

**THE
LITTLE
MATCH
GIRL**

3

i n s t r u c t i o n m a n u a l

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ABOUT THE LITTLE MATCH GIRL

The **Little Match Girl** was once an extremely poor little girl with no name whose father forced her to sell matches in the street. Whilst attempting this occupation in vain one horribly cold New Year's Eve, she almost **froze to death**, but managed to survive by activating a mysterious ability to **travel through time and space by looking at fire**. This discovery led to her adoption by the famed philanthropist **Ebenezer Scrooge**, who christened his new daughter **Ebenzabeth**. Since that fateful night, Ebenzabeth has learned to leverage these strange powers in her new occupation as **time-traveling assassin**.

But she won't be able to handle her latest assignment without some help...

THE PARTY SYSTEM

In **The Little Match Girl 3**, Ebenezebeth will team up a bunch of other adventurers to form a "party." This creates sort of a weird situation for text parser purposes.

When the narrator refers to "you," it usually means Ebenezebeth specifically. The "you" taking actions outside of combat is normally Ebenezebeth. So, outside of combat, you'll use a command like WEAR AMULET to make Ebenezebeth wear an amulet, but PUT AMULET ON WHOEVER to make someone else wear it. In combat, the agent of a command will be whichever character you're currently controlling.

The INVENTORY command displays what Ebenezebeth is carrying, but this basically functions as the party's common inventory. In combat, anybody can USE POTION ON

WHOEVER as long as Ebenezabeth/the party is holding the item. (Paraphernalia carried by other party members is stuff you don't really have to worry about.)

The STATUS command gives you the basic information for all party members. You can LOOK AT a character to see their detailed stats.

COMBAT BASICS

Battles in **The Little Match Girl 3** follow the conventions of RPGs like *Golden Sun* or your classic *Final Fantasys*, where a round of combat begins with each unit deciding whether to attack or cast a spell or whatever. After these choices are locked in, the unit with the highest Speed statistic goes first, and then the next-fastest unit, and so on down the line.

I do not know how ties are resolved. Inform 7 handles that part. It might be down to which unit is named first in the source code.

By the time a unit's turn rolls around, their intended target may have disappeared—perhaps because someone else eliminated that target already. In such a case, nothing will happen on the unit's turn. If the acting unit is not Ebenezebeth, there may not be any text to indicate that anything is not happening. This

is because of some action-checking machinery at the Inform 6 level that I'm not prepared to mess around with for the purposes of this game. Sorry!!!

When it's time to give commands to your units, they will appear in order of their Speed stats. This might seem odd (it won't always be Ebenezechab who takes orders first) but it should be helpful strategically.

The most basic action you can take is of course ATTACK WHOEVER. Although each playable character has their own name for it (SHOOT or STAB or whatever), they're all synonyms for the underlying Attacking action. You can just type A WHOEVER if you're looking to save time.

The DEFEND option increases the unit's own Defense and Resistance stats by 5 for the length of the current round (including before the unit's turn actually comes up).

When entering a command for a transitive action (like ATTACK), you must stipulate the target of the action. If an ability's description says that it affects "an enemy" or "an ally" then it's probably transitive, but if it refers to "all enemies" or something then it's probably intransitive, so, don't specify a target for that action.

You can use the INVENTORY and EXAMINE commands during combat without wasting a turn.

Ebenezabeth's weapon is her Colt revolver, which she must RELOAD from time to time. Outside of combat, you can check her stats or the revolver itself to see how many bullets are chambered; you may also RELOAD outside of combat if need be.

When an enemy unit falls to 0 HP, they typically leave the battlefield. When a party member falls to 0 HP, they faint and can no

longer act. If your entire party faints, you lose the battle! But if you beat all the enemies, then you *win* the battle.

OPTIONS

By default, descriptions of all of a character's combat options are displayed when it's time to pick that character's action. The COMPRESS command will change that to a shorter list, and the DECOMPRESS command will restore the more detailed list.

By default, there's a "press any key" prompt after each combatant takes their turn. I think this makes it more dramatic (and easier to follow) than having all the actions of a round show up at once. But you can use the FAST BATTLE command to turn off this dramatic effect, or the SLOW BATTLE command to re-enable it.

HOW EACH STAT WORKS

Level: Generally, individuals with higher Levels are stronger than individuals with lower Levels.

Affinity: A unit gets a bonus to the damage of spells it casts that match its elemental affinity. It also takes less damage when it gets hit by spells of that element. (There are no fancy inter-alignment interactions, so Ice-aligned individuals do not take extra damage from Fire-aligned spells.)

HP: This is how much damage a unit can take before it keels over.

Attack and Defense: The damage dealt by a normal attack action is the attacker's Attack stat minus the defender's Defense stat. This calculation also applies to some other non-magical offensive abilities.

Magic and Resistance: The damage dealt by a spell attack is the attacker's Magic stat minus the defender's Resistance stat. A character with a higher Magic value also has a better chance of inflicting additional effects on the targets of their spells; a character with a higher Resistance value has a higher chance of resisting such effects.

Speed: This determines the order in which combatants act.

Skill: This is the chance (out of 100) that a unit has of scoring a critical hit with their normal attack action. A critical hit deals double the damage a normal hit would (so if a normal hit would deal 0 damage, so does a critical hit).

A defending unit whose Speed is higher than the attacker's Skill has a chance of evading an attack entirely. This applies to normal attacks and simple spells, but certain more powerful abilities aren't subject to this calculation.

LEVELING UP

Most enemies, once defeated, leave behind a tiny Mirror Shard. Ebenezebeth and her allies wear Silver Phylacteries for the purpose of collecting these shards.

The simplest command for putting a Mirror Shard in an ally's Phylactery is `USE SHARD ON WHOEVER`. When you do this, the wearer of the Phylactery will level up!

The bonuses for leveling up in this game follow *Fire Emblem* rules: Each party member has an underlying "growth" value for each numerical stat that represents the likelihood of that stat increasing when they level up. So some levels will be better than others, and the results are somewhat random and not entirely fair. But the game should be easy enough that this won't be a big deal.

A character who levels up may also learn a new ability, which is a much bigger deal. Make sure you try out all your characters' abilities! Just so you know, no playable characters will learn any new abilities beyond level 5.

You cannot remove a Shard from a Phylactery to give it to someone else. But there should be enough Mirror Shards in the game for all playable characters to reach at least level 5. So, don't stress about it too much. Just relax. It's supposed to be fun.

SOME ADVICE

- **This game is supposed to be very forgiving.** I don't think there's any way to reach an unwinnable state, or miss out permanently on an opportunity.
- **It's okay to lose a battle.** You'll just respawn at a convenient spot nearby.
- **It's also okay to run away.** There's no penalty for fleeing.
- **If a challenge is too hard, don't bang your head against it.** Go look at something else, and come back to the hard part when you're better prepared.

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