

ABAÖÖON ABYSS (solution)

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The named and pictured characters are from the [Super Smash Bros.](#) series of video games, a fighting game with various moves and attacks for different characters. As clued by the phrase “scorching attacks” in the flavortext, the pictured moves of those respective characters are specifically [flame attacks](#) that have a fire effect. The two flame attacks from each pair of fighters in each stage have the same word length and exactly one matching letter in the same position, as a confirmation and letter extraction. The stage names, which are given in alphabetical order, need to be reordered. As clued by the phrases “depths of hell” and “round stages” in the flavortext, as well as the images of the stages as circular discs, the stage names reference the 9 circles of Hell from [Dante’s Inferno](#). Reordering the extracted letters corresponding to the stages in the canonical order of the circles of Hell yield the thematic answer and the Fire Guardian’s magic **SOLAR SEAR**.

The table below summarizes the flame attacks, with the matching letters in the same positions in red, and reordered based on the referenced circle of Hell by the respective stage:

Reordered stage	Referenced circle of Hell	Left fighter	Left fighter move	Right fighter move	Right fighter
Space Void	Limbo	King Dedede	DEDERUSH	FOXBURST	Fox
Desire Island	Lust	Mii Gunner	BOMBDROP	ROBOBEAM	R.O.B.
Cornucopia Gorge	Gluttony	Captain Falcon	FALCONKICK	WILDGUNMAN	Duck Hunt
Avarice City	Greed	Olimar	ENDOFDAY	UPAERIAL	Zelda
Field of Rage	Wrath	Charizard	DOWNTHROW	LLOIDTRAP	Isabelle
Temple of Nonconformity	Heresy	Donkey Kong	HOTS LAP	MISSILE	Seamus
Assault Fortress	Violence	Roy	BLAZER	PUMMEL	Pyra
Trick Land	Fraud	Robin	PAIRUP	VANISH	Sheik
Sellout Stadium	Treachery	Ness	PKFIREBURST	SUPERDRAGON	Yoshi

Constructor’s notes:

I wanted the first Guardian puzzle to be based on Super Smash Bros. as the move names are similar to the magic names of the Guardian answers, which will help solvers to associate them as such. Thematically, the focus was on the flame attacks, and using the matching letters in the move names as a simple extraction method. The initial idea was to embed videos of these moves, but not all were available, and it could be confusing as they sometimes featured a different opponent. Hence only static images were used to depict the moves, which possibly required more reverse image searching, but it should also not be necessary to identify all the moves. A key element of video games are its visual graphics, so I wanted to incorporate these as much as possible into the puzzle, including making each page look like a fighting game after the stage and character selections. The ordering based on Dante’s Inferno is also thematic, and fits the graphical element of the stages well.