

# FINAL FANTASY VII

Chapter 8: The journey begins



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The group was asleep. Cloud was starting to dream of his hometown...



Can you hear me?

Who...? Who are you?

Suddenly, a noise woke him up: the door to his prison was open! Tifa was still sleeping, he decided to go outside... A guard was lying on the ground, bathed in blood, a huge slice across his chest...



What happened?!

After picking the keys, he returned to his cell.



Tifa, wake up!

What is going on?



Something is wrong! Look outside!

I wonder what could have done this to him?

Cloud opened the door to Aerith's cell.



Take Aerith, I'll get Barret and Red XIII.

He entered their cell to their great astonishment.



How did you get in? Why is the door open?

Come with me, something is wrong...



Someone must have attacked...



No human could have done this. I'll scout ahead.



I've got your back, let's be careful!

They set off. Not a soul lived on these floors anymore. Following the tracks, they arrived in front of the pod that imprisoned Jenova. The door blown up from the inside...



This specimen... Look, the blood trail leads to that elevator, we should go check what's up there...

The trail continued up to the 70th floor, that of President Shinra's office...

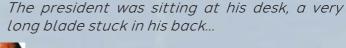






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He is dead... President Shinra is dead.



Whose sword is this?



...Sephiroth!



Sephiroth is still alive?



Apparently yes. He is the only one capable of using this blade.



Whoever did this, Shinra is done now.

They heard a small noise... Palmer, the head of the Space Division, was hidden behind a column... Cloud and Barret caught him as he was trying to run away.



Please... Please don't kill me!



Tell us what happened!



S-Sephiroth came!



🏄 You saw him? You've seen Sephiroth?



Yes! I saw it with my own eyes! Why would I lie? I heard his voice too! He told the president "I will not let you take the Promised Land".



So the Promised Land really does exists... And Sephiroth wants to prevent Shinra from taking it?



Is he one of us then?



Stop Shinra? One of us? No! It's not that simple. Knowing him, I'm afraid Sephiroth's mission is very different!

They were interrupted by the arrival of a helicopter. A young man dressed in white stood on the bridge... Palmer took the opportunity to escape to the landing pad on the roof...





Rufus! Damn, I forgot about him!

Who is he?

Vice President Rufus, the president's son!

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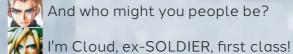


The group went out onto the roof where the helicopter had landed... Palmer had just told Rufus everything.



So Sephiroth is alive, after all. Palmer, get in the helicopter.

Rufus turned to the group.



I'm the leader of Avalanche!

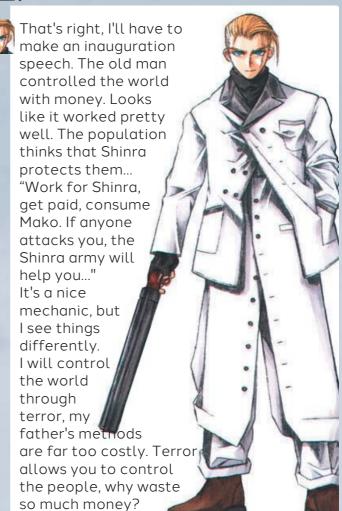
I'm one of their member!

I'm a florist, from the slums.

I am a research specimen.

What a team! Well my name is Rufus, I am the president of Shinra.

You are only president because your father just died!



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You like long speeches like your father.

Everyone get out of the building.

What?



I'll explain later!



What's that about all of the sudden?



Just do as I say for now! I'll join you as soon as I've taken care of him!



Well, okay, if you insist...

They left Cloud alone facing Rufus, headed back towards the exit. A little further...



Cloud... I just thought of something... I'll wait for him here, everyone go down to the first floor!



But Tifa, what's going on?



Listen to me, take the elevator!



Alright...

Barret, Aerith and Red XIII got into the elevator. Barely had it started when the second elevator reached their level, housing a security robot. The latter broke the glass of the elevator shaft in which our friends were...



Oh no, is it never going to end?



I don't think this machine is programmed to hit me, I'm too precious to them!



So what?

Aerith approached the machine slowly... The machine's cannon followed Aerith...



I see!

Barret concentrated a huge burst of shots, exploding the turret. The rest of the machine fell into the void...



That was really easy!



You spoke too soon...

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A flying robot appeared. At once, it shot at Red XIII and Barret, carefully avoiding Aerith.



I'll take care of it this time!

Aerith, no! You're going to get...

Before he had time to finish, Aerith stuck her long stick into the machine's propeller which lost balance and exploded...



Mmm, looks like you're a major asset!

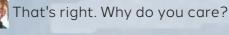
Meanwhile, on the roof of the building, Cloud was preparing to confront Rufus.



Why do you wish to fight me?



You seek the Promised Land and Sephiroth.





I know Sephiroth, we were friends in SOLDIER.



Oh, I see... Is that why you asked your little friends to leave?



Yes, I can't tell them yet about the pain it made me endure.



Did you know Sephiroth was an Ancient?



So much has happened. I can't let anyone, neither you nor Sephiroth, take the Promised Land!



So I guess we won't be friends. Very well. Do you think I'm crazy enough to take on a SOLDIER?



Ex-SOLDIER!

That'll be it for today.

Rufus grabbed the legs of the departing helicopter, fleeing the fight against Cloud.



See you soon, Ex-SOLDIER!

Cloud clenched his fists. Perhaps he had just missed the best opportunity to end things once and for all. He took the stairs and came across Tifa who was waiting for him on the 69th floor.







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🚺 Did you defeat Rufus?



I couldn't get rid of him. This might complicate things...



Cloud... I wanted to ask you...



You... You are not really fine, are you?



Tifa... Let's get out of here and I'll explain...

Meanwhile, Red XIII, Barret and Aerith had reached the first floor... No one was present in the building.



Damn! You seeing this?

The entire floor served as an exhibition room for Mako technology... Several vehicles were presented, large screens displaying different usages Shrinra made of Mako...



Revolting!

They should be ashamed!









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While distracted by the horror of this reality, the guards surrounded the building...



Shit! We're stuck here! If it was just me, I would rush in head first, but...



They're not after you, I am who they want!



Do you really think I'm going to leave you behind after you saved my Marlene? It's up to me to save you now!



Well then, if you're done talking maybe we can look for a way to escape?



You sure have guts!



What do you mean exactly?



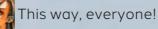
Nothing, forget about it. So what do we do?



Barret!



Tifa! Where is Cloud?

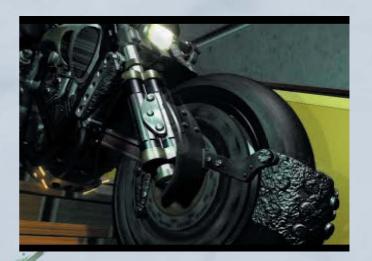




What is going on? Where is Cloud?

You'll see, hurry up, quickly!

They followed Tifa... There was a curious roaring noise coming from the stairs above them... Tifa seemed to be looking for something...













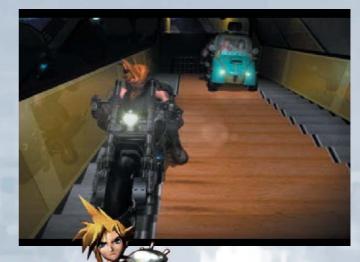






Chapter 8: The journey begins













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Cloud stopped in front of the second floor window...

Cloud... Don't tell me he's going to...

It seems so!

Hey girls, why are we going up?

You better grab on tight.

Hang on, we're going through the window!













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Guards on motorcycles chased them, Cloud bringing them down with his sword...



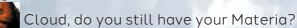
Keep it up guys! Incredible, we're making it!

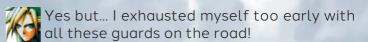
Don't speak so soon...

Barely had he said that when the ground began to shake. A enormous machine, yet another one, was tailing them... They reached the end of the road, still under construction!



We have no choice, we must face it!





The huge robot rushed towards the group which dispersed in time, the machine turned around... Aerith was severely hit by the steel monster blade...



Help, I'm hurt!

Cloud! Is there anything you can do?



It's heavily armored, my sword can barely scratch it!

Red XIII rushed onto the machine cutting a few cables with its fangs. The machine sent a hail of bullets on the group save for Aerith. Everyone found themselves on the ground...



Help!



Mother, please. What should I do at a time like this?



I... I won't last much longer...

We were... almost... there!

The machine continued its attacks on the group, avoiding Aerith helplessly watching the terrible spectacle...



Piece of junk! You will never get me!

🕌 Aargh!

Suddenly, in a praying position, Aerith stood up, an orange glow surrounding her...

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The light turned green and scattered over all the members of the group who were instantly healed...



It's... it's a miracle!

Cloud, your Materia!

Cloud concentrated as much as possible and a huge blue lightning bolt fell from the sky, blowing the machine into a thousand pieces.







A cool wind now blew on their faces, they were free...

Aerith...

Don't ask, I don't understand myself!

**\** 

Well, what do we do now?

Sephiroth is alive... I'll make him pay.

What for? Will it save the planet?

Maybe yes.

In that case I'll come with you Cloud!

Me too, there are lots of things I would like to understand.

About the Ancients?

Among many other things...

l guess this is goodbye, Midgar.



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They got off the highway using a long cable that took them outside the Sector 7 gate...



I'm going back to my hometown. I will accompany you as long as it is on my route.



...I guess this is where our journey begins...



Are you sure you want to come?



I don't know. I have nowhere else to go, so I don't have much of a choice.



You know, this will be my first time leaving Midgar...



Marlene... Are you sure she'll be safe?



Don't worry, mom has probably already fled Midgar!



Alright, let's go!



We will need a leader for this trip and I believe I am the best suited for this role!



...You believe so?



It should be Cloud... Right?



You...! Okay! I see how it is. Where do you want us to go then, boss?



Don't take this the wrong way Barret...
Where did you think we should go?



Mph! I can't believe it! You call that a leader?



Calm down Barret, the leader is the one who look after the others. Make a suggestion, he makes sure everyone feels safe.



What... You too? I... Okay, I give up! We'd better go to Kalm. It's a very small village, we can rest there and then... Maybe you'll tell us more there Cloud?



Agreed!



Alright. I'll follow!



Kalm, here we come!

