

= Last Order : Final Fantasy VII =

Last Order : Final Fantasy VII (??????? -?????????VII- , Rasuto ?d? -Fainaru Fantaj? Sebun-) , also abbreviated as Last Order or LO , is a 2005 Japanese anime original video animation (OVA) produced by Madhouse and released by Square Enix . It was directed by Morio Asaka and produced by Masao Maruyama , Jungo Maruta , and Akio Ofuji . Tetsuya Nomura acted as the supervising director . The OVA is an alternate rendition of two flashbacks found within the 1997 video game Final Fantasy VII . Last Order was released in Japan with Advent Pieces : Limited , a special edition release of the film Final Fantasy VII : Advent Children , and as a bonus feature in the North American " Limited Edition Collector 's Set " release of Advent Children .

Last Order is associated with the Compilation of Final Fantasy VII , a series of prequels and sequels to the original Final Fantasy VII . Although not an official Compilation installment or canon within it , the OVA has nonetheless been included in official guidebooks . The Compilation of Final Fantasy VII includes the games Before Crisis : Final Fantasy VII , Dirge of Cerberus : Final Fantasy VII , and Crisis Core : Final Fantasy VII , as well as the film Final Fantasy VII : Advent Children and the collection of short stories On the Way to a Smile . Last Order 's soundtrack was released with the music of Before Crisis , and select songs were later remixed for Crisis Core . The OVA was created due to the success of promotional commercials for Before Crisis , with production lasting six months .

The plot of Last Order encompasses two events that occurred before the main events of Final Fantasy VII . One storyline revolves around the Nibelheim scenario that focuses on Zack Fair , Cloud Strife , Sephiroth and Tifa Lockhart . The other event follows Zack and Cloud as they run from the megacorporation Shinra . The OVA cuts back and forth between these two flashbacks , linked by the narration of Turk leader Tseng and his reflections on the Nibelheim event . Originally meant to focus on Zack , Last Order highlighted Tseng 's feelings and position in the Shinra company , as well as his moral values .

Although the 77 @,@ 777 copies of Advent Pieces : Limited that were released in Japan sold out months in advance of the official release date , Last Order received a negative fan response due to changes in content and presentation from the original Final Fantasy VII game , and because of this , the crew working on Crisis Core avoided recreating certain scenes from Last Order .

= = Background = =

Last Order explores situations shown and referenced within Final Fantasy VII and other Compilation titles . The world of Final Fantasy VII , referred to as " the Planet " , is dependent for its survival on a flow of spirit energy called the Lifestream . The megacorporation Shinra eventually rises to power and begins extracting the Lifestream through Mako reactors , killing the Planet . Shinra uses the Mako as an energy source and to manipulate the strength and abilities of their paramilitary organization , SOLDIER . Sephiroth , considered the strongest member of SOLDIER , is sent to investigate a Mako reactor in the secluded town of Nibelheim and is accompanied by the SOLDIER Zack and two grunts , one of whom is Cloud . While there , Sephiroth spends most of his time reading in the Shinra Mansion , which had previously been used by the Shinra scientist Hojo to conduct experiments . Through Hojo 's log books , Sephiroth comes to learn of his past , in which he was injected with Jenova 's cells . The Planet had once been inhabited by the Cetra (or " Ancients ") , who were almost completely destroyed by Jenova , an extraterrestrial lifeform that crashed onto the Planet 2 @,@ 000 years previously , and began infecting the Cetra with a virus . When Jenova was unearthed by a Shinra science team , it was mistakenly identified as a Cetra . This caused Sephiroth to believe he was also a Cetra , and that humans had betrayed his ancestors .

= = Plot = =

Narrated by Tseng , leader of the elite espionage and assassination division known as the Turks , Last Order switches between the Nibelheim incident and Zack Fair 's escape to Midgar with his

unconscious friend , Cloud Strife . During the Nibelheim event , Sephiroth , insane after discovering his origins , sets fire to the village of Nibelheim . After killing many villagers , he proceeds to the Nibelheim reactor where Jenova has been encased . Tifa , a resident of Nibelheim , attacks him soon after he arrives . Sephiroth knocks her aside and continues to Jenova 's body , preserved in a large glass tank filled with liquid . Zack follows Sephiroth into the reactor and they engage in combat , but Sephiroth is able to disarm and incapacitate him . Sephiroth returns to Jenova 's body , but does not notice Cloud approaching .

Cloud immediately impales Sephiroth with his sword , cracking Jenova 's glass tank . He returns to Tifa and the two converse , while Sephiroth cuts off Jenova 's head . He carries the head with him towards Cloud and they engage in battle . During the fight , Cloud is impaled through the stomach and hung over the reactor 's core . In a feat of strength , he grabs Sephiroth 's sword and moves himself down the blade to solid ground and hurls Sephiroth aside . Sephiroth abandons the battle and jumps into the reactor core with Jenova 's head in an attempt to reach the " Promised Land " . Although Zack and Cloud survive the ordeal , they are taken to the Shinra Mansion by Hojo for experimentation .

The other event detailed in Last Order illustrates Zack and Cloud 's escape from Shinra . While at the Shinra Mansion , Cloud had succumbed to Mako poisoning caused by a surge of memories flooding through his mind , rendering him in an unconscious , non @-@ reactant state . Zack escapes with Cloud from the Mansion with the intention of returning to Midgar , the headquarters of Shinra . However , Shinra orders their paramilitary and the Turks to find and eliminate the two escapees . Tseng decides to capture them alive .

On a bluff overlooking Zack and Cloud , who had hitched a ride on a truck , Shinra operatives decide to ignore orders to wait for the Turks . One takes aim at the incapacitated Cloud . Zack jumps in front of Cloud , yelling at him to escape .

= = Cast = =

Kenichi Suzumura voices Zack Fair , a 1st class SOLDIER who faces Sephiroth and is brutally defeated . After being experimented on by Hojo , Zack attempts to escape Shinra with his friend , Cloud . The production crew used Last Order " to portray Zack properly " as light @-@ hearted and young . Suzumura noted that Zack felt more " alive " in Last Order in comparison to his appearance in Advent Children .

Takahiro Sakurai voices Cloud Strife , a Shinra grunt who fights against Sephiroth after seeing his friends , Zack and Tifa hurt , and Nibelheim destroyed . Nearly dead due to his wounds , Cloud is experimented on by Hojo and lapses into an unresponsive state .

Toshiyuki Morikawa voices Sephiroth , a 1st class SOLDIER and a past friend of Zack . After discovering his origins , Sephiroth goes insane and " betray [s] those who had believed in him . " He attempts to bring Jenova (his " mother ") and himself to the " Promised Land " .

Junichi Suwabe voices Tseng , the leader of the Turks who narrates the OVA . Originally , the OVA was intended to focus on Zack , but Tseng became the " real highlight . " Last Order elaborates on Tseng 's changing feelings towards his job , as well as where he places his moral values .

Ayumi Ito voices Tifa Lockhart , a resident of Nibelheim and a childhood friend of Cloud . In a fit of rage , Tifa tries to kill Sephiroth , but he blocks her attack and wounds her .

Hiroshi Fujioka voices Zangan , Tifa 's martial arts instructor . After Tifa is injured by Sephiroth at the Mako reactor , Zangan retrieves her and carries her to safety .

Keiji Fujiwara voices Reno and Taiten Kusunoki voices Rude . They are both members of the Turks under Tseng 's command and operate as partners .

Nachi Nozawa voices Professor Hojo , the head of Shinra 's science department . Hojo takes Zack and Cloud for experimentation , instantly dismissing Tseng 's discontent about using them .

Daisuke Namikawa voices Turk (Rod) , Ginpei Sato voices Turk (Two Guns) , H?ch? ?tsuka voices Turk (Martial Arts) , Mayuko Aoki voices Turk (Shotgun) , and Megumi Toyoguchi voices Turk (Gun) . These characters are all Turks under Tseng 's command that originally appeared in Before Crisis .

Other roles include Keiji Okuda , Atsushi Imaruoka , Ryōji Mizuno , and Daisuke Kirii as members of Shinra 's military unit who attempt to apprehend Cloud and Zack . Yūhei Tadano and Katsuhisa Hōki voice villagers at Nibelheim .

= = Production and release = =

Last Order : Final Fantasy VII was produced and scripted by Madhouse and directed by Morio Asaka . The decision to create Last Order arose from the positive reaction towards a popular promotional clip created by Madhouse for the game Before Crisis . Madhouse was chosen to produce the OVA partly because of their success with the clip and because the president of Madhouse was very enthusiastic about the project . However , the main reason for choosing Madhouse was that the company " understood the significance " of making a Final Fantasy VII animation , as it was considered a large responsibility to animate " the most popular game in the FF [Final Fantasy] series . " Tetsuya Nomura , the character designer for the Final Fantasy VII series and co -@ director of Advent Children , acted as the supervising director . He had the right to reject or accept concept drawings for Last Order . As a result , Nomura had a large quantity of images redrawn , to the extent that " the entire production was in jeopardy . "

Production lasted six months . The production crew considered the most challenging part of creating the OVA to be making " Nomura 's drawings move on screen . " Because Last Order was hand -@ drawn , the crew faced difficulties creating uniform lines . Another issue was the overall feel of each scene ; original drawings were done by several artists , resulting in various scenes having different styles . Producer Akio Ofuji explained that they " wanted to make sure the final product was of very high quality , so [they] worked with the production company day and night , straight through to the deadline . " Nomura and Ofuji agreed that many scenes showing important events and feelings in Final Fantasy VII had been fragmented and disjointed , and so they had decided that those scenes would be the subject of Last Order , giving the audience of Advent Children (the film Last Order was released with) a " more enjoyable understanding . " They used the film as an opportunity to portray Zack " properly " as a " handsome , light -@ hearted man [who] was in everyone 's memory " . Last Order also details Tseng 's growth and his feelings towards his both job and events depicted , wherein he attempts to " get his own ideas of justice heard " but later abandons his moral values " in order to carry out a cruel mission . " Ofuji commented that " those are the kind of scenes we wanted people to be more aware of . "

Last Order was originally released in Japan with the " Ultimate Edition " of the Advent Children movie , Advent Pieces : Limited , on September 14 , 2005 . The OVA was included in the North American " Limited Edition Collector 's Set " of Advent Children , released by Sony Pictures Home Entertainment on February 20 , 2007 . The North America release did not come with an English dub and the OVA is subtitled . Last Order was not included in the release of Final Fantasy VII : Advent Children Complete , a 2009 director 's cut of Advent Children with extra footage .

The Compilation of Final Fantasy VII is a series of prequels and sequels to the original Final Fantasy VII game . Last Order is not part of the Compilation of Final Fantasy VII and is considered an outside work . However , it has been associated with the Final Fantasy VII series since its creation , and is mentioned alongside official installments in official guidebooks and Ultimantias . Compilation titles include the film Advent Children and games Before Crisis (mobile phone) , Dirge of Cerberus (PS2) , and Crisis Core (PSP) . Like Last Order , Dirge of Cerberus Lost Episode : Final Fantasy VII (a mobile phone spin -@ off of Dirge of Cerberus) is an outside work associated with the Compilation .

= = Music = =

Last Order 's score was composed , arranged , and produced by Takeharu Ishimoto , including the ending theme entitled " Last Order " . The music was combined with the music from Before Crisis on a single soundtrack and released in Japan on December 19 , 2007 . The soundtrack was later made available in North America by Square Enix . Tracks 13 through 27 on the disc contain the score from

Last Order , while tracks 1 through 12 contain music from Before Crisis . Select tracks on the soundtrack of Crisis Core contain music and remixes of music from the OVA .

OverClocked ReMix 's four @-@ disc tribute album , Voices of the Lifestream , has a disc entitled Order . The name was chosen to coincide with Last Order , and the music is themed after it .

= = Response and cultural impact = =

Only 77 @,@ 777 copies of Advent Pieces : Limited were produced in Japan , and they are no longer available , having been sold out months in advance of its release . They retailed for ¥ 29 @,@ 500 , or US \$ 300 , each while the North American collector 's edition retailed for \$ 49 @.@ 95 .

Overall , Last Order garnered positive feedback from Western critics . Chris Carle of IGN noted that Last Order was " the true meat of the new extras [in the Advent Children collector 's set] ? a traditionally animated chapter for FF [Final Fantasy] fans that centers on the story of Zack and Cloud " and that " it adds even more dimension to the story [of Final Fantasy VII] . " Todd Douglass Jr. from DVD Talk called Last Order " the real reason to check out the Limited Edition release for Advent Children " and commented that as " a long @-@ time anime fan and lover of Final Fantasy , " he " was enthralled by every minute to be had in Last Order . " However , Hideki Imaizumi , the producer of Crisis Core , stated that they had received " considerable negative feedback " from fans , who were displeased with changes made to the Nibelheim event in Last Order . Due to this , the scene was redone for Crisis Core , and the production crew was careful to avoid making the same decisions .