"

The instant he turns back around he sees the ninja with the black band he thought he had just brought down seconds before standing in front of him.

His black band now covers his hand and glows with a ghostly aura. He lunges but the pursued ninja manages to narrowly avoid the attack. The wound is not lethal, but it leaves a wound on his chest. The ninja tosses down a smoke bomb and flees. The ninja with the black band does not chase him.

Seth walks around asking the locals the way to Hebei province.

But the people turn silent and appear to quake with fear at the mention of Hebei. Seth runs into a kindly old man, and succeeds in learning the way to Hebei. As he follows the road per the old man instructions, he finds himself in a remote area where not a soul stirs.

As he presses further on, he reaches the foot of a large waterfall. Here he finally runs into another human. But the figure totters from side to side. Seth senses something is afoot, and as he closes in while remaining unnoticed, he's able to see that the figure is a ninja. His wound looks shallow, but his face is pallid, drool runs from his mouth, and his eyes stare off into nowhere at nothing in particular.

As Seth looks on behind a boulder, a gush of blood suddenly issues from the ninja's mouth along with a scream.

"!!!...What in blazes...is going on...?!"

The ninja collapses into an unrecognizable mass. When Seth runs to check out the ninja, he notices him breathing slightly and his mouth is gasping for air.

"...P...Poison...Flying...Brigands...Bwaaaagh!"

As he finishes, the ninja heaves up another torrent of blood and expires.

"Flying Brigands! ... I knew it...!!!"

At that instant the man with the pig tail and the black band appears.

"You, too, know the name of the Flying Brigands and thus must die..."

The man, without warning, attacks.

"Hoo, hoo, hoo...You are as fast as they say.... Very well...let's dispense with the pleasantries, eh?"

For a while, the two exchange fierce blows. Seth lets his guard down for a second, looses his balance, and falls flat on his back.

"It's over...."

A magical aura issues from his band and the man aims at Seth's chest.

"It ends here!"

Seth makes a special move of his own and barely manages to evade the attack.

"Hoo, hoo, hoo...So that was the Poison Punch of ?Lin,' one of Four Devas of the Flying Brigands, was it...?"

"...Why? ...Why do you...know my name...?"

"Hoo, hoo. I know of your code, too. All who know anything of the Flying Brigands' must die-that's why no one knows anything of your inner sanctum and the name "Flying Brigands" remains unknown to the rest of the world. You're a real crack band of assassins, you are. It appears that your Four Devas are quite a force to be reckoned with."

Lin is confused by the inquisitive Seth. He cannot fathom how this man knows so many details concerning the inner sanctum of the Flying Brigands.

"...I will not let you live...."

"Just why do you think I know so much about you and your group anyway?"

Lin attacks Seth, ignoring the question, but Seth, unfazed, continues his story.

"Just where is your chief ?Ron' now, anyway?!!!"

Lin's attacking hand stops.

"...How? ...How do you know of Ron, too...?!!! Just who are you...?!!!"

"Wouldn't you like to know?"

"...Enough to wait until I kill you...."

"Very well...You're chief is now missing, isn't he...? I know exactly where your chief Ron is right now."

"...Where...?"

"...Ah, ah, ah. First I want you to agree to a few conditions of mine."

"...Don't mess with me! ...If you don't tell me quickly, you shall die...very slowly."

"Tut, tut, tut...Kill me, and you'll never find out where Ron is. Can you live with that?" $\,$

"...Why, you...." Lin must resign himself to the fact that the inner sanctum of the Flying Brigands is on the brink of total collapse. Just who is this ?Ron' person anyway...?" $\mbox{\tt "I}$ want you to enter the fighting tournament called KOF with me. Then if we go on to win, you will find out just who Ron is. You'll be able to see with your own eyes." "...Impossible. ...I will kill you...!" A few days later, in an abandoned baseball field...there is no sign of anyone and steel girders are strewn all about. "He should be arriving soon...." Benimaru glances at his wristwatch as he mutters this. "Benimaru! Why did you ask me to meet me in this creepy place? This place... gives me the heebie-jeebies!" "...I've summoned someone for whom a place like this is appropriate." Benimaru bruskly replies as he lights his cigarette. "Benimaru...I've been meaning to ask you this, but...is the reason you called me here...could it be?" Benimaru produces two tickets to KOF and passes one to Shingo. "So they did come, did they...?!!! But just why are you waiting for K' in a place like this?" Benimaru exhales a puff of smoke and answers, "We're not joining up with those clowns this time around...." "Huh? Then who are the other two members...? Kusanagi still missing, and...." "This time I'm going to choose the members I want. One of them is an old comrade of mine, and the other is a rather touchy type it seems.... He's the reason why we're meeting here. He seems to prefer...out of the way places." Benimaru has a bad feeling that something wicked is about to happen. Crashing scrap metal clatters in the distance. Shingo shrinks back in fear. The figures of two men suddenly appear from behind a steel column. "Hey, Benimaru...Long time, no see, eh? ... I'm honored to be invited to join your team. Looks like we're going to bust some heads together again!" Seth extends his right hand, giving Benimaru a firm handshake. Lin stands behind him. "So this is the guy...?" Benimaru asks Seth, trying to keep the question out of Lin's earshot. "...You should keep your distance from him...I told you about him before, but this guy's necessary to find Kyo Kusanagi and crush NESTS.... "What about Kyo...? Have you come up with any leads?" "... All I've been able to come up with is that he's probably going to enter KOF as usual...but everything will become apparent once we enter, I guess...." "I quess so...." Benimaru shoots a glance at Lin. Just at that moment, Shingo innocently approaches Lin to greet him-he shouldn't have done this. "Uh...My name's Shingo Yabuki!!! Nice to meet you. What's that band for?" The moment Shingo tries to touch Lin's band, Lin's eyes begin to glare brightly and he motions to attack Shingo. "Cut that out...!" Benimaru quickly snags Lin's attacking hand in the nick of time. "...Let go...." "They call me Benimaru.... Don't be messing with my team. ...Do you got me?"

Seeing Lin all worked up over his interrupted attack, Benimaru senses that he won't be able to avoid a showdown with this clown. As predicted, a strange aura bursts from his hand and Lin attempts to run Benimaru through. In an instant, Benimaru zaps Lin with his Electrigger move, rendering him temporarily paralyzed. "...!!!..." "... Never get any strange ideas like that again, got me?" "That was magnificent, Benimaru!" Seth is impressed at the speed of Benimaru's lightning swift judgment. "But...a few ticks later or if my Electrigger move was late, I would have been dead. It seems that he wasn't that serious. To take a full-force Electrigger move and still be alive... You sure brought one tough cookie to our little party, Seth...." As a matter of fact, this is the first time Lin has tasted defeat outside his band of Flying Brigands. Along with Lin's animus toward him going up a notch, so too does his respect for Benimaru's moves. "...Hmph...fascinating...." Lin lets out an audacious laugh. It looks like this year's KOF is going to be another doozy. An it's about to begin. ... Meanwhile, Shingo, the reason fro all this commotion, stands petrified, alone in the middle of the abandoned baseball field. "Mr. Benimaaaaaaru! Help me! I'm scared!" Benimaru Nikaido Fighting Style: Japanese version of Muey Thai (Thai kickboxing) Birthdate: 6th June Nationality: Japan (with American heritage) Blood Group : O+ Height: 180 cm Weight: 68 kg Likes : Being the center of attraction Fav. Food : Sashimi Strong Sports : Clay disc shooting Impt Things : Himself Disliked Things : Otaku, regrets 0-----THROWS Catch and Shoot: close, b or f + CFront Suplex: close, b or f + D Spinning Knee Drop: in air and close, b or f or d + C or D COMMAND MOVES Jackknife Kick: f + B Flying Drill: in air, d + DSPECIAL MOVES IaiGeri: d, df, f + K Handou Sandan Geri: IaiGeri, d, u + K Shinkuu Katategoma: d, db, b + P Super Inazuma Kick: f, d, df + K Raijin Ken: d, df, f + P (also in air)

SUPER MOVES

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Raikou Ken(DM): (d, df, f) \times 2 + P
Gen'ei Hurricane (DM): (d, df, f)x2 + K
Striker Move: Electrigger
Another Striker: Another Benimaru (RaijinKen)
Shingo Yabuki
Fighting Style: (Self-claimed) Ancient Kusanagi-style martial arts
taught by Kyo Kusanagi
Birthdate: 8th April
Nationality : Japan
Blood Group : O+
Height: 179 cm
Weight: 71 kg
Likes : A fan of 'Lizard Man'
Fav. Food : Microwave dishes
Strong Sports : Swimming, water polo
Impt Things : Life, his girlfriend, his student handbook
Disliked Things : Milk
                           THROWS
Hatsugane: close, b or f + C
Issetsu Seoi Nage Fukanzen: b or f + D
                     0-----
                         COMMAND MOVES
                     0----0
Ge Shiki Goufu "Kakkodake": f + B
                          SPECIAL MOVES
114 Shiki Aragami Mikansei: d, df, f + A
115 Shiki Dokugami Mikansei: d, df, f + C
Shingo Kick: b, db, d, df, f + K
100 Shiki Oniyaki Mikansei: f, d, df + P
101 Shiki Oborogurama Mikansei: b, d, db + K
202 Shiki Kototsuki Mikansei: f, df, d, db, b + K
Shingo Kinsei Ore Shiki Nietogi: Close, f, d, df + K
                          SUPER MOVES
Burning Shingo(DM): d, db, b, db, d, df, f+P
Ge Shiki Kake Hourin(DM): (d, df, f)x2+P
Burning Shingo (SDM): d, db, b, db, d, df, f + AC
Striker Move: Yacchatte Kusadai
Another Striker: Cosplayer Kyoko (75 Shiki Kai2)
+++
Lin
Fighting Style: Qing Shen Gong & Zhang Martial Arts
Birthdate: February 16
Nationality: Chinese
Blood Group: Poison
Height: 195cm
Weight: 75kg
Likes: None
Fav. Food: None
Strong Sports: Anything (Mostly long-distance running and sprints)
Most Important Things: The Dictates of Hizoku
Disliked Things: None
                            THROWS
                     0-----
Akuzan: close, b or f + C
Akuzan Ki: b or f + D
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COMMAND MOVES
                     0-----
Benpatsuken: f+ A
Joudan Hakkyoku Ken Dakai: df + C
                         SPECIAL MOVES
                     0-----
Muei Kusashu: f, d, df + P
Kasumi: d, db, b + P
Hike Kyaku: b, db, d, df, f + K
Hiten Kyaku: f, df, d, db, b + K
Tetsuzan-bu Rasatsu: d, df, f + P
Tetsuzan-bu Nagi: Rasatsu, f, df, d, db, b + P
Tetsuzan-bu Hakei: Rasatsu, f + P
                        SUPER MOVES
                     0-----0
Hizoku Ougi Yougou (DM): (b, db, d, df, f)x2 + K
Hizoku Ougi Ranbu Dokugi (DM): d, db, b, db, d, df, f + P
Hizoku Ougi Ranbu Dokugi (SDM): d, db, b, db, d, df, f + AC
Hizoku Ougi Doku Shukou (SDM): d, d, d + AC
Striker Move: Hirai Kyaku
Another Striker: Eiji Kisargi (Kasumi Giri)
+++
Seth
Fighting Style: Goshinjutsu (Self-Defense Arts)
Birthday: 1st August
Nationality: America
Blood Type: B
Height: 190 cm
Weight: 108 kg
Fav. Food: Vegetables, fruit (he's a vegetarian)
Best Sport: Individual games
Impt Things: His necktie, his family
Hated Things: Airplanes
                     0-----0
                           THROWS
S.S.F.E.S.: close, b or f + C
Tomoe Nage: close, b or f + D
                     0-----
                         COMMAND MOVES
Sliding: df + B
Rolling Sobat: b + A
Tackle: f + A
Mae Age Geri: f + B
                     0-----
                         SPECIAL MOVES
                     0-----
Falling Moon: d, df, f + B in air
Swimming Moon: d, df, f + D in air
Rising Sun: d, df, f + P
Doh-Kuzushi: b, db, d, df, f + B
Ashi-Tori: b, db, d, df, f + D
Bow Moon: f, df, d, db, b + K
Crescent Moon: d, df, f + P in air
                          SUPER MOVES
Open Sea Moon(DM): d, df, f, df, d, db, b + K
Double Arm Rising Sun(DM): (d, df, f) \times 2 + P
Seven Antagonizing Deaths(DM): d, df, f, df, d, db, b + P
Seven Antagonizing Deaths(SDM): d, df, f, df, d, db, b + AC
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Striker: Final Agent

Maniac Striker: Goro Daimon (Tenchi Gaeshi)

~~Fatal Fury Team~~

A lone man enters the hallowed ground; silent monuments stand vigilant over the lonely field where there's no sign of another living soul.

"So another year has passed since I've visited here."

Every year at this time, Andy comes to visit the grave of his dead father.

The piercing sunlight, the carpet of green that covers one side of the grounds, the gravestones stood in careful order-in this landscape that seems to never change between each visit, something has changed this year.

"...So it looks like I'm all alone this year."

He walks on, resigned to the fact. His big brother should be at his side every year.

But for this entire year, Andy has been unable to discover anything about Terry's whereabouts.

As he mulls this over, Andy arrives in front of his father's gravestone.

"It's been too long, Father. I'm sad to say that this year Andy...."

He stops while trying to complete his sentence. In spite of his one year absence, the gravestone gives off a gleam as if it had just been polished moments ago.

And a single wreath decorates the foot of the gravestone. Surely someone has just been here.

"...Could it be...?"

"Again...?"

What time does this make it...? I see the terrible mess as I return to my room. This has been going on for some time.

The beginning of this string of events began the day I received the job....

On that day a clinging sort of humidity infused my room.

An electronic noise shattered the stagnant air and echoed through my environs.

The source of this noise was my laptop computer that failed to function and preserved the silence of my room.

A few weeks later, I noticed something in my mailbox.

"It's been quite a while, huh?"

There was no way I could miss this. It was a single letter there, addressed to me, Mary Ryan.

No new jobs had come my way to a degree that I was beginning to enjoy it.

This job, though, comes as it had been exactly what I was waiting for....

"Just what is this all about...?"

It was an investigation that was carefully spelled out to the last detail. And among the many instructions, one involved me going deep undercover.

The subject of my investigations: the King of Fighters....

"...Considering how long its been, this is way to big for me alone to chew on..."

This was material sufficient enough for my gut to tell me something.

"Well, it looks like I'll need to make a few preparations first."

And the first thing I decided to do was set about investigating my new client.

I thought something was a little fishy, but if I played the course of events out through the King of Fighters, I felt I just might run into a certain

someone.

The person I'm searching for now...

But at this point in time, I was not really thinking that something would actually happen to $\operatorname{me}...$

It was obvious that someone was observing me.

But this was no simple surveillance. Even for a specialist at investigation like me, the surveillance on me was so perfect ${\tt I}$ could find no traces of it.

Since this was my profession, I've learned a few tricks, but this was the first time I had been completely neutralized.

Seeing how things had been escalating recently probably explains why I've been on pins and needles recently.

"There's more to this job than meets the eye. This is probably a warning that I should keep focused, keep silent, and finish my work.... If I don't put all my effort into this, I may end up getting more than burned."

It was then I decided what to do.

"If this's how it's going to be, then I'll have to play the consummate professional myself."

I took my well-worn helmet in hand and left my apartment.

"It's getting a little tough to look for him at the same time...."

I mounted my bike as I always do and kicked the engine on.

"So what does it mean, Andy? You're telling me that Terry is in town now, are you?!"

"It's a strong possibility. Even Mary's having trouble finding any clues, so I was wondering what I would do for a moment there."

"Hmm, I guess my presence, my aura, is what beckoned Terry here."

"...Yeah, yeah, I got it, Joe.... More important than that, I should tell Mary about this incident. Joe, why don't you keep looking for Terry...What the...?

BA-BOOM! ... The sound of an explosion abruptly cuts Andy off.

"What was that?"

Joe rises to his feet next to the surprised Andy.

"...I hear...I hear someone calling my name!"

At the same time, Joe runs away.

"H-Hey, wait up, Joe! ...For the sake of the Shiranui, just what did that clown come here for? That bozo...."

Andy heads toward the direction of the explosion, in pursuit of Joe.

I knew I felt someone was watching me. Even if it's meant to be a joke, I couldn't say it was friendly one.

Something I felt at that time kept me from moving....

And I'm now in pursuit of the man who I felt watching me.

The wave of people between me and the man became gradually stronger. And as I felt that, the figure of the man vanished.

"Tsh, come on. Don't lose the guy now...."

The figure disappeared from my sight in the flash of an eye.

"...Just how much do you know, Terry Bogard?"

The voice didn't even give me time to look around; I heard it come from behind, out of nowhere.

"...!"

I couldn't process what had happened. While I barely saw the guy, I remained still.

"All you have to do is stay cool, Mary Ryan...."

Mary? That name echoed in my head as I was overcome with anxiety. Then it happened,

BA-BAM!

The sound of an explosion reverberated from somewhere not so far from where I was standing.

While the people around me were still shaken by the sound, that man and me clearly gave off a different aura than those around us.

"...!"

At that time during that tense standoff ${\ \tt I}$ could not help being able to notice a slight opening.

"He's pretty serious, it seems."

I didn't think someone had fiddled with the breaks to the motorcycle. Someone emerged from the crowd that seemed to surround me.

"What? Mary, is it?"

"What? Mary?"

"Joe, and Andy, too!"

Of all the things to happen, the timing of this event couldn't have been worse....

"Hmm, looks like I wasn't wrong about the voice that called me."

"...Oh, baloney. What a crock! By the way, I was just about to contact you. Who'd've thought it would have played out like this?"

"Uh, yeah...So just what do you have to tell me? That you found something out about Terry, perhaps?"

As a matter of fact, I couldn't tell them everything I found out then. Since I was caught up in other pursuits, I had to make sure these two concentrated on finding Terry. But I couldn't very well ask them directly to help me out when I had found Terry....

"Yeah, yeah. That's it! Terry just may be in town!"

"No way!"

THUD!

At that instant, we heard the sound of something falling behind us. There was also another simultaneous noise in our vicinity.

We looked back to see an unconscious man on the ground and a familiar face.

"Fancy meeting you guys here."

"T-Terry...!"

Judging from Terry's story, that man was without doubt the very one who had sabotaged my motorcycle.

And as the situation was explained to me, I realized I could no longer ignore the circumstances of my job and the things that were going on around me.

"Terry, just what have you been up to all this time?! Since you didn't call us we were all worried sick!"

"Yeah, I'm sorry about that.... More importantly, just who is this clown, Mary?!"

Terry pulled down his cap hard over his eyes as he asked me this.

"...I don't think you'd be satisfied if I told you that he's no one important."

I couldn't deceive them any longer. I told the three all about the things I had been dealing with.

"Shouldn't you just ignore it and move on?"

"I can't do that either. If they're willing to go to these lengths, what do you think they'll do if I just blow them off?"

"If you keep doing that, Mary, you'll be nothing more than their servant."

Yes, Joe was right. But if my client had done all these things so far, this job

was sure to be even more trouble than I had imagined. At that moment, Terry interjected suddenly. "OK, I got it! This year all four of us are entering together!" "H-Hey, it's that simple, is it? I just told you, didn't I? Even if I do my job, there's no guarantee that we'll be in the clear. Not only that, this is my job. If you're doing this out of sympathy, I don't need your help.' "Do you think we'd risk our lives out of sympathy?! It's not that cut and dry...No, sirree..." It was a while since I saw Terry angry. More than being surprised at his anger, the last thing he said is what really stuck with me. "No, sirree...?" "...That's what I said...." I felt that he had something more to say to me.... But Joe blabbered on, ignoring what had just transpired. "Well, it would be a waste not to enter the tournament, wouldn't it? And we can't do that alone, can we?" "Th-That's for sure...but is it really OK with you? There'll be no turning back, you know?" "Of course I know that! But if we enter, we enter to win, so don't hold us back!" Again it was Terry's words to me that stuck with me, but, to be quite honest, I was grateful for their cooperation. Whatever the case may have been, I knew this was one job that I wouldn't be able to do on my own.... I knew I had to change my attitude. "Leave it to me. If I join up with you, you're sure to have a lot more firepower.... By the way, if I join up with you guys, what about Andy?" "What? Oh, no, not again...Mai...." We all fell silent. Finally Terry, his cap tight around his eyes, placed a hand on Andy's shoulders and silently nodded his head. "T-Terry...." Joe was his usual self. "Ah, what the hey? I'll explain things so Mai will understand. Don't you worry your pretty blond head, Andy-poo." "...No way, you'll do nothing of the kind... You'll just make things worse...." "I'm sorry, Andy." "Oh, what am I going to do...." I saw this coming.... Mai is always the one to blow her top when others enter the picture. "No, when stuff like this happens, Andy's the one to suffer most. You'll be looking into the maw of hell itself this time, won't you?" That's a bit of an exaggeration, Joe. A very little bit, though, I believe. Terry Bogard Fighting Style : Martial arts taught by his father Jeff Bogard Birthdate: 15th March Nationality : America Blood Group: O+ Height: 182 cm Weight: 82 kg Likes : Video games Fav. Food : Junk food Strong Sports : Basketball Impt Things : Gloves from his father
Hated Things : Slugs

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THROWS
                   0-----
Grasping Upper: close, b or f + C
Buster Throw: close, b or f+ D
                       COMMAND MOVES
                   0-----
Back Knuckle: f + A
Rising Upper: df + C
                   0-----0
                       SPECIAL MOVES
                    0-----
Power Wave: d, df, f + A
Round Wave: d, df, f + C
Burn Knuckle: d, db, b + P
Crack Shoot: d, db, b + K
Rising Tackle: d~u + P
Power Dunk: f, d, df + K
                       SUPER MOVES
                   0-----
Power Geyser (DM): d, db, b, db, f + P
High Angle Geyser(DM): (d, df, f) \times 2 + K
Power Geyser (SDM): d, db, b, db, f + AC
Striker Move: Dunk Geyser
Another Striker: Geese Howard (ShinkuuNage)
Andy Bogard
Fighting Style: Koppou (Basic knowledge of Shiranui Ninjitsu)
Birthday: 16th August
Nationality: America
Blood Type: A
Height: 172 cm
Weight: 67 kg
Fav. Food: Natto spaghetti
Best Sport: Short track
Impt Things: Photo of him and his master in his training days
Hated Things: Dogs
                         THROWS
                   0-----
Gourin Kai: close, b or f + C
Kakaekomi Nage: close, b or f + D
                        COMMAND MOVES
                   0----0
Jou Agito: f + B
Age Omote: df + A
                        SPECIAL MOVES
                   0-----
Hishouken: d, db, b + A
Geki Hishoken: d, db, b + C
Shouryuudan: f, d, df + P
Kuuhadan: b, db, d, df, f + K
Genei Shiranui: d, df, f + P in air
Shimo Agito: Genei Shiranui, P
Uwa Agito: Genei Shiranui, K
Zaneiken:db~f + P
Gadankou: Zaneiken, d, df, f+P
Geki Kabehaisui Sho: close, b, db, d, df, f + P
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SUPER MOVES

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Chou Reppadan(DM): d, db, b, db, d, df, f + K Hisho Ryuseiken (DM): d, db, b, db, d, df, f + P
Chou Reppadan(SDM): d, db, b, db, d, df, f + BD
Striker Move: Shippuu Zaneiken
Another Striker: Billy Kane (Rengeki Ensatsukon)
Joe Higashi
Fighting Style: Muey Thai (Thai kickboxing)
Birthdate : 29th March
Nationality : Japan
Blood Group : AB+
Height: 180 cm
Weight: 71 kg
Likes : Creating noises, brawling
Fav. Food : Deep-fried alligator meat
Strong Sports : All types of martial arts
Impt Things : Hachimaki (the bandanna on his forehead)
Hated Things : School
                                THROWS
Hiza Jigoku: close, b or f+HP
Leg Throw: close, b or f+ D
                            COMMAND MOVES
                       0-----0
Sliding Kick: df + B
Low Kick: f + B
                            SPECIAL MOVES
Hurricane Upper: b, db, d, df, f + P
Slash Kick: b, db, d, df, f + K
Tiger Kick: f, d, df + K
Bakuretsu: P repeatedly
Bakuretsu Finisher: Bakuretsu, d, df, f + P
Ougon no Kakato: d, db, b + K
                          SUPER MOVES
Screw Upper(DM): (d, df, f) x2 + P
Bakuretsu Shippuu Kakato(DM): d, df, f, df, d, db, b + P
Super Low Kick (DM): (d, df, f)x2 + K (delayable)
Screw Upper(SDM): (d, df, f)x2 + AC
Striker Move: Ora Ora Exploder
Another Striker: Duck King (Windmill)
+++
Blue Mary Ryan
Fighting Style : Commando style
Birthdate : 4th Feburary
Nationality : America
Blood Group : AB+
Height : 168 cm
Weight: 49 kg
Likes : Biking
Fav. Food : Beef
Strong Sports : Baseball
Impt Things : Her leather jacket from her ex-partner Butch
Disliked Things : Cats
                                THROWS
                       0-----
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0-----

Victory Throw: close, b or f + C Head Throw: close, b or f + D 0-----COMMAND MOVES Hammer Arch: b or f + A Double Rolling: b or f + BClimbing Arrow: df + BSPECTAL MOVES 0-----Spin Fall: d, df, f + P M. Spider: Spin Fall, d, df, f + P Straight Slicer: b~f + K M. crab Clutch: Straight Slicer, d, df, f + K Real Counter: d, db, b + P Backdrop: Real Counter, b, db, d, df, f + P Head Crush: Real Counter, b, db, d, df, f + K Vertical Arrow: f, d, df + K M. Snatcher: Vertical Arrow, f, d, df + KM. Reverse Face Lock: d, db, b + B M. Head Buster: d, db, b + D SUPER MOVES M. Splash Rose (DM): d, df, f, df, d, db, b + P M. Dynamite Swing (DM): (d, df, f)x2 + KM. Typhoon (DM): close, (f, df, d, db, b)x2 + KM. Dynamite Swing (SDM): $(d, df, f) \times 2 + BD$ Striker Move: Rapid Spider Another Striker: Ryuji Yamazaki (Sarashi Kubi) ~~AOF Team~~ TAKUMA: "Hey! Yuri, can't you wait?" YURI: "Ab-so-lute-ly not! Joining up with you guys again is something that I absolutely won't do." The usual parent-child fight takes place in the Kyokugen Karate gym. YURI: "How long do I have to be a Kyokugen Karate slave?! It was the same last time! And the time before that! And before that, and that, and that! And even before that!!! I've entered the KOF tournament with you before, so this time, absolutely! Absolutely! Absolutely! No!" This time the quarrel is more fierce than usual. YURI: "Why don't you just back off! You and Ryo are more than enough to advertise the greatness of the Way of Kyokugen." Yuri pick up her luggage with this and rushes quickly into the hallway. Just as she puts her shoes on at the entryway, Ryo shows up. RYO: "Yuri, are you okay? I know that you're strong enough to go your own way. That's exactly why Pop thinks it would devastate us if you don't enter on our team." YURI: "I know, Ryo. But I'm not a kid that needs you, Robert, and Pop to watch over me anymore. I want to strike out on my own as an independent fighter!" RYO: "I know that, but...." YURI: "What's more, you don't have to worry about the void I create. I've asked a powerful substitute to take my place!" RYO: "What? A substitute? Who could that be?"

YURI: "That's for me to know and you to find out. Well, see you, big bro'!"

RYO: "Hey, Hey, Yuri...Oh, that little twerp...And just what does she mean by arranging for a substitute?" Meanwhile, here at Southtown's "Bar-Illusion" owned by the famous woman fighter King... KING: "H-Hey, hold on there. Why won't everything work out if I don't join the Kyokugen Karate team?!" YURI: "Please! You're the only one I can ask, King!" KING: "Just what is going on with your team, anyway, Yuri? Have you got all your team members?' YURI: "Yeah. Three of them are certain. One space remains undecided, and I wanted you to be that person, but...If I'm to succeed in getting out of the Kyokugen team, I can't think of a better substitute than you, King! Not only that, King, I know you're hot for my brother...." KING: "Uh, I don't think he's exactly hot for me...not in that way, at least...." YURI: "King! I'm begging you! I'll be indebted for you for life!" Yuri bows deeply for her acceptance. KING: "Hey there, stop it. Ah...Well, what can I do? ...Well, okay. I guess I'll join the Kyokugen Karate team this year!" YURI: "R-Really? Thank you so much, King!" KING: "However, your Yuri Team must win its way to the finals!" YURI: "OK, King! Let's all give it our best shot! Well, see you!" KING: "Huh?! You're leaving already?" YURI: "Yup! I got to find my fourth member! I'm outta here!" Yuri pops the door open and skips out of sight. KING: "H-Hey! Yuri! In and out like a gale, that girl is." The time flies by in an instant and only a few weeks remain until the tournament. ROBERT: "Hey, Ryo! Just what's the word?" RYO: "Oh, Robert. What's with the red face?" ROBERT: "It's Yuri. It looks like she's up and joined another team this time around! Just what's going on?!" RYO: "And that's why you flew here all the way from Italy. You really do have a lot of free time!" ROBERT: "Just what do you mean by that?! You know how I feel about Yuri!" RYO: "It's not that! I'm not trying to tear you two apart. It's just that Yuri decided on her own to join another team." ROBERT: "Oh? Then what's this all about?" The newspaper lists the major entrants of this year's tournament. RYO: "What's up? It mentions the change in members for the Kyokugen Karate team and the leading member of the Woman Fighters team King will substitute for Yuri Sakazaki...Hmm. ...What?! King?!" ROBERT: "Yup! It's obvious that you finagled this to get closer to King and eighty-sixed my sweet little Yuri!" RYO: "Hey, lighten up, Robert! I just learned about this this very moment!" ROBERT: "You better tell me the truth! Dragon Blast Punch!!" "OOF!" Ryo barely manages to evade this attack. RYO: "Hey! Are you really cruising for a bruising?" ROBERT: "Hey! I'm about to lose it!"

TAKUMA: "Would you two cut it ou-uuuuuuuut!" At that instant, a clap of thunder rumbles through the gym. TAKUMA: "You two fools! Just what is going on here?!" RYO: "Pop..." ROBERT: "Master..." TAKUMA: "Rancid rice balls! You two just never grow up, do you? You two! Hey, by the way, Ryo, you have a visitor!" RYO: "For me?" KING: "Hi, Ryo, Robert! You both are looking good." The person that appears from behind Takuma is none other than King. RYO: "King!?" ROBERT: "Oh, Oh! Kissy, kissy. It's getting kind of hot in here!" Robert apparently has lost it as his little hissy-fit shows. KING: "Oh, Robert, Ryo's telling you the truth when he says he didn't know about this. I didn't call on him until the members were listed in the paper. Not only that, Yuri was the one who decided to remove herself from the Kyokugen Karate team. And then she asked me to take her place in your little group." RYO: "I'm sorry, King. What with you having to leave your own team for Yuri's sake....' KING: "No, problem. It looks like this may turn out to be a good experience. I've never been able to join another team until now. You just might be able to teach me a thing or two." RYO: "King...." ROBERT: "Hold on there! I can't consent to this! In order for her to join the Kyokugen Karate team, she's going to need the necessary ability! She's going to have to show us what she's got." RYO: "Robert! You know well and good she's got more than enough..." King cuts off Ryo. KING: "Well, that suits me just fine, Ponytail Boy. I'm sure your willing to indulge me. I guess you'll do as a test of my abilities." TAKUMA: "Very well! Let's have a little match in the gym! CRUNCH! Robert and King pile on the kicks. And each time for countless times the match ends in a stalemate. The two breathe heavily, and it's clear they've taken this as far as it can go. ROBERT: "Pant, pant...You live up to your legend...You weren't a bodyguard just for show, I see.' KING: "You're no slouch yourself...You certainly are...the Mighty Tiger of the Way of Kyokugen..." The two both look like as if one more kick would send them both to the floor. ROBERT: "Okay, King! Breaks over. Gyah!" KING: "Aaah!" CRACKLE! Once again the two pile heavy kick upon heavy kick on each other. It's impossible for either of them to try to attack any more. TAKUMA: "OK, boy and girl, show's over." RYO: "Are you guys okay? King! Robert!" KING: "Ah, I'm okay.... But I'm a little drained from going at it with such a worthy opponent. What a kickfest that was!" ROBERT: "I...was just going to say that...." TAKUMA: "So, Robert?! Any more complaints about allowing King to join our

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Kyokugen team?"
ROBERT: "No, I have no complaints...Master...?"
TAKUMA: "Well, King, I think you get the message. We'd be honored to have you
join us...."
KING: "I got it. Takuma...I won't disgrace the Kyokugen name."
TAKUMA: "Well, then we join the KOF tournament with these members! We'll be
invincible, of course! We're going all the way!"
Ryo Sakazaki
Fighting Style : Kyokugen Karate
Birthdate : 2nd August
Nationality : Japan
Blood Group : O+
Height: 179 cm
Weight: 75 kg
Likes : Weekend Carpentry
Fav. Food : Mochi (rice cakes), natto (fermented soy beans)
Strong Sports : Sumo Wrestling
Impt Things : His recovered motorcycle, horse
Hated Things : Bugs with multiple legs
                             THROWS
                       0-----0
Tani Otoshi: close, b or f + C
Tomoe Nage: close, b or f + D
                           COMMAND MOVES
                       0-----
Hvouchuu Wari: f + A
Joudan Uke: f + B
Gedan Uke: df + B
                       0----0
                           SPECIAL MOVES
Ko Ou Ken: d, df, f + P
Kohou: f, d, df + P
Kohou Shippuuken: d, db, b + P
Mouko Raijinsetsu: d, df, f + K
Zanransetsu: f, b, f + P
Hien Shippu Kyaku: d, db, b + K
                      0-----0
                           SUPER MOVES
Haoh Shou Ko Ken(DM): f, b, db, d, df, f + P
Ryuuko Ranbu(DM): d, df, f, df, d, db, b + P
Tenchi HaohKen (DM): (d, df, f)x2 + P
Haoh Shou Ko Ken(SDM): f, b, db, d, df, f+ AC Ryuuko Ranbu(SDM): d, df, f + AC
Striker Move: Kuuchuu Ko Ou Ken
Another Striker: Kaede (Kasshin Fukuryu)
Maniac Striker: G-Mantle (G-Mantle Shot)
Robert Garcia
Fighting Style : Kyokugen Karate
Birthdate : 25th December
Nationality: Italy
Blood Group : AB+
Height: 180 cm
Weight: 85 kg
Likes : Collecting cars
Fav. Food : Sushi, yakisoba (japanese noodles)
Strong Sports : Motoring sports
Impt Things : His collection of cars
Hated Things : Rakkyoo (garlic)
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THROWS
                     0-----
Ryuuchou Kyaku: close, b or f + C
Kubikiri Nage: close, b or f + D
                        COMMAND MOVES
                     0-----
Nidan Sokutou Geri: df + B
Ryuu Han Shuu: b or f + B
Kou Ryuu Gokyageri: b or f + A
                         SPECIAL MOVES
Ryuugeki Ken: b~f + P
Sujin Ranbu Kyaku: d~u + P
Hien Shippu Kyaku: b~f + K
Hien Ryuujin Kyaku: df + K in air
Ryuuzan Shou: d~u + K
                         SUPER MOVES
                     0-----
Haoh Shou Ko Ken(DM): f, b, db, d, df, f + P Ryuuko Ranbu(DM): d, df, f, df, d, db, b + P
Kuzuryuusen (DM): (d, df, f) \times 2 + K
Ryuuko Ranbu(SDM): d, df, f, df, d, db, b + AC
Striker Move: Ryuuko Ranbu
Another Striker: Another Robert (Chouhatsu no Ken)
+++
Fighting Style : Muey Thai (Thai kickboxing)
Birthdate : 8th April
Age : 24
Nationality : France
Blood Group : A+
Height : 175 cm
Weight: 58 kg
Vital Stats (cm) : Unknown
Likes : Collecting wine glasses
Fav. Food : Vegetables
Strong Sports : Billiards
{\tt Impt\ Things\ :\ Her\ younger\ brother\ Jean}
Disliked Things : Gross people
                           THROWS
                     0-----
Hold Rush: close, b or f + C
Hook Buster: close, b or f + D
                     0-----
                         COMMAND MOVES
                     0-----
Slide Kick: df + D
Trap Kick: f + B
                         SPECIAL MOVES
                     0-----
Venom Strike: d, df, f + B
Double Strike: d, df, f + D
Surprise Rose: f, d, df + P
Tornado Kick: f, df, d, db, b + K
Trap Shot: f, d, df + K
Mirage Kick: f, df, d, db, b + P
Mirage Dance: close, b, db, d, df, f + P
```

0-----

Illusion Dance (DM): d, df, f, df, d, db, b + K Silent Flash (DM): $(d, db, b) \times 2 + K$ Illusion Dance (SDM): d, df, f, df, d, db, b + BD Striker Move: Trap Rush Another Striker: King Lion (Beast Blow) +++ Takuma Sakazaki Fighting Style: Kyokugen-ryuu Karate Birthday: 4th February Nationality: Japan Blood Type: 0 Height: 180 cm Weight: 88 kg Fav. Food: Milled rice, miso soup, kale pellets, vinegar-cured soybeans Best Sport: All fighting arts Impt Things: His two children, his disciples, Kyokugen-ryuu Karate Hated Things: Insects with many legs THROWS 0-----Oosotogari: close, b or f + C Ippon Seoi Nage: close, b or f + D 0-----COMMAND MOVES 0-----Oniguruma: f + A Hisha Otoshi: b + A Kawara Wari: f + B Keima Uchi: df + B SPECIAL MOVES Ko Ou Ken: d, df, f + P Hien Shippuu Kyaku: db~f + K Mouko Burai Gan: d, db, b + P Zanrestuken: f, b, f + PShourankyaku: f, df, d, db, b + K 0-----0 SUPER MOVES Ryuuko Ranbu(DM): d, df, f, df, d, db, b + P Haohshikohken (DM): f, b, db, d, df, f + P Shinkishin Geki (DM): close, (d, df, f)x2 + PRyuuko Ranbu (SDM): d, df, f, df, d, db, b + AC Striker Move: Cho Hissatsu Tengu Shikohken Another Striker: Gai Tendou (Wheel Combo: Maxi Edge) ~~Tkari Team~~ The surface of the ruins. It is not a relic of the past, but ruins that suddenly burst forth from the womb of the earth. Emitting a sound that one would think it's crying like a baby, the edifice screeches and surrounds itself in smoke, as if cradled by it. The smoke does not let up. It smolders in the nasal cavities, and visibility is

far from satisfactory. But gradually things become visible.

Heidern stares at the smoke before him. A single shadow is at its side, as if

Twelve seconds later...

SUPER MOVES

cuddling next to it.

Heidern continues staring at the sight and calls to the figure that is most likely one of his soldiers.

"Is that you, Ralf?"

The shadow begins to assume the form of Ralf.

"My status report, sir."

His voice is steady but a quick glance at him makes it apparent that he's pretty banged up inside.

"How did things go?"

"We recovered everyone. Clark and Leona both suffered external injuries but wounds are nothing serious."

The exchange lasts exactly twenty seconds.

"That's going to swell up like a blowfish."

Ralf doesn't follow him.

"What?"

"I can see it."

By following the trajectory of Heidern's stare, Ralf finally realizes what he's talking about. The smoke subsides.

Heidern does not alter his expression. But a pained grimace seizes Ralf's face. He recalls an unpleasant memory. The cause of it appears before his eyes once again. Following the smoke is a huge hole.

Straight underfoot there is a huge, gaping hole as if some giant object had fallen from the sky and tore a hole in the earth before coming to a stop.

And farther down there is a "lid" that fits the size of the hole perfectly.

A few figures are already standing near this lid, performing some sort of procedure.

"Is that it?"

"That's it."

Ralf points exactly at the position where the figures are engaged in their project.

Under the "lid" there is yet another hole, and most of the workers are gathered around it.

"The very ground is crumbling. The thing that covered us from above was that lid. That hole had the lid on it that we opened to escape is.

"What sort of condition was it in?"

"The direct hit of the cannon shell did quite a lot of damage to the ground. It completely smashed it in. I was totally focused on the incident that was taking place right after I came to."

"Commander!"

A member of the survey team approaches the two who swivel to look back.

"I have some news. We investigated below the "lid," but we found no survivors. The only things left behind was the disk we obtained here."

"Baloney!!!"

His emotions increase the length of Ralph's stride.

An enraged Ralf simultaneously appears in the squad member's eyes. The disk he holds out is knocked into the air and it lands with a plunk.

"No way! No survivors, you say? Where are the bodies? Have you found any?!"

Ralf's sticks his face into the squad member's again, violently bobbing it in and out of the latter's field of vision.

A feeling of overwhelming pressure seizes the squad member's neck and his vision clouds up. The only thing that is clear while in his gradually fading consciousness is the clear reverberations of Heidern's voice.

"Wait."

As he picks up the knocked-away disk, Heidern restrains Ralf with a glance.

"Let's hear the details. You weren't able to find any survivors, uh, I mean, bodies?"

Ralf realizes his excessive transgression as his superior officer puts a stop to his folly. The squad member opens his mouth even though he appears on the verge of collapsing.

"I...am...sorry. I take back what I said. We were unable to find any survivors. But a body ws found."

"What...!!!"

As Ralf once again begins to crowd the squad member, Heidern puts himself between him and the hapless investigator, then continues his questioning.

"Were they male? ... Female?"

"M-Male."

"Any special characteristics? Did you check it out?"

"Did you say...special characteristics?"

Hit with an unexpected question, he goes through the fragments of memory and information among which remain none to answer the question.

The squad member takes out a memo on which various fragments of information were listed and begins his report, regaining most of his composure.

"I'll report the information that we have ascertained at the present time. The sex of the corpse was male, as I mentioned before. One area of the body was significantly injured, but the body was for the most part unscathed. As far as his clothing is concerned, he was wearing a coat equipped with some form of armaments. And, this...I don't know whether I should mention it...there was something puzzling...."

Heidern answers the pausing squad member.

"Was it his face?"

"Yes, sir. Have you heard about it, commander?"

"Good job, soldier. Continue your investigation."

Heidern's words drown out the squad member's question. No, Heidern intentionally cuts off him off. Appearing upset, the squad member returns to his mission while Heidern presents Ralf with the disk.

"Does this look familiar?"

The disk in Heidern's hand still bears the code on it that Ralf had seen once before.

"...Serial code...1012-710...!"

Ralf's memory is as clear as ever. Just whose disk is this?

Ralf, however, denies his impulse to utter the answer.

Heidern cannot help but notice that the expression on Ralf's face clearly gives away that reluctance.

"This must be Whip's disk, isn't it?"

There is no reply. Heidern takes this as an affirmation.

"I'll continue to survey the site. I want you to analyze the contents of this disk. Whip was also a member of the intelligence division. Maybe she obtained some intel before her death."

"Death...!!!"

Heidern ventures to say what Ralf could not bring himself to do. Heidern holds the disk in front of Ralf's eyes as he approaches, as if trying to negate this possibility.

"It's an order."

As Heidern passes him the disk and begins to leave, Ralf, in a rare moment, stops his superior officer with a thinly voiced appeal that seems to squeeze out through his mouth from deep down in his throat.

"Sir...may I ask you a favor?"

Heidern does not look back. Ralf continues, ignoring this reaction.

"I want you to assign me to the investigation."

An instant passes. Naturally, there is no response. Ralf reflexively grabs Heidern's arm before he can walk away.

"I beg you."

He increases the strength of his grip. His hand is covered with injuries.

This hand speaks volumes to what appalling measures Ralf must have gone to escape.

Heidern places his own over this injured one. But Heidern's gesture is not one of approval to Ralf's request; no, just the opposite. Heidern tightens his slightly more powerful grip on Ralf's arm.

An chilling sound issues from it. Coupled with this unexpected surprise, a pain heretofore unknown to Ralf runs through his limb.

"Gah...ugh...!!!"

Heidern looks down at Ralf who has dropped to his knees.

And even farther above the two, the rays of the sun suddenly begin to look upon the two through the spaces in the clouds.

Ralf looks at Heidern's face, but the expression on the face above his conveniently hidden by the sunlight behind him; Ralf cannot confirm his expression.

The increasing shadow of Heidern's grows colder than ever, and Ralf finally opens his mouth.

"I cannot very well entrust a survey mission to a squad member who has not satisfactorily recovered from his injuries. Analyze the disk!"

"You don't know for sure! You don't know she's dead!"

He knows his behavior is vain.

But for Ralf this action was the only method before him.

As before, Ralf is unable to discern Heidern's expression.

Indifferent words are spun from the cool shadow.

"Yes. That's why I'm saying we should set things straight. That disk just may be the answer to your hopes."

"...!"

Ralf is shocked at this?shocked at himself for concluding that Whip must be dead.

And Heidern had realized his fatalism too. Heidern already begins to walk away.

Ralf is unable to pursue him any further.

Just how long was he there?

Without giving any time for thought, Ralf remains here kneeling.

The sunlight from on high has become more intense, making the contours of the huge hole that spreads before his eyes more vivid.

The hand that holds the disk.

The hole that widens its maw before him.

Something snaps within Ralf.

"Aw...nuts!!!"

Ralf beats the ground. He hits it hard. Again. And again.

The strength that wells up from the anger at himself moves to his fists, showing no signs of abating. His fist aches, as if it is about to be torn apart.

Along with the pain comes the realization that this is his atonement for

assuming the worst about Whip. But for Ralf, however, this is not the time to rationalize his thoughts. Unbeknownst to him, his fists covered in blood, are no longer red but instead encrusted in sticky mud. In stark contrast to the serene landscape, Ralf's screams usher forth to break the silence. Leona Heidern Fighting Style : Martial arts + Heidern-style assasination techniques Birthdate: 10th January Nationality : Unknown Blood Group : B+ Height: 176 cm Weight: 66 kg Likes : None Fav. Food : Vegetables Strong Sports : None Impt Things : None
Hated Things : Blood THROWS Leona Crush: close, b or f + COrdeal Buckler: close, b or f + D Heidern Inferno: in air and close, b or f or d + C or D 0-----COMMAND MOVES Srtike Arch: b or f + B SPECIAL MOVES Moon Slasher: d~u + P Baltic Launcher: b~f + P Running Saber: b~f + K Gliding Buster: Running Saber (D), f + D X-Caliber: d, db, b + P in air Earring Bomb: d, db, b + K Earring Bomb 2: b, d, db + K Manual Explosion: Earring Bomb 2, b, d, db + K 0-----SUPER MOVES 0----0 V-Slasher (DM): d, df, f, df, d, db, b, ub + P or In air, d, df, f, df, d, db, b + P Grateful Dead (DM): (d, df, f)x2 + PRebel Spark (DM): d, db, b, db, d, df, f + K V-Slasher (SDM): d, df, f, df, d, db, b, ub + AC or In air, d, df, f, df, d, db, b + ACStriker Move: Killer Touch Another Striker: Leopold Goenitz (Yonokaze) Maniac Striker [PS2]: Orochi (Mirror Toss) Ralf Jones Fighting Style : Martial arts + Heidern-style assasination techniques Birthdate : 25th August Nationality: America Blood Group : A+ Height: 188 cm Weight: 90 kg Likes : Collecting knives

Fav. Food : Bubble gum Strong Sports : Baseball

```
Impt Things : Badge of honour
Hated Things : Snakes
                     0-----0
                          THROWS
Dynamite Headbutt: close, b of f + C
Northern Light Bomb: close, b or f + D
                     0-----0
                         SPECIAL MOVES
Gatling Attack: b~f + P
Vulcan Punch: P repeatedly
Super Argentine Backbreaker: close, b, db, d, df, f + K Blitzkrieg Punch: d~u + P or d, df, f + P in air
Ralf Kick: hold K for 5 seconds and release
Ralf Tackle: f, df, d, db, b + K
                     0-----
                         SUPER MOVES
Bari Bari Vulcun Punch (DM): d, df, f, df, d, db, b + P
Mounted Vulcan Punch(DM): d, df, f, df, d, db, b + K
Bari Bari Vulcun Punch (SDM): d, df, f, df, d, db, b + AC Galactica Phantom (SDM): (d, df, f)x2 + AC
Striker Move: Galactica Phantom
Another Striker: Yashiro Nanakase (Missile Might Bash)
Maniac Striker [PS2]: Orochi Leona (V-Slasher)
+++
Clark Steel
Fighting Style: Martial arts + Heidern-style assasination techniques
Birthdate: 7th May
Nationality : America
Blood Group : A+
Height: 187 cm
Weight: 89 kg
Likes : Collecting guns
Fav. Food : Oatmeal
Strong Sports : Wrestling
Impt Things : His sunglasses
Hated Things : Slugs
                        THROWS
                     0-----
German Suplex: close, b or f + C
Fisherman Buster: close, b or f+ D
Death Lake Drive: in air and close, b or f or d + C or D
                         COMMAND MOVES
Stomping: f + B
                     0-----
                         SPECIAL MOVES
                     0-----
Gatling Attack: b~f + P
Napalm Stretch*: f, d, df + P
Super Argentine Backbreaker*: close, b, db, d, df, f + K
Frankensteiner*: f, d, df + K
Mount Tackle: b, db, d, df, f + P
Rolling Cradle: Mount Tackle, d, d + K
Clark Lift: Mount Tackle, d, d + A
Super Lift*: Mount Tackle, d, d + C
Flash Elbow: d, df, f + P after * moves
                     0-----
                         SUPER MOVES
                     0-----
Ultra Argentine Backbreaker (DM): close, (f, df, d, db, b)x2 + P
```

Running Three (DM): (b, db, d, df, f) $x^2 + K$

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Ultra Argentine Backbreaker (SDM): (f, df, d, db, b)x2 + AC
Striker Move: Flashing Launcher
Another Striker: Shermie (Shermie Spiral Hold)
Whip
Fighting Style: Whip-slashing skills + Heidern-style assasination techniques
Birthdate: 12th October
Nationality : Unknown
Blood Group : O+
Height: 173 cm
Weight: 59 kg
Likes : None
Fav. Food : Honey
Strong Sports : None
Impt Things : Her whip Woodoo
Hated Things : Angels, Internet abuse, corruption
                     0-----
                        THROWS
Zed: close, b or f + C or D
                     0-----0
                         COMMAND MOVES
                     0----0
Whip Shot: f + A up to five times
                    0-----
                         SPECIAL MOVES
Boomerang Shot: b, db, d, df, f + P
Assassin Strike: f, d, df + any button
Strength Shot A "Superior": f, df, d, db, b + A Strength Shot B "Strength": f, df, d, db, b + B
Strength Shot C "Victory": f, df, d, db, b + C
Strength Shot D "Rain": Strength Shot, D
Desert Eagle: b, d, db + P
Hook Shot: d, db, b, (up position) + K
          in air, d, db, b + K
                     0----0
                         SUPER MOVES
Sonic Slaughter (DM): d, db, b, db, d, df, f + P
Stiker Move: Valkyrie
Another Striker: Chris (Shooting Dancer)
                                     ~~Kim Team~~
______
It's been a few months since Choi has begun training with Jhun, and it appears
his life in Japan and rehabilitation under Jhun's tutelage is coming off
without a hitch.
JHUN: "You're a pretty quick study, Choi. I'm impressed."
CHOI: "Something like this is a piece of cake, buddy boy."
JHUN: "I have to run some errands tomorrow, so I was planning to have you study
by yourself tomorrow, but it looks like that won't be necessary from now on. So
I've decided to change my plans and have you join me."
CHOI: "Where are we going, buddy boy?"
JHUN: "Tokyo."
CHOI: "Tokyo?"
```

The next day the two set out a little early and head for Tokyo.

After they arrive in Tokyo, they transfer trains, get off at their destination, and wait among a small group of people gathered in front of the station.

MAN 1: "Hey! White Tiger. Long time no see!"

WOMAN 1: "Huh? You're White Tiger, are you? I'm ?Malin,' nice to meet you."

JHUN: "It has been a while. Nice to meet you, too, Malin. I enjoyed our little online chat."

CHOI: (White Tiger?)

MAN 1: "Who's this? You've brought a different friend today, haven't you?"

JHUN: "That's right."

Taken aback by Jhun being referred to as "White Tiger" and the unusual atmosphere of the twenty or so gathered here, Choi asks Jhun,

CHOI: "Uh, Master Jhun...just what is this group anyway, buddy boy?"

JHUN: "Uh, it's the Japanese chapter of the Athena Fan Club."

CHOI: "...."

Meanwhile, back in Korea, as a special homecoming treat (?) to the returning Chang, Kim resumes the usual regimen of harsh training.

KIM: "OK, just two sets more."

CHANG: "Huh?! Uh, yeah, okay...."

Regretting having thought that things would be a little bit better training back here in Korea, Chang hears the same phrases from Kim he has heard countless times over these past few years as he works on finishing his additional two sets.

KIM: "That reminds me. Jhun told me that there's going to be another KOF held this year."

CHANG: "Is it that time of year already...? Huh? So that means...."

 ${\tt KIM:}$ "That's right. Beginning tomorrow we begin special training to get us ready for the tournament."

CHANG: (I saw that coming....)

Aside from the fact that it's the same old stuff and he's fed up with it, when he thinks about what Choi is probably going through, for different reasons, the same miserable circumstances that he went through one year ago, Chang mumbles:

CHANG: (Choi should be experiencing the true pain of training with Jhun right about now....)

JHUN: "And the costume she wore in her last concert was aces, too!"

WOMAN 2: "Yeah, she was so cute in that, wasn't she?"

MAN 3: "Yeah, but that costume was a little old-fashioned for my tastes...."

JHUN: "On the other hand, that's what was so cool about it.... Ha, ha, ha, I guess I'm turning into a middle-aged guy."

When the previous group moves to a different location, the conversation centering on stories concerning Athena perks up, but among the group one man stands silently alone for more than a few hours.

CHOI: (So this is what Chang was talking about, was it, buddy boy? \dots This sure is worse than training.)

MAN 4: "For me personally, I forgot about it some time ago, but that Chinese dress costume she wore in the King of Fighters a few years ago was really cool."

MAN 5: "Yeah! Did you know she had a white one like that, too? It was so hot; it made her look like a nurse."

JHUN: "Hey, that's the first time I heard about that. As far as I'm concerned...."

MAN 5: "Heh, heh. As a matter of fact, I got a picture of that. I have it posted on my homepage, so please download it. Ah, by the way, it's on one of my secret pages. Here you go." JHUN: "Hey, thanks." MAN 1: Ah, all this about KOF reminds me that I heard that KOF is going to be held again this year. I saw it somewhere on some BBS." MAN 3: "So Athena must be entering, then, huh? ...What are you going to do this time? Are you going to organize a tour?" MAN 1: "I haven't told anyone about it officially ... But keep your eyes out for it." MAN 4: "But...what do you suppose her costume'll be this year? Maybe a shrine maiden? Maybe even a maid costume?" MAN 2: "So that's what you're into, is it?!" EVERYONE: (Wah, hah, hah) [Of course one among the group doesn't see the humor WOMAN 2: "By the way, what are you going to do ?White Tiger?' You entered last year, didn't you?" WOMAN 1: "Huh? Are you in the fighting game, White Tiger?" MAN 1: "Yeah, he does tae kwon do. So, what about it?" JHUN: "Yeah, I'm figuring on entering." MAN 5: "Then maybe you can fight Athena. ... But don't you dare hurt her!" JHUN: "Yeah, I may go up against her...but if I do, I must face her as a fighter at that time. And since it's a match for keeps, getting injured goes with the territory. ... For someone like Athena, me holding back would be an insult." At this time only, Jhun reveals his true self. And those comrades who also held the same interests as Jhun, listen intently to his opinions as a fighter JHUN: "But I definitely plan to get her autograph!" MAN 3: "Gag...Sounds like the White Tiger really is a White Tiger. For a moment there I thought you'd become somebody else." MAN 4: "But, man, you are so lucky, getting to grapple with Athena." JHUN: "Ha, ha, ha. Then why don't you join my little friend here and I'll train you in the ways of tae kwon do." MAN 4: "Training, well that's a little...nah, screw that!" EVERYONE: (Wah, hah, hah) [Of course one among the group still doesn't see the MAN 1: "Well, let's move on to the next party, shall we?" CHOI: (I'm saved.) Choi is a little curious about the plans for the second party, but he's glad for the time being that things are drawing to an end here.... CHOI: "So, uh, what's the agenda for the second party, buddy boy?" JHUN: "Karaoke!" At last, something he can get into! Choi's expression brightens up. CHOI: "Oh, karaoke! It's been a while, buddy boy. What are we going to sing, buddy boy?" JHUN: "Uh, we're only going to sing Athena songs there. We always do that." CHOI: "What?" JHUN: "You should take advantage of this opportunity, Choi, and learn a few Athena tunes before we go back home. Then you'll be able to sing along at the next concert." CHOI: (Master Chang...Get me out of here...!)

Kim Kaphawn Fighting Style : Taekwondo Birthdate : 21st December Nationality : Korea Blood Group : A+ Height: 176 cm Weight: 78 kg Likes : Karaoke Fav. Food : Korean barbecue Strong Sports : Gymnastics Impt Things : His wife and two sons Hated Things : Evil 0-----THROWS Kubikime Otoshi: close, b or f + CSakkyaku Nage: close, b or f + D 0-----0 COMMAND MOVES Neri Chagi: f + B Kuuren Geki: f + A SPECIAL MOVES Hien Zan: d~u + K Tensouzan: Hien Zan(D), d + D Hishou Kyaku: d, df, f, (up position) + K in air, d, df, f + KHan Getsu Zan: d, db, b + K Ryuusei Raku: b~f+K Haki Kyaku: d, d + K SUPER MOVES 0-----0 Hou'ou Kyaku (DM): d, db, b, db,f + K Hou'ou Hiten Kyaku (DM): (d, df, f)x2 + KHou'ou Kyaku (SDM): d, db, b, db, f + BD Striker Move: Hishoukyaku Another Striker: Hisenzan Chang Koehan Fighting Style : Taekwondo + Power Attacks Birthdate : 21st October Nationality: Korea Blood Group: B+ Height: 227 cm Weight: 306 kg Likes : Destruction Fav. Food : Whole roasted sheep Strong Sports : Table tennis Impt Things : His iron ball Hated Things : Centipedes, Training days 0-----THROWS Hagan Geki: close, b or f + C Kusari Jime: close, b or f + D 0-----COMMAND MOVES Hiki Nige: df + A 0-----0 SPECIAL MOVES

Tekkyuu Daikaiten: P repeatedly

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Tekkyuu Funsai Geki: b~f + P
Tekkyu Taiko Uchi: b, db, d, df, f + K
Dai Hakai Nage: close: f, df, d, db, b, f + C
                     0-----
                         SUPER MOVES
Tekkyuu Dai Bousou (DM): d, df, f, df, d, db, b + C
Tekkyuu Dai Assatsu (DM): (d, df, f)x2 + K
Tekkyuu Dai Bousatsu (DM): (d, df, f)x2 + P
Tekkyuu Dai Assatsu (SDM): (d, df, f)x2 + BD
Striker Move: Tekkyuu Dai Kourin
Another Striker: Kim Dong Hwan (Shiden Kyaku)
Maniac Striker: Smart Chang (Tekkyu Dai Kaiten)
+++
Choi Bounge
Fighting Style: Taekwondo + Speed attacks
Birthday: 25th October
Nationality: Korea
Blood Type: B
Height: 153 cm
Weight: 44 kg
Fav. Food: Crab
Best Sport: New gymnastics
Impt Things: The claws he made himself
Hated Things: Konnyaku (a gelatinous candy)
                     0-----0
                         THROWS
Zujou Sashi: close, b or f + C
Geketsu Zuki: close, b or f + D
                     0-----
                         COMMAND MOVES
Toorima Geri: b or f + B
Mukuro Tsuki: b or f + A
Sankaku Tobi: ub against wall and any f direction
                          SPECIAL MOVES
Shissou Hishou Zan: b \sim f + P, dir + P/K for Houkou Tenkan
Tatsumaki Shippuu Zan: d~u+P
Hishou Kuuretsu Zan: d~u + K, dir + P/K for Houkou Tenkan
Hishou Kyaku: in air, d, df, f+K
Kaiten Hienzan: d, db, b + P
Kishuu Hien Tsuki: Kaiten Hienzan, P
                          SUPER MOVES
Shin! Chouzetsu Tatsumaki Shinkuu Zan(DM): (f, df, d, db, b)x2 + P
Houou Kyaku (DM): d, df, f, df, d, db, b + K
Shin! Chouzetsu Rinkaiten Toppa (DM): in air, (d, df, f)x2 + K
Houou Kyaku (SDM): d, df, f, df, d, db, b + BD
Striker Move: Chouhatsu Zanmai
Another Striker: Kim Jae Hoon (Ryuusei Raku)
Maniac Striker: Cool Choi (Shissou Hishou Zan)
Notes: During Senpuu Hien Shitotsu, Choi can change directions up to 3 times by
pressing a direction plus a button
Jhun Hoon
Fighting Style : Taekwondo
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Birthdate: 26th July Nationality: Korea Blood Group : O+ Height: 177 cm Weight: 77 kg Likes : Collecting perfume and admiring idols Fav. Food $\,:\,$ Eel, clams and arrowroot starch Strong Sports : Billiards Impt Things : All of Yuso Mimori's debut CDs, a seagull ornament Hated Things : Squid and his family name THROWS Handou Geki: close, b or f + C Kaisen Kaze: close, b or f + D 0-----COMMAND MOVES Ryouuro Geki: f + B - Hold for Ryouko Jin Sosshu Geki: f + A - hold for Soshuu Jin Ryuurou Shuu: in air, d + B SPECIAL MOVES 0-----Hangetsu Zan: d, db, b + K Kuu Sajin: d~u + P Haiki Jin: d, db, b + P - hold for Soshuu Jin Soshuu Jin: d, d + A - after going into Soshuu stance Shuusou Kyaku Joudan: Soshuu Jin, u + C Shuusou Kyaku Gedan: Soshuu Jin, C Taikyoku Ha: Soshuu Jin, D Kirikae Kougeki: Soshuu Jin, b or f + B Kirikae Dousa: Soshuu Jin, B Ryouko Jin: d, d + B - Ryouko Stance Hiko Geki: Ryouko Jin, u + C Mouko Geki: Ryouko Jin, C Shuuko Geki: Ryouko Jin, d + C Taikyoku Hi: Ryouko Jin, D Kirikae Kougeki: Ryouko Jin, b or f + A Kirikae Dousa: Ryouko Jin, A SUPER MOVES Hou'ou Ressou Kyaku(DM): (d, df, f)x2 + K Hou'ou Tenbu Kyaku(DM): in air, (d, df, f)x2 + K Striker Move: Fukuko Shuugeki Another Striker: Kang Baedal (Ko Neppuu) -----~~Female Team~~ Yuri and Mai sit on a couple of chairs on the train platform. They appear to be in the middle of an argument. YURI: "Aw, come on, Mai. Are you still angry?" MAI: "Why did he boot me off the team? I can't believe it! Oh, Andy!" YURI: "He said that he had to let Mary on the team for her to complete the job she had, so what are you going to do?" MAI: "What are you going to do? If it were that simple, than why would you need a cop on your team?" YURI: "Don't take it out on me, Mai. More important, if we don't get cracking and find some new team members quickly we'll run out of time." MAI: "I know, I know! There's nothing we can do so we have to make another team!"

YURI: "Geez, why are you getting all snippy with me?"

Yuri eyes dart around the surroundings as she gets off one last shot.

MAI: "Hey, Yuri. Are you expecting someone?"

YURI: "Heh, heh. I just got an idea about a possible team member."

MAI: "Really? Who is it?"

As Mai finishes her question, a train slides up to the platform.

YURI: "Ah, this is the train. She's supposed to be on board."

POOH-SHAW!

The train comes to a stop and the passengers file out. Among them is a young woman dressed in a traditional style that seems out of place and carrying an umbrella.

MAI: "Hey, isn't that...?!"

YURI: "Heeey! Kasumi-eee! Over here, over here!"

KASUMI: "Oh, Yuri-eeee!"

MAI: "Why if it isn't the girl who traveled 12,000 kilometers to see her father."

YURI: "Hey, back off, Mai. ... Ah, Kasumi. It's been ages."

KASUMI: "It sure has. Thank you for inviting me onto your team."

MAI: "Hello, Kasumi. So you found your father, I take it?"

YURI: "Mai! Put a sock in it, would you?! I'm sorry. Mai's a little touchy now. Pay her no mind, okay? So, since you're here, all we have to do is find one more member."

KASUMI: "Yeah, speaking of that, I have an idea!"

MAI/YURI: "An idea?"

"Hey, this is an audition hall, isn't it?"

A young girl obviously the product of well-bred family, gets out of a posh car in front a Japanese-style mansion.

On the gate to the house is a sign written in large letters, WAY OF TODOH $_{\rm DO,TO-GYM}$

The woman walks briskly through the gate and enters the mansion.

YURI: "Whoo!"

MAI: "Well, Yuri, did you find any good candidates?"

Yuri plops herself down on a piped chair while she wipes the sweat from her with a towel.

YURI: "How did it go...I don't mean any disrespect to you, Kasumi, but no one really had what it takes, Mai. I hope it all works out, though, and we can find another teammate."

KASUMI: "Really...I thought that a general audition for a teammate wouldn't be such a bad idea, but...Mary helped me when I last tried it, and I think she used something called the Intertrap to do it."

MAI: "That's Internet. Yeah! Yeah! So just why does someone like Mary have to join Andy's team anyway! Geesh! ... I got it! It's a conspiracy, a conspiracy carried out by this year's sponsor! The harmonious relationship I had with Andy was too much for them!"

YURI: "Not again, Mai...I told you to put a sock in it. ... But if this is the way it's going to be, I wish I hadn't introduced King to Ryo and the gang."

KASUMI: "I guess that's true, but, for the time being, there are still people waiting at the general auditions, so let's get on with it? Yuri?"

YURI: "Yeah, you're right. For the time being, there are those who've come to be on our team, so we should really meet them."

MAI: "OK, next!"

The next contestant enters the practice hall. She's the person who had gotten out of that posh care shortly before.

"Hello, my name is Hinako Shijo. It's a pleasure to meet you."

All three rise up as she enters and their jaws drop to the floor.

She has blond hair, an elegant and charming face, and a sailor uniform that seems like that of a high school student to boot.

It appears that a girl who has nothing to do with the martial arts is standing before them.

MAI: "Uh, excuse me, Hinako, is it? So you'd like to enter this year's KOF tournament, would you?"

 ${\tt HINAKO:}$ "Yes. By all means I'm hoping you will grant me the opportunity to audition for the open position on your team. The honor to be here is all mine."

YURI: "Um, have you ever participated in a fighting tournament before, Hinako?"

HINAKO: "No, this is my first time."

YURI: "Ah, oh, let's see... (Mai! She's a freaken' amateur!)"

MAI: "(I know!) So, well...uh, yeah. Well then, I know it's a bit sudden but would you care to spar with Yuri here?"

YURI: "Say what?! (I'm not going to be the one to slap some silly kid around!)"

MAI: "(If you show her the difference in our abilities, she'll run right on home!)"

KASUMI: "(And it would be just plain rude to send her on her merry way without giving her a chance.)"

HINAKO: "Uh, is there a problem here?"

YURI: "Uh...no, no problem. Well, then, shall we have a little match then?"

HINAKO: "Yes, please."

The match begins.

At that moment Hinako immediately begins to stamp the ring to warm up.

MAI/KASUMI: "What the...?! Ah! That pose...!! It can't be!"

YURI: "S-Sumo?!"

Seeing a chance for an attack, Hinako stomps down on the canvas and lunges toward Yuri .

YURI: "(Oh, Oh no! She's got my waist!)"

MAI/YURI: "Aaaaaah!!!"

And the moment Yuri becomes aware of her predicament, Yuri goes falling to the ${\sf mat.}$

MAI/KASUMI: "An overarm body slam!"

Hinako's sumo moves are masterfully applied to Yuri.

MAI: "N-No way...."

KASUMI: "Wow! You tossed Yuri on her caboose in no time!"

HINAKO: "How did I do?"

The serious look in her eyes during the match has already vanished, giving way to her unassuming visage.

MAI: "W-We got a good idea of your abilities. I just have a question for you: why do you want to enter the KOF tournament?"

HINAKO: "Uh-huh. If I go into to much detail it would become quite a long story, but if I win a well-known tournament, the school that I go to says that they would help me make a sumo team at my school, so I thought KOF would be the perfect opportunity."

MAI: "Uh, huh.... (I'm not sure I'm following her, but I really think we've hit paydirt this time...but there sure is a gap between her style of combat and her looks, isn't there...?)"

HINAKO: "If we're able to win the KOF tournament, I won't have to practice alone anymore. I wonder how many people would sign up? And I'll have to get the school to make a suitable training gym, too. Maybe that space at the right of the school gym...?" YURI: "Uh, Mai...She seems to be getting all worked up alone over there...." KASUMI: "But she's really something. With a body like that, what refined technique! And she must be the same age as I am, so it looks like she'll make a fine teammate! I want her on the team." YURI: "That's fine with me. I'm a little humiliated that she could throw me so quickly, though...." MAI: "Y-Yeah, she's a bit , though, isn't she? But she does have ability...Uh, Hinako?" HINAKO: "And I'll have them make a window with a beautiful view of the hill outside...Uh, yes? Did you call me?" MAI: "We'd like to welcome you as the new member of our team. We're looking forward to having you with us." HINAKO: "Yes! Thank you so much. I won't let you down, and I look forward to receiving your kind guidance. Whooo-hoo!" Mai Shiranui Fighting Style : Shiranui-style Ninjitsu Birthdate : 1st January Nationality: Japan Blood Group : B+ Height: 165 cm Weight: 46 kg Likes: Making osechi (soup with rice cakes specially for New Year) Fav. Food : Ozouni Strong Sports : Hane-Tsuki Impt Things : Hairpin of deceased grandmother Disliked Things : Spiders 0-----THROWS Shiranui Gourin: close, b or f + C Fuusha Kuzushi: close, b or f+ D Yume-zakura: in air and close, b or f or d + C or D COMMAND MOVES Tsubakuro no Mai: f + B Benitsuru no Mai: df + B Daiwa Fuusha Otoshi: in air, d + A Ukiha: in air, d + BYurazaume: in air, d + D0----0 SPECIAL MOVES Ryuu En Bu: d, db, b + P Sachiyo Dori: d, db, b + K Ka Chou Sen: d, df, f + P Hissatsu Shinobi Bachi: b, db, d, df, f + K Musasabi no Mai(air): in air, d, db, b + P Musasabi no Mai(ground): d, u + P Ukihane: Musasabi no Mai(ground), d + K Yusura Ume: Musasabi no Mai(ground), d + P SUPER MOVES Suichou no Mai (DM): $(d, df, f) \times 2 + P$ Chou Hissatsu Shinobi Bachi (DM): d, db, b, db, d, df, f + K Houou no Mai (DM): $(d, db, b) \times 2 + P$ Chou Hissatsu Shinobi Bachi(SDM): d, db, b, db, d, df, f + BD

Striker: Sakura Fubuki

Another Striker: Chizuru Kagura (Bou Katsu Hatei no Reifu) Yuri Sakazaki Fighting Style : Kyokugen Karate Birthdate : 7th December Nationality : Japan Blood Group : A+ Height: 168 cm Weight: 54 kg Likes : Karaoke Fav. Food : Sweet curry rice Strong Sports : Softball Impt Things : Friends, Ronnet's earrings Hated Things : Octopus 0-----0 THROWS Oni Harite: close, b or f + C Silent Nage: close, b or f + D Tsubame Otoshi: in air and close, b or f or d + C or D0----0 COMMAND MOVES 0-----Tsubame Tsubasa: f + ASenkai Kyaku: f + B, B SPECIAL MOVES 0-----Ko Ou Ken: d, df, f + P HaohShokohKen: d, df, f + hold P Hyakuretsu Binta: f, df, d, db, b, f + K Hien Senpuu Ken: d, db, b + P Hien Senpuu Kyaku: d, db, b + K Raiou Ken: d, df, f + K Chou Upper: f, d, df + P Double Chou Upper: Chou Upper (C), f, d, df + C 0-----SUPER MOVES Hien Hou'ou Kyaku(DM): d, df, f, df, d, db, b + K Hien Hou'ou Kyaku(SDM): d, df, f, df, d, db, b + BD Mekki Zan Kuu Ga(DM): (d, df, f)x2 + K Striker Move: Hien Rekkou Another Striker: Nakoruru (Daichi no Megumi) +++Kasumi Todoh Fighting Style : Todoh Ancient Martial Arts Birthdate: 29th march Age : 19 Nationality : Japan Blood Group : B Height: 154 cm Weight: 45 kg Vital Stats (cm): 75,54, 78 Likes: Watching videos (especially splatter flicks) Fav. Food : Croquet Napolitan from the meat shop on her way to school Strong Sports : Aikido, Archery $\hbox{Impt Things} \quad \hbox{: An amulet from a special person}$ Disliked Things : The things her mother teaches (Japanese dancing, flower arrangement, tea ceremony) THROWS Maki Age: close, b or f + C Aiki Nage: close, b or f + D

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COMMAND MOVES
Hiji Ate: f + A
                         SPECIAL MOVES
Kasane Ate: d, df, f + P
Messhin Mutoh: b, db, d, df, f + B
Sassho Inshuu: b, db, d, df, f + D
Hakuzan Toh: d, db, b + K
Tatsumaki Souda: close, f, df, d, db, b + P
Senkou Sagashi: d, db, b + P up to 3 times
Hanshin Morote Gaeshi: d, d + K
                     0-----0
                         SUPER MOVES
Cho Kasane Ate (DM): (d, df, f) \times 2 + P
Atemi Nage (DM): d, df, f, df, d, db, b + P
Striker Move: Katsu
Another Striker: Li Xiangfei (Dai Kokuchou)
Maniac Striker: Unknown [Ryuhaku Todo] (Unknown)
Hinako Shijoh
Fighting Style : Sumo wrestling
Birthdate : 3rd March
Nationality: Japan (her grandmother is 1/4 Russian)
Blood Group : B+
Height: 154 cm
Weight: 42 kg
Measurements: 83 cm, 56 cm, 83 cm
Likes: Collecting sumo stuffs, making herb stuffs (potpourri and herb tea)
Fav. Food : Chanko (mixed hot pot) made by her mansion's chef, red tea,
pooch-brew
Strong Sports : Horse-riding, Halberd fencing
Impt Things : Teddy bear she bought when she was young
Disliked Things : Insects, sour food, piano scores
                           THROWS
Tasuki Nage: close, b or f+ A
Uwate Nage: close, b or f + B
                        COMMAND MOVES
                     0-----
Harite Sendai: f + A, A
Harite Nishiki: f + A, C
Tsuppari: f + B, B
Nodowa: df + C, D
Maemitsu Tataki: df + A
Kakeguri: df + D
                         SPECIAL MOVES
Tsukidashi: d, df, f + P
Tsuki Otoshi: d, db, b + P
Kote Nage: close, b, db, d, df, f + K
Kake Nage: close, f, df, d, db, b, f + K
Yorigiri: close, f, d, df + K
                         SUPER MOVES
Gasshou Hineri (DM): (b, db, d, df, f)x2 + K
Gasshou Hineri (SDM): (b, db, d, df, f)x2 + BD
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Striker Move: Teppou Hiyouko

Another Striker: Lily Kane (Lily no Ouen)

~~Psycho Soldier Team~~

--CHINA. A boy lies bedridden in a room of Chin's house.

Kaoru sits beside him, watching over the sick child. Athena enters the room.

ATHENA: "So how's he doing, Kaoru? How is our little Bao?"

KAORU: "Ah, well right now, there's no real change. But it looks like the fever has broken a bit."

Kaoru begins to change the compress on the boy's forehead. In that interval, Athena places her hand over Bao's forehead.

ATHENA: "Is that so? Great.... I'm sorry, Kaoru, to ask you to attend to Bao like this...."

The expression on Athena's face lightens a little after she makes sure Bao's fever has fallen, but her face then reflects her concern toward Kaoru.

KAORU: "Ah, no, don't worry about me. More importantly, though, Bao hasn't regained consciousness...."

Since the end of last year's tournament, Bao has been bedridden, stricken for several months with a high fever whose origins are unknown.

"Origins unknown"...This is how the doctor put it, but Chin knows a better reason for this affliction.

A few months ago.

After the doctor returns, stumped by the case, Chin begins to address his three charges, speaking as if he has come to a profound realization.

CHIN: "... Naturally the doctor would not understand the cause behind this."

ATHENA: "Does the doctor know something?"

CHIN: "Well, it's no more than mere speculation, but...to begin an explanation we'll have to consider Kensou's condition."

KENSOU: "Are you talking about my powers?"

Chin nods toward Kensou, who today seems unusually quick on the uptake.

CHIN: "That's right. Just when was it that your powers gradually began to fail you?"

KENSOU: "It all began last year."

CHIN: "Specifically?"

Athena answers for the obfuscating Kensou.

ATHENA: "...Ever since Bao came to live with us."

Chin continues, nodding at Athena's observation.

CHIN: "Indubitably. Ever since he was brought to us, I sensed that he had the ability to use psychic powers, but something was astonishing about the growth of his powers since he came to live with us."

ATHENA: "Without doubt his powers are equal to us, perhaps they even exceed ours."

CHIN: "I had thought that surely his powers were just blooming, but since he came here, there was that matter with Kensou."

KENSOU: "Huh? So you mean...Bao siphoned away my powers?"

CHIN: "Well, that's roughly what I'm saying. But I don't know why you're the only one he's affected."

ATHENA: "Is that the cause for Bao's current affliction?"

CHIN: "Athena, Kensou, do you recall anything that happened recently?"

The memory of everyone barely escaping NESTS's base is the first thing to appear in Athena and Kensou's mind's eye.

ATHENA: "Well...I heard about it afterward, mind you, but all I remember is the roof of NESTS's base collapsing...."

KENSOU: "Me too. All I remember is me jumping out of there without realizing what was going on around me...."

CHIN: "Kaoru and I only saw it, but Kensou was releasing a staggering power while he carried Athena out to safety then."

KENSOU: "But I was almost completely drained of my power at that time, too...."

Kensou responds to his Master with a puzzled expression.

CHIN: "You must have summoned your latent powers sleeping within you to save Athena. Seeing that Bao fell ill subsequently around that time, the power from Bao must have temporarily fed back to you, and with that synergetic effect you were able to summon that power."

ATHENA: "So with the feedback from Bao.... Yeah, but, I see, that awesome power at that time...No, it can't be!"

CHIN: "That's it exactly. Right now, all of Bao's psychic powers have been sucked from him and the effect of that has resulted in his current affliction."

KAORU: "It was right after Kensou collapsed. Bao came to be afflicted with that high fever."

All of the gathered people cast their gaze to Bao.

CHIN: "Even someone like Kensou who had been tempering his mind and body with his daily training didn't wake up for three days after using that power. And when Bao, whose body is still not fully developed, absorbed that power, he must have reached a point of sensory overload."

KENSOU: "So you mean that I'm actually drained of all my psychic powers?"

Everyone turns their gaze toward Chin. Chin sighs deeply and answers.

CHIN: "Unfortunately, that possibility is quite likely. But you did surprise me; I never thought you had such latent power within you...."

KENSOU: "How terrible. Even the doctor.... But I'm not much of a happy camper now."

CHIN: "Well, even though it was just once, your power did temporarily return, so there must be a chance that your power could return permanently. Kensou, try not being so negative and see how things play out."

KENSOU: "Yeah, I guess your right...."

Athena gazes at Kensou, whose reply is neither one of resignation or satisfaction.

Chin and Kensou clear the room, leaving Athena, Kaoru and Bao in the room. While watching over the unconscious Bao, Athena strikes up a conversation.

ATHENA: "Ah, yes, that reminds me, Kaoru. Did you know there's another KOF this year?"

KAORU: "Uh, yeah. Or so it seems."

ATHENA: "And we decided to enter KOF."

KAORU: "But you'll need four members this year, won't you?"

Kaoru asks with a surprised look on her face.

ATHENA: "Yes, that's right."

KAORU: "So have you found the fourth member yet?"

ATHENA: "No, it seems that Chin plans to enter Bao."

KAORU: "What? He hasn't opened his eyes for months since the last one!"

An expression of both surprise and worry comes over Kaoru's face. While Athena sports a similar expression, Athena replies to Kaoru's question.

ATHENA: "Uh, that's right...but the Master said that Bao's fever looks like it's gradually breaking and he should awaken with his powers intact by the time

of the tournament." KAORU: "But, that...sounds so rash." ATHENA: "Yeah, I thought so too...." KAORU: "If you think so, then why...?" Athena continues with a troubled expression on her face. ATHENA: "The Master says it's a rather drastic method of treatment, but even if he's stabilized, it's no different than the dangerous condition he's in now. KOF would be the perfect chance for him to release the psychic power that overwhelms him. It seems that the Master has thought things out.' KAORU: "Really...? And then there's Kensou, too." It took a while, but Athena's tense expression relaxes upon hearing Kaoru's reply of acknowledgement. ATHENA: "...Yeah...uh, I'm sorry. Things will change someday, though." Athena stands up and tries to take Kaoru's place. Kaoru stops her. KAORU: "No, I'll stay here a little longer...I sure hope Bao awakens for the tournament, don't you...?" Kaoru turns her gaze to Bao and she continues her watch over him. ATHENA: "Yeah." Responding only to her question, Athena, along with Kaoru, continues to gaze gently at Bao. Athena Asamiya Fighting Style : Chinese Martial Arts + Psychic powers Birthdate : 14th March Nationality: Japan Blood Group : B+ Height : 163 cm Weight: 49 kg Measurements: 83 cm, 57 cm, 82 cm Likes: Astrology Fav. Food : Strawberry cakes Strong Sports : Lacross Impt Things : Peter Rabbit teacup set Disliked Things : Grasshoppers THROWS Psychic Throw: close, b or f + D Bit Throw: close, b or f + C Psychic Shoot: in air and close, b or f or d + ${\tt C}$ or ${\tt D}$ COMMAND MOVES 0-----Renma Momo: f + B Phoenix Bomb: in air, d + B Sankaku Tobi: ub into wall and press any f direction SPECIAL MOVES Psycho Sword: f, d, df + P (can be done in air) Psycho Ball: d, db, b + P Psycho Reflector: f, df, d, db, b + B Psycho Reflector Neo: f, df, d, db, b + D Phoenix Arrow: in air, d, db, b + P Psycho Teleport: d, df, f + K Psychic Shoot: b, db, d, df, f + P SUPER MOVES Shining Crystal Bit(DM): b,f, df, d, db, b + P

Crystal Shoot: Shining Crystal Bit, d, db, b + P (hold and release)

Phoenix Fang Arrow (DM): $(d, df, f) \times 2 + P$

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Shining Crystal Bit(SDM): b, f, df, d, db, b + AC
Crystal Shoot: Shining Crystal Bit, d, db, b + P (hold and release)
Striker Move: Psycho Healing
Another Striker: Athena 86' (Flame Sword)
Sie Kensou
Fighting Style: Superpowers and Chinese Kung Fu
Birthday: 23rd September
Nationality: China
Blood Type: B
Height: 172 cm
Weight: 61 kg
Fav. Food: Meat buns
Best Sport: Soccer
Impt THings: Stuffed toy given to him by a fan
Disliked Things: Training
                         THROWS
Hakkei: close, b or f + C
Tomoe Nage: close, b or f + D \,
                         COMMAND MOVES
                      0----
Kobokute: f + A
Gousentai: f + B
                         SPECIAL MOVES
                      0----0
SenShippo: d, db, b + P
Ryuu Renda: close, f, d, df + P rapidly
Ryuu Renga: b, db, d, df, f + A for Chiryuu, HP for TenRyuu
Ryuu Gakusai: b, d, db + K
Ryuusoh Geki: d, db, b + P in air
Senkyuutai: d, df, f + K
                      0-----
                          SUPER MOVES
Shinryu SeiohRekkyaku(DM): d, df, f, df, d, db, b + B Shinryuu Tenbu Kyaku(DM): d, df, f, df, d, db, b + D
Senki Hakkei (DM): close, (d, df, f)x2 + P
Shinryuu Tenbu Kyaku(SDM): d, df, f, df, d, db, b + BD
Striker Move: Niku Man O Kuu
Another Striker: Kensou 87' (Psycho Space)
+++
Chin Gentsai
Fighting Style: Chinese Kung Fu (mainly Drunken Fist)
Birthday: 27th April
Nationality: China
Blood Type: A
Height: 164 cm
Weight: 53 kg
Fav. Food: Lemon salmon and lettuce with fried rice, among others
Best Sport: Taking a walk, yo-yo tricks
Impt: Alcohol
Disliked Things: Pandas
                      0----0
                            THROWS
Gou Inshu: close, b or f + C
Gyaku Ashi Nage: close, b or f + D
                      0----0
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COMMAND MOVES
Suiho Hyoutanshuu: f + A
                           SPECIAL MOVES
                      0-----
Suikan Kanou: d, d + P
Chou Shuuriku Gyo: Suikan Kanou, f + P
Kaitenteki Kuutotsuken: Suikan Kanou or Bogetsui, f + K
Ryuurinhourai: f, d, df + P
Kaiten-teki Kuutotsu Ken: b, db, d, df, f + K
Hyoutan Geki: d, db, b + A for Jaku, HP for Kyou
BogetsuSui: d, d + K
RouJu Hanhou: BogetsuSui, u + B
Rigyu Hanhou: BogetsuSui, u + D
Suihai Kou: d, df, f + P
Funen Kou: Suihai Kou, d, df, f + P
Gouen Shourai Kai: Suihai Kou, f, d, df + P
                           SUPER MOVES
                      0-----
Gouran Enpou(DM): (d, df, f) \times 2 + P
Gouen Shourai (DM): d, df, f, df, d, db, b + P
Gouran Enpou(SDM): (d, df, f)x2 + AC
Striker: Hourai Rakuen
Another Striker: Baitang (Gororin Panda)
Fighting Style : Supernatural Power
Birthdate: 18th July
Age : 12
Nationality : China?
Blood Group: Unknown
Height: 153 cm
Weight: 40 kg
Likes: Consumer games, network games
Fav. Food : Hot Milk
Strong Sports : Fishing
Impt Things : B-games
Disliked Things : Huge RPGs
                          THROWS
Genei Tougi: close, b or f + C
Critical Throw: close, b or f + D
                          COMMAND MOVES
                      0-----0
Kakugi: f + A
Senheki Shuu: f + B
Senshou Shuu: df + B
Rikotsu Shuu: df + D
Soushou: d + A in air
Hikida: d + B in air
                          SPECIAL MOVES
Psycho Ball Front: d, db, b + A
Psycho Ball Raise: d, df, f + A
Psycho Ball Reflect: d, db, b + B
Psycho Ball Bound: d, df, f + B
Psycho Ball Air Front: d, db, b + A in air
Psycho Ball Air Bound: d, df, f + B in air
Psycho Ball Crash Front: d, db, b + C
Psycho Ball Crash Raise: d, df, f + C
Psycho Ball Crash Reflect: d, db, b + D
Psycho Ball Crash Bound: d, df, f + D
Psycho Ball Crash Air Front: d, db, b + C in air
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Psycho Ball Crash Air Bound: d, df, f + D in air

O----O
SUPER MOVES
O-----O

Psycho Ball Max (DM): (d, db, b)x2 + PPsycho Ball DX (DM): (b, db, d, df, f)x2 + KPsycho Ball Max (SDM): (d, db, b)x2 + ACPsycho Ball SP (SDM): f, b, db, d, df, f + BD

Striker Move: Psycho Ball Max

Another Striker: Kaoru Watabe (Powerful Miracle Tackle)

~~Edit Only~~

Story for Kyo and Iori

Gazing up at the sun.

Without trying to avoid this, Iori does nothing but keep gazing up at the sun in the sky. Same as ever, he is unable to find the whereabouts of Kyo. But they will meet. Pursuing a premonition that resembles certainty, he has become stronger. Right before he covers his eyes, the clouds in the sky hide the sun. When he returns his glance to the ground, warning bells go off instinctively in Tori.

"...!"

... An enemy. It isn't Kyo. But he has come across this sensation before.

When and where was it? He tries to pick out from his memory the place where he sensed this same sensation. His instincts sharpen his senses, further accelerating the speed of his thinking. His temperature rises and his body begins to ready himself for combat. It gradually draws near, but he has focused on the sensation he must aim for. A number of men among the passing throng of people do not blink. He feels another similar sensation a short distance from him. Simultaneously, a vague memory becomes clear to him

"NESTS...A bunch of lackeys..."

What is even more interesting to Iori is that he determines that the person following him is keeping his distance while other men closer to him are focusing not on him but another target. Who are they pursuing? ... The answer stands right in front of Iori.

It is a woman.

To Iori, this is just another female. But the pursuers close in with the woman at the center. It would be no problem to let them go about their business. But it sure would make a sorry sight. The lackeys make their way past Iori. Iori is easily able to sense the tension his enemies feel toward him. He drops his shoulders. He is right on top of them. With his back to them, Iori extends an arm to a man on the left with his back to him in a similar manner. Along with a dull thud, all things linked together separate at once and he feels the sensation of further breakage. The feeling goes through his fingers and directly stimulates his instincts.

"Let's have a little fun, then."

Iori says this with an expression that's even icier than any he's issued before. Looking over the shoulder of his limp victim, he can see that the remaining thugs are turning and coming toward him. Besides that, the position of the gaze he previously felt continues to focus on him. Iori ignores the feeling that he's being watched along with the crow and runs toward his prey, using the man he just dropped as a shield. In seconds he closes in on the men.

What one of the men sees is the spectacle of his friends closing in on him for an instant, followed by the ground far below him, and the people standing there looking up at him. The weak thud of the man falling from a height of less then two meters is heard. The vacant space begins to grow at the center of the crowd around where the unfamiliar thud of the man was heard. As the remaining men continue to overtake the woman, Iori frantically attempts to chase them down. Before they can ready themselves for the onslaught, a similar dull thud is heard. Just one more to go.

Iori makes a beeline for the woman. The woman is bewildered at the situation

around her. When she turns to survey the situation, Iori appears in her field of vision. The man who's clearly out of his element heads her way-directly at her. Like a snake enthralled by a frog, his body does not move. In no time they are squaring off against each other.

"You're being followed."

Iori's words come as a complete surprise to the woman. Looking at Iori who is fixing his attentions behind him, the woman confirms for the first time the fact that someone is pursuing her. The two parties continue to stare each other down with the woman sandwiched in between Iori and her pursuers. Iori can't help noticing the smiles that momentarily twist the men's faces.

In the direction where the men had looked and smiled, he catches the other figure who had been focusing on him.

"So this is where you were."

The words and Iori's actions occur simultaneously. Iori scoops up the woman and crouches down. The woman is unaware of what is happening, confused by Iori's sudden actions. But at the moment she was scooped up she was sure she heard the sound of a gunshot.

"Get out of here. If you don't want to die."

His words are neither a threatening or coercive. They were just something Iori uttered to her indifferently. Behind her she can see the figures of the men breaking off and slowly leaving. The woman realizes that the gunshot was not just in her imagination. The woman heads for no place in particular. Iori rises up and pursues the direction he heard with his eyes from the place where a man lies. Far off in the distance he sees a man holding a rifle with a scope.

Iori matches his line of vision with the direction the shooter's scope is pointed. He faces his body toward the gun and takes a step forward. Whether he is confirming Iori's movements or not, the man lowers his gun and runs off.

"Excuse me..."

Iori looks back in the direction of the voice. The woman has waited for Iori, the though of escaping never occurring once to her.

"Thank you. It looks like you saved my life."

"It wasn't my intention."

The woman continues, unfazed at Iori's response.

"You are a strong one, aren't you? You resemble someone I know."

"Resemble someone? Me?"

Iori feels drawn to what she says. The woman remains unaware of the change in Iori's heartbeat.

"I haven't seen him in quite a while, though...."

Why was NESTS pursuing this woman? Why did she come across me? The dots just don't match up. It must be, this is his girl.

"Do you think I'd be able to meet this person?"

"Pardon?"

Iori turns his back on the bewildered girl and begins to leave.

"I think it can be arranged."

His feet stop. The woman calls to him from behind.

"He always keeps his promise. I guarantee it."

The woman is unable to see the expression on Iori's face. Without responding to the woman's words, Iori vanishes into the crowd.

Gazing up at the sun.

In spite of such an incident, nothing unusual or frightening remains. Maybe it was because she sensed the same "smell" from the man who saved her and the other familiar man she knows who resembles him.

Yuki gazes up at the sun in which Kyo's gloved hand appears, it is a sight she has temporarily forgotten.

It's been a long time since she's seen $\mathop{\text{\rm him}}\nolimits.$

Kyo, who left as he always did on that fateful day, has yet to arrive home.

The only thing that has returned to Yuki is Kyo's beat up glove she carries with her. She doesn't believe he's dead. The groundless confidence grows stronger with each day. Along with the events of this day, her belief now changes into something resembling certaintly.

The cloud cover breaks and the sun shines through.

Yuki puts the glove back into her bag and gazes up at the sky for a while. The sin glitters brightly.

"I'm waiting for you, Kyo."

Yuki begins to walk away as the sun continues to shine down on her.

Glaring up at the sun.

Kyo arrives at this place as if drawn her by some force. The battle with the Orochi ended, this was to be the place that all would come to an end. But everything has once again originated from this place. This glove he had supposed to have lost was why they first met.

This scuffed and torn-up glove.

The light of the setting sun brings out all the scratches and tears on the sun that decorates his glove.

Each of these scratches and tears appear now to be a part of his very being. He has not returned from that day. Until he settles his score with NESTS, he cannot go back.

Kyo has reached this firm decision.

Kyo removes an envelope form his pocket. It is an invitation to KOF; from where it originates he does not know.

He is sure that here he can find the answers he seeks to a great many questions. At least there's some value in entering. Soon all will be settled. And then he will be able to return home. It appeared gradually, but it begins to light up glare with a light different from the sun.

Through the breaks in the clouds shine the rays of the moon. Unknown to him, the sun has already set. As he gazes upon it, the clouds separate and the sky clears. A crescent moon appears in the sky.

It emits a strong glow disproportional to the space it takes up in the sky that illuminates Kvo.

The image of the man whose back is decorated with a crescent moon appears in Kyo's mind's eye.

"It won't be long."

Turning his back to the light of the sun, Kyo slowly begins to walk away. It doesn't take long for him to melt into the darkness where the moon's rays do not reach. The rays from the moon continue to pour down on the space where Kyo was standing, as if demanding for his return.

KYO KUSANAGI

The moment that thunderous rumbling in my ears begins, the color drains from the surrounding landscape and I fall into darkness.

In this darkness, the feeling that cool drops are falling on my body continues for some time.

And then the sensation suddenly stops. My body goes limp, but I still can open my eyes.

 $\bar{\text{I}}$ regain my sight with difficulty, and someone's approaching palm appears right before my eyes.

The darkness swallows me once again. I, along with my consciousness, am sucked back into the darkness.

I don't know how long I've been asleep. As before, I am still enshrouded in the darkness.

But now I know I'm awake.

At times I feel as if something is sucking me upward. I feels like I'm going to hurl.

At odd moments, I recall the forms of old acquaintances that have nothing to do with my current predicament.

A voice comes next.

I can't make out whose voice it is, and it asks me things I can't quite

understand: 'Are you Kyo Kusanagi?' 'I'll have your data now.' And the voice that seems to be calling to someone passes through my ears, echoing in my head: "Krizalid,' K'."

But whatever I hear, I choose to ignore.

I absolutely do not want to voluntarily answer any questions.

A transformation takes place just as I begin to think how long will I be like this.

I hear a throbbing sound.

It is a throbbing sound within me.

At the same time, a familiar fever seizes me.

It's my blood.

The blood begins to course through my veins.

The ferocity of the throbbing increases?so much so that ${\tt I}$ want to cover my ears.

In the midst of this I hear a voice calling to me. The throbbing is louder and I have trouble hearing it. The throbbing then consists of a variety of other noises, and it transforms into a blast, as if something's exploding. The voice calling to me is faint, but I can certainly hear it.

Someone is calling me.

"Kyo," it says.

Along with the voice that summons me, I see a light in the distance, albeit faintly.

I squint, trying to make out what it is.

But the light grows in an instant and my surroundings become visible.

I'm surrounded in a sea of flame. Smoke fills the air and I have trouble breathing. An alarm echoes in my ears.

When I am finally able to see and hear clearly, I become aware that the throbbing that is growing even more intense are the explosions occurring around me, and they shoot flames into the air.

A man blocks my way.

"So, was it you who was calling me?!"

The man does not attempt to answer; in fact he seems absolutely paralyzed with fear. I can make out a mark on the man's collar.

"N-E-S-T-S?"

The instant I attempt to ask what this mark means, the blast wave of an explosion knocks the man and me backward. When I come to I wonder how long I was out and realize it was only an instant. The smoke seems to have subsided and I realize I have been thrown several meters clear of the fire.

The next thing I hear is not the sound of explosions but one of shattering glass. Some sort of fluid spills to the floor and it seems to vaporize, surrounding me with a choking heat. Just when I come to the realization that I have to get out of here, something touches my feet.

"!"

A corpse. Not only that...it's my corpse.

And it's not just at my feet, the whole room is filled with me, corpses of me are strewn all over the place.

I put two and two together quickly; the meaning of my interrogation while I was in darkness suddenly becomes obvious to me.

"...Make a monkey of me will you...!!!"

I unleash the flames fly from my fists. But I don't let them all out at once, I let the irresolute flames smolder at my fingertips.

"My power as well..."

Nothing seems to matter. All I can do is fill the room in flame with all the power at my command. From the roaring flames, I can this time clearly hear a voice beckening me.

"Kyooooooooooh...!!!"

There's no need to think; it's his voice."

I leave the room. I'm buffeted with the shockwave of a fiercer explosion.

"NESTS...This is going to cost you big time...!!!"

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The flames continue to smolder from my fists, as if imploring me to take
action.
____
Kyo Kusanagi
Fighting Style : Ancient Kusanagi-style martial arts
Birthdate: 12th December
Nationality: Japan
Blood Group : B (RH-)
Height: 181 cm
Weight: 75 kg
Likes: Writing Poetry
Fav. Food : Barbecued fish
Strong Sports : Ice hockey
Impt Things : His motorcycle and girlfriend Yuki
Hated Things : Hard work
                     0-----
                           THROWS
Hatsu Gane: close, b or f + C
Issetsu Seoi Nage: close, b or f + D
                         COMMAND MOVES
Ge Shiki Naraku Otoshi: d + C in air
Ge Shiki Gou Fu You: f + B
88 Shiki: df + D
                         SPECIAL MOVES
                     0-----
114 Shiki Aragami: d, df, f + A
128 Shiki Kono Kizu: 114 Shiki Aragami, d, df, f + P
127 Shiki Yano Sabi: 128 Shiki Kono Kizu, f, df, d, db, b + P
125 Shiki Nana Se: 127 Shiki Yano Sabi, K
Ge Shii Migiri Ugachi: 127 Shiki Yano Sabi, P
115 Shiki Domu Kami: d, df, f + C
401 Shiki Tumi Yomi: 115 Shiki Domu Kami, f, df, d, db, b + P
402 Shiki Batu Yomi: 401 Shiki Tumi Yomi, f + P
100 Shiki: Oniyaki: f, d, df + P
910 Shiki Nue Tumi: d, db, b + P
Ge Shiki Ryuu Iri: d, db, b + P (high counter)
Ge Shiki Tora Fuse: d, db, b + P (low counter)
R.E.D. Kick: b, d, db + K
75 Shiki Kai: d, df, f + K, K
202 Shiki Kototsuki You: f, df, d, db, b + K
                     0-----
                         SUPER MOVES
Ura 108 Shiki: Orochinagi(DM): d, db, b, db, d, df, f + P
182 Shiki: (d, df, f)x2 + P (DM) (unblockable if full charge)
Ura 108 Shiki: Orochinagi(DM): d, db, b, db, d, df, f + AC
Striker Move: Ura 108 Shiki: Orochinagi
Another Striker: Syo Kirishima (Sexual Charisma Dynamite)
Maniac Striker: Saisyu Kusanagi (Kusanagi no Jin)
+++
Iori Yagami
Fighting Style: Ancient Yagami-style martial arts + instinct
Birthdate: 25th March
Nationality : Japan
Blood Group : O+
Height: 182 cm
Weight: 76 kg
Likes : Band
Fav. Food : Meat
Strong Sports : All
Impt Things : His girlfriend
Hated Things : Violence
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0-----0

THROWS Sakahagi: close, b or f + C Saka Sakahagi: close, b or f + D COMMAND MOVES Ge Shiki Yumebiki: f + A, A Ge Shiki Goufu In "Shinigami": f + B Ge Shiki Yuri Ori: in air, b + B 0-----SPECIAL MOVES 100 Shiki Oniyaki: f, d, df + P 108 Shiki Yami Barai: d, df, f + P 127 Shiki Aoi Hana: d, db, b + P (up to 3 times) 212 Shiki Koto Tsuki In: f, df, d, db, b + K Scum Gale: close, f, df, d, db, b, f + P 0-----SUPER MOVES Maiden Masher (DM): d, df, f, df, d, db, b + P Ura 327 Shiki : Yami Sugi (DM): (d, df, f)x2 + PMaiden Masher (SDM): d, df, f, df, d, db, b + AC Striker Move: Ura 108 Shiki : Ya Sakazuki Another Striker: Mature & Vice (Da Cide) Maniac Striker: Another Iori (311 Shiki Sou Kushi) Kula Diamond Fighting Style: Anti K' Arts Birthday: May 29 Nationality: Unknown Blood Type: Unknown Height: 169 cm Weight: 48 kg Fav. Food: Strawberry sorbet, Peropero candy Best Sport: Skating Likes: Candy Impt Things: Candy Hated Things: Trashy people, fire THROWS Ice Coffin: close, b or f + C Behind Slash: close, b or f + D COMMAND MOVES 0----One Inch: f + A Slider Shoot: df + D SPECIAL MOVES Crow Bites: f, d, df + P Counter Shell: d, db, b + PDiamond Breath: d, df, f + PSUPER MOVES Diamond Edge(DM): $(d, df, f) \times 2+P$ Diamond Edge(SDM): (d, df, f) x^2 + AC Freeze Execution(SDM): (f, df, d, db, b) x^2 + AC

Striker Move: Candy (Ray Spin) Another Striker: Foxy (Juggle n Slash) Maniac Striker: Rugal (Genocide Cutter) +++ Zero 0-----0 THROWS Yokoshima Karakui Satsu: b or f + C or D COMMAND MOVES Genma Kizashou: f + A SPECIAL MOVES Zankaze Tsubame Hazaki - Hikawa Kagami: d, df, f + A Zankaze Tsubame Hazaki - Satsuma: d, df, f + C Tsugio Hikoujin: d, df, f + K Zankaze Tsubame Hazaki - Ou Kiba: f, d, df + A Zankaze Tsubame Hazaki - Shou Suburu: f, d, df + C Ma Maikosou: close, d, db, b + K SUPER MOVES 0-----

Dakekusari Zanjin: (d, df, f)x2 + PShera Metsusei: (d, df, f)x2 + K