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CHAPTER FIFTEEN

KID ICARUS

Type: Fantasy quest.

Objective: As the youthful angel, Kid Icarus (also known as Pit), you're a tad overwhelmed by the task you're given: Sent from Angel Land, you must pass through the Underworld, the Overworld, and the Skyworld, to reach the Palace in the Sky. There, you must duke it out with the nefarious Medusa and rescue the precious Princess of Light, Palutena.

Layout: The hero enters a series of rooms and can move in any direction. Each world has four distinct "areas" through which the hero must venture.

Scroll: The screen moves from side to side or up and down, depending upon which way Icarus travels.

Hero's Powers: When he sets out, poor Icarus can do nothing more than jump, duck, come to sudden stops, and shoot arrows. As he forges ahead he can win Angel Feathers to break his falls; Holly Bows to boost the power of his arrows; Light Arrows, which are extremely potent; a Crystal, which preserves him from harm; the Water of Life, which replenishes Icarus' strength; the Water Barrel for storing extra Water; a Mirror Shield, for defense; Fire, which enlarges the Kid's arrows; a Big Hammer, which packs far more wallop than an arrow; a Harp, to transform his foes into those very useful Big Hammers; Pegasus' Wings, for flight; a Credit Card for charging things in shops (obtained by triumphing against every foe and target in the Treasure

Room); and a Check Sheet, Torch, and Pencil, which enable him to see exactly where he is in any area. Goods can be purchased; many can also be found in the special rooms that dot the landscape (see *Beginner's Strategies*, below).

Hero's Weaknesses: If Icarus is blasted or pounced upon by monsters (see *About Your Enemies*), falls from a ledge, or tumbles into any trap, the Princess is going to grow old in captivity.

About Your Enemies: *Kid Icarus* is a veritable museum of monsters. There are over *forty* in all, among them: the tentacled orb Monoeye; the snaking Kobil; the flaming McGoo; the Pac-Man-like Minos; the beaked Nettler; Girin, which spits bullets from its mouth; Specknose (believe it or not, he looks like those funny glasses with a false nose and moustache); Mick, a pair of ravaging teeth; Snowman, who flings iceballs at Icarus; the Eggplant Wizard, who transforms you into the vaunted food staple; the Reaper and Reapettes, whose touch is death; Keron, a flying toad; Rokman, who pounds the hero with his stony body; Tamambo, a biting brass ball; Hewdraw, a huge serpent; and the lumbering quadruped Twinbellows.

Menu: There is only the one great adventure.

Timer: None.

Scoring: You get points for making your way through the worlds. Also, as you travel you will be gathering Currency Units, which you need to buy things. These appear whenever Icarus is victorious against an adversary; the monster transforms into a Heart. (You might say the baddies have a *change of heart*. . . .) A Small Heart gives him one unit, a Half-Heart 5, and a Big Heart 10.

Patterns: The rooms, shops, and appearance of the monsters are always the same.

Beginner's Strategy: The most important aspect of any quest game is knowing the terrain *and* how to negotiate it. In this case, the Underworld begins with ledges haunted by the serpentine Kobils. On the fourth level up you'll find God's Room. Fill your quiver, then continue up the ledges. On the second of the staircases that leads to the left, beware of Monoeyes. Let them near, then shoot them. Mount the

thin steps carefully, then climb the seven gray stone ledges. A Treasure Room awaits on the platform above. When you reach the second area of the Underworld, proceed with caution; the ledges are covered with ice. Be ready to press the controller in the direction *opposite* that of your skid, or else dig in your heels by tapping the controller up.

Along the way keep notes about what treasures are hidden where, and in what sequence. For example, in the Treasure Room of the first area of the Underworld, go to the upper left and get the goods in that Pitcher first. Descend and get the treasure below it next. If both of these are Hearts, retrieve what's in the Pitcher in the lower right. If it's a Hammer, go to the bottom left and get the treasure there, then move to the middle ledge on the right and gather the goods there. Save the top right ledge last. *However:* If there's a Heart in the lower right, get the treasure on the top right and middle right (in that order) before heading to the Pitcher in the lower left. If the upper and middle left ledges both contain Hammers, go next to the treasure on the ledge in the middle; if they were a Hammer and Heart, respectively, hie thee to the middle ledge on the right. As for the Shops, it's always useful to try and bargain with merchants. This can be done by tapping the A and B button of the second controller *concurrently*. More often than not the merchant will come back with lower prices for goods. (Alas, one in five times haggling will only make him grumpier and he'll *raise* the price.)

Make sure you know how to get to the Hot Spring Room to nurse your wounds before meeting Twinbellows at the end of the Underworld. When you enter the fourth area, head left 2 rooms, down 2 rooms, then left one room. Also, note how to reach the Hospital in case you've been transformed into an Eggplant. Upon reaching the fourth area, go right 3 rooms, then up one. There's another Hot Spring Room a short distance into the Overworld, and another not far beyond it, in area two.

Advanced Strategy: If you've mastered the ins and outs of moving through the early areas, the latter realms are difficult largely because of the monsters you'll encounter. Some

important strategies are as follows. Lesser demons are easily beaten: the Reaper, for instance, by shooting it in the back (this is no time for fair play!), the Snowman by shooting from below, and the Eggplant Wizard by firing between the flurries of eggplants. Destroying the evil Bosses of each world is somewhat more difficult. When you tackle Twinbellows in the last room of the Underworld, secret yourself in back of a column (thus protecting you from projectiles) and, as the beast approaches, hit it with rapid-fire bursts. Hurry to the other side and repeat. When you face Hewdraw at the end of the Overworld, continuously leap over the leviathan and shoot at its head. As for Medusa, you can't battle the head Boss unless you've obtained the Light Arrow, Mirror Shield, and Pegasus' Wings. When you reach your nemesis, your best approach is to go to the top left side of the screen and come right a few taps (just under one third the length of the screen). Keep facing to the right so Medusa's beams can't hurt you. When the Snake slithers by, drop down so you can shoot Medusa's pupil, skewer it, then continue to descend. When the Snake goes by, rise, blast the monster's pupil again, and continue to ascend. Continue this pattern over and over until the creature is "stone dead."

Par: 25,000 is a good point tally for each area of every world.

NES Advantage: The joystick makes it a great deal easier to move Icarus with precision.

Training Tips: Practice your jumping, especially the jump followed by a crouch. Unless this is second nature to you, you won't be able to move and duck and also fire when it comes time to battle your adversaries.

Rating: Although *Kid Icarus* doesn't have quite the same sense of wonder as *Solomon's Key*, or the exotic look of *Mega Man*, it is innovative in its various pitfalls (the ice is great), sense of humor, and in the hero's powers.

Challenge: A—

Graphics: B

Sound Effects: B