

Role-Player's Realm

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Shining Force II GENESIS

By Scary Larry

Another day in the dungeons, and this one is a little drearier than the rest. Shining Force II gathers the team where the first Shining Force left off, and not much has changed since then. In this case, RPG is starting to stand for Routinely Played Game.

Not So Shining

The citizens of Granseal have been preparing for something that smells like war, looks like war, but isn't really war; it's just some monster unrest on the outskirts of town. Nevertheless, you and your buds decide to investigate, and with the help of your teacher, Astral the Wizard, you're on the road to fame and glory.



PROTIP: Search everywhere and taste everything.

You begin under inconspicuous circumstances, just chumming around with your centaur friend and a female priest, when the king falls ill



PROTIP: Reading the titles in the bookshelves will sometimes uncover clues...and sometimes they're just meant to be funny.

and you rush off to help. From there, it's your standard monster bash with things that slither, crawl, bite, and fly.

You start off at a low level and build up your characteristics through battle. The battle in this RPG is hex based, meaning that you're only allowed a certain number of moves before the enemies close in. This annoying holdover from the pen-and-paper RPGs may seem fair to some, but it's slow and cumbersome work for action-oriented video game players.



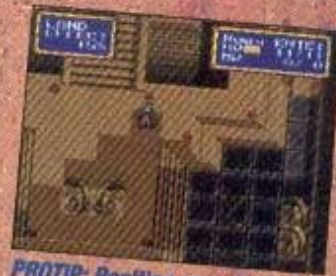
PROTIP: Sometimes the only way to gain access to a room or upper floor is by asking around or talking to someone.

Bright Lights, Big Deal

The graphics are divided between a fairly clear overhead view and an awesome 3/4-overhead battle view. The



PROTIP: Before leaving the castle, check this storeroom in the lower left portion of the castle for supplies.



PROTIP: Position your fighters with their backs to ledges so that enemies can't sneak up from behind.



PROTIP: Sarah is mainly a healer, so don't send her into the fray to fight.



monsters and action in the 3/4 view look good and move smoothly, but you have precious little time to enjoy the graphics before you're laid out in ye olde coroner's office.

The music is peppy, upbeat...and totally out of place. If you think you should hear sword-slinging sounds in a heated battle, then look (and listen) elsewhere.

You control characters using a standard menu-driven RPG interface. The menus sometimes confuse you with their lightning-fast appearances, and generally there are too many menus and too few battle options.



PROTIP: Use common Cents when fighting with the Centaur. Heal him the minute his health goes below six marks.

A Shine a Dozen

This RPG is way too familiar. The cuteness and elvishness of this game will really annoy you after a while, and that's not the half of it. The game progresses at a pace that would slow the Road Runner down. If you're looking for something special in the Genesis RPG arena, don't use the Force, Luke. **G**

Shining Force II (By Sega of America)				
Graphics	Sound	Control	Funfactor	Challenge
4.0	2.5	2.5	3.0	Int.
\$79.99	16 megs	Available now	RPG	1 player Battery backup Sega rating: MA-13