

Up next we have "Miracle" . I was instantly gonna accuse Parsee of rigging his favourite girl to be my next video topic, but he used a random theme generator and it spat out Miracle so here we are. Fine, fair enough, you can have that one. Obviously the intention is completely clear "Go do Sanae" so I'm gonna go do Sanae. I did take a quick peek at Suwako and Kanako as well, in the hopes that I could perhaps bundle them together for a nice 3 for 1 combo, but both of them are rooted in their godly-ness rather than in granting miracles, so just Sanae for today.

Usually my Soku footage is on Normal or Hard since... well Soku is hard and I'm bad at it, but today the Soku footage is on Lunatic, because she's stage 1 and I've fought her like a billion times thanks to other videos I've already made. Esoterica "Forgotten Ritual" and Miracle "Night with Bright Guest Stars" are Hard spells with no meaningful differences, but I wanted to prove that I capped all of Sanae's spells so I put them in the video in a way I hope isn't too intrusive, I'd test that for myself, but Premiere throws a fit whenever I try to play back the footage.

I expected a lot more to have to fight, but I'm up against a more modest 22 spells across 5 games, still quite a lot but it could have been worse. Let's do this!

[Esoterica "Gray Thaumaturgy"](#)

My biggest trip in MoF was Kanako, as it would be with pretty much everyone, oh and stage 4, like the whole meme is that stage 5 is legitimately easier than stage 4, both stage and boss and yeah, I felt that, Sanae was kind of a pushover. Midboss spell is cool, it's the thumbnail spell for a reason since it's got the whole star motif and it's very symmetrical, very formative, I like it. In the past, I was not a fan of the micro dodging, but MoF was the point in which my skills were starting to sharpen seriously, I did get through IN relatively quick, PoFV slowed me quite a bit since it's gameplay was like learning a new game, but that was the perfect bullet perception trainer to help me go through MoF with little resistance. Micro dodging benefits from bullet perception probably more than any other kind of dodging, since knowing the entire layout in front of you is necessary to properly route through it, and that is all bullet perception, so this was the first time in which I was truly tested on micro dodging, and the first time I truly overcame it.

[Esoterica "Secretly Inherited Art of Danmaku"](#)

Lunatic was... Well you saw, it's a bit of a nightmare without any sort of route as Marisa, or at the very least without prior knowledge as Marisa, which is where I was, I didn't know what changed beyond assuming it got denser and that was an understatement. This is not an easy spell to gorilla blind, a lot of paths seem like they're open, but then they close up by the time the bullets reach you and it's hard to push into them since the field is so dense, so I had a bit of a time trying to get through the gaps in a timely fashion and ultimately my capture was a fluke, those dodges weren't planned, I just moved and it just worked. Certified Marisa fatbox spell, but y'know I refuse to give up my main.

[Miracle "Daytime Guest Stars"](#)

Hmm, I don't really have much of anything to say about this spell, beyond the fact that it's an entirely different spell compared to the H/L version. Art was fine this week, I expected that of course since it's honorary 3rd protag Sanae, she's bound to have a lot of art and yeah, 250 something, she's charting just fine but the weighting of that art is very frontloaded, that is to say that the first half of MoF spells have plenty of arts, but everything past that point is pretty much barren, populated only by garbage. That's Touhou art for you. Fortunately, Sanae has a lot of nebulous danmaku art, stuff that isn't tagged with spells but is clearly danmaku inspired so they served as fine enough filler for the most part. Easy week.

[Miracle "Night with Overly Bright Guest Stars"](#)

Fuck this spell. "What do you mean? Aren't you the one going on about how Sane is so easy all the time?" Yes, I am, and I stand by that. I'm not Mints so I don't base difficulty purely off of my own experience with something. I understand that my absolute failure on this spell doesn't mean that it's objectively difficult, it means that I, due to my lack of experience and failure to understand it, sucked out, a case that is isolated to me alone. Just because I failed doesn't mean that everyone ever attempting this spell around my level would also fail. DO YOU UNDERSTAND MINTS?! IS THAT UNDERSTANDABLE TO Y- okay why am I blowing up about that? Well a while back there was a conversation about whether or not the Dancers are a harder boss fight than Seija, the correct answer is yes, they are harder than Seija, but Mints decided that because he knew the Dancers fight better than he knew the Seija fight, that automatically meant that the Seija fight was harder and man did he fight that point, which despite not being a part of the debate, really ticked me off. I don't care if an individual believes that X is harder than Y, but if Y is provably harder than X, and someone provides that proof, then you need to shut up, because it's clear that you're talking subjectively and not objectively.

This spell is not hard, I just didn't understand the route and even when I understood the route, the timing on the movements just didn't click until the end, where I got it the run that it finally clicked. The rest of those like 30 or whatever attempts I died not understanding what I needed to do to survive, I didn't know when I was supposed to side swap specifically, I was always too early or too late, getting hit by lasers on either side. THAT is subjective difficulty, something that is unique to me and my dysfunctional mind. Know the difference and debate in good faith.

[Sea Opening "The Day the Sea Split"](#)

I actually died a couple times, I figured I could ULTRA slow stream this and I didn't move enough, then I said fuck it and capped it normally. Again, I don't have much to say about the spell on normal, Sanae was such a breeze that I never went through any process with her, I either just bombed and moved on or I capped things, I was good enough at bombing to do it decently well and MoF is so resource generous in that regard that there was little to slow me down outside of the seriously hard stuff. This is a spell that does stuff, it's practically the same on Lunatic.

[Sea Opening "Moses's Miracle"](#)

I mean yeah not literally, but today I learnt that the extra knives added basically do nothing, like I moved fast enough to keep a consistent stream without the second closer knife line hitting me, I moved slow enough so that I never caught up to the far out knife lines either, like as long as you have the speed that I had, or something relative to that, then it's basically the same as dodging single line of knives, just like the normal version. Sure the cutbacks are shorter, you have less time to make them, but it's not like you need to do wide cutbacks to begin with, this spell is a perfect tool for teaching shallow cutbacks because A. It's necessary to beat the spell and B. The long straight knife lines, at their pace, are incredibly easy to cut back on. Easy one and done.

[Preparation "Star Ritual to Call the Godly Winds"](#)

This was the spell I struggled the most with I think, like it's basically just the midboss spell again, but with larger bullets and while I was getting to grips with micro dodging, this one was still a little scary thanks to the blue lines. My positioning wasn't the best and I'd often be pressured by a blue wall, I wasn't quick enough to get away, bomb, move on. It's not like it ever ended any runs, but it was something I couldn't just go in and cap like basically everything else. Of course on subsequent 1ccs after the first, it became a non factor.

[Preparation "Summon Takeminakata"](#)

After midnon, I expected this to be just as bad but it's not, like I don't even know if the density is raised that much if at all, the gaps between the red bullets actually look the same size, but maybe there's some perception business to do with the new speed and how things appear to be scaled based on eye tracking blah blah blah. Some sort of back end visual trickery, intended or otherwise, that could make the spell appear denser despite it actually being similar in density relative to the normal version, that is what I'm trying to say. Either way, the density isn't the threat alone, the spell combined with it is what makes this potentially scary. Density X Speed = Pressure, so this is the sort of spell that'll mush you against the bottom if you can't keep up, that's what I experienced with my miss and then I proceeded to play more aggressively and capped it. The speed increase didn't catch me off guard nor did I feel all that endangered, I've capped Lunatic DVoWG, which is what seriously high pressure looks like, this is nothing compared to that.

[Miracle "God's Wind"](#)

Boring bye

[Great Miracle "Yasaka's Divine Wind"](#)

I'm sorry, it's just more of the same, I don't know what the fuck to say about this spell, it's bland, it's beige flavoured porridge, it's not exciting, it's not difficult, it's not even all that visually impressive, it just exists as the end to the fight, where even on Lunatic all you have to do is press right, then press left, then press right again then press left again. It's like super strict static spells when you follow their routes, they practically complete themselves, but this spell ain't super strict static so even if you fuck up, you can recover with relatively little effort, like I did when I went far out by accident. Idk, Nome tell me what I'm missing.

[Esoterica "Nine Syllable Stabs"](#)

Never played SA extra, never intended to. I don't like Koishi, I don't like the fanbase surrounding her, it's cultish and puts psychopathy on a pedestal like it's an appealing personality trait rather than a serious mental illness. I don't care for her theme, Heian Alien is Koishi's theme but done infinitely better, IMO. There, HEAVY negative bias towards Koishi so obviously I have no experience against this Sanae either. I didn't really have clear expectations going into it, I had seen her spells a long ass time ago so I was very vaguely aware of the laser net spell at least, the other 2 were complete unknowns. This spell was... hmm well it's not hard, but it's tricky in that without knowledge on the laser net, it would seem like a very troublesome spell, but in reality, it's got a very easy safe spot and a massive lack of pressure, so taking it on with knowledge is practically a guaranteed cap.

I remember where I saw this spell, it was a crazy graze video where someone just moved along the screen edges with the laser getting stupid amounts of graze from it, that was cool.

[Miracle "Miracle Fruit"](#)

It's like an Ichirin non, but it's somehow more threatening and less threatening. It's big and loud and RIGHT IN YOUR FACE, but in practice it's kinda lacking in pressure beyond the initial dodge, like sure the bullets are very close, but the path they take requires very little movement and thought to dodge. It's pretty much the textbook definition of all bark, no bite. At least it looks imposing.

[Divine Virtue "Bumper Crop Rice Shower"](#)

This was fun I guess, like I find it hard to have fun with Touhou anymore, since I'm so critical beyond the point of being fair that I make everything miserable for myself by calling it trash, but like spells like this, they're not special, they're not amazing, but they're completely inoffensive and that is enough for me to enjoy myself. It's simple, it's not very threatening or complicated, it looks nice, it's balanced. I could be more specific about my criteria, but honestly just meeting those points is enough for me. Sadly Touhou is INCREDIBLY poorly balanced across the whole series so I find myself disliking the games the deeper I go. I mean sometimes it's funny, like the whole Aya and Sane difficulty curve thing, on the surface it's fun to poke at that point and laugh about it, "Oh good ol' silly ZUN, must have been drinking too much! Or maybe not enough, idk." But then you dig deeper and you look at

something like PWG on Lunatic and you're left to think "Wow... this is really not cool, it's a spell with absurd levels of sustained RNG pressure that demands pretty much perfection at a Lunatic level to endure and capture, this isn't a spell you can become reasonably consistent at; the end of the day, it's RNG that determines your time." That conversation is a lot less fun and it's spawned of imbalance, it's interesting for sure, but it doesn't exactly make me want to run MoF or anything since it's definitely a flaw to have significant points of imbalance in your game, and the more of these things crop up in a single game, the more the scales tip until the negative moments outweigh the positives. That's been my experience as I've gotten to know more about Touhou, I'm thankful for the knowledge, I love to know more about it, about how the difficulty curve is broken and how balance is a non-existent concept a lot of the time, it's fun to know these things and understand why, but it's also a knock on quality and I don't want to play low quality games. Are Touhou games low quality? Well besides VD which is provably so, it's impossible for me to say, because I haven't put in the legwork to truly determine that, nor do I intend to, since there's nothing but negativity waiting at the end of that road.

Another random tangent.

[Snake Sign "Great Snake Swimming in the Clouds"](#)

IDK who it was along Cirno's route, Okuu and Alice are two at least that come to mind, I think Meiling as well, all characters I've fought in videos using Cirno so naturally I've fought Cirno's stage 1 many times. That is Sanae, she is INFINITELY easier than Patchy and therefore she's not able to gate me from playing on Hard/Lunatic as Cirno.

[Miracle "Miracle of Fafrotskies"](#)

Cirno is hilariously low tier in PvP Soku, she's got a lot of problems and not many positives, and some of those positives are double-edged swords, like her ability to float being good for dodging low attacks or projectiles sometimes, but also stops you from fast falling when you need to after using a second dash, so yeah give and take. In story however, even if you include the SWR cast as well, she's a top tier story pick. Her bullets range from decent enough to great priority and some of them have a large quantity as well, so she can easily overwhelm plenty of opponents with just bullet spam alone, her 236C charged up in time with the opponent getting knocked down can put even the Lunatic story AI into an infinite loop. You knock them down once, then you just charge the 236C until they get up and as soon as they press a button, let 'er rip. That's the good thing about it, that you can charge it for a really long time unlike most specials which have a single charge level, then the move is automatically used. Her ability to hold onto multiple specials like that, her variety of bullets, her solid screen-filling ability, her floating, her really nice f.5A and her unique charged 5A, her smaller size, she is just excellent for story. I actually have fun playing Cirno of all characters in Soku.

[Miracle "Divine Wind of the Kouan Era"](#)

Never needed to do these, so I never did 'em. I only got to the EX stage on my scorefile last week, so yeah. Marisa and Reimu both gave me a lot of trouble with one of their EX spells each, but that was a long time ago. I am better at the game now than I was back then, so surely Sanae can't be that hard right? First spell was easy. My first attempt was figuring out what to do, second was employing that, I figured I just needed to stay up close and snap ASAP since I didn't want to have to dodge the blue bullets, turns out that was the right choice. I died to the last shot when the bullet curtain increased in speed and density, I didn't want to fall back but I couldn't dodge at the required speed to maintain my ground so RIP that run. The next few runs were just trying to fall back successfully without losing too much distance to land a clean snap, that didn't work so I finally decided to fall back all the way and just do a full zoom shot for the last one. Worked easy, next.

[Frog Sign "Wily Toad"](#)

This is just RNG, the only good thing to say about this spell is that it's cool to fight Sanae's bomb that you're usually using. It's a great recreation and it's probably accurate to what the opponent would have to face, we play as Aya/Hatate, so it makes sense that we, a Youkai, would be on the receiving end of Sanae's bombs. The thematic and visual elements of the spell is where the positives end. The explosion into a snap to avoid death is fine, but the timing can be janky as if you snap too early, you won't cancel that many bullets and if you snap too late, you just die, so it's a game of chicken on a VERY small timer. It's not reasonable to expect perfect snaps every time, leading into the second problem. THE RNG. Due to the timer of the spell, you NEED to charge as soon as you can or you won't make it in time to cancel the next bomb, so you have to spot dodge at charge speed in an INCREDIBLY dense field of bullets. That is not reasonable. It's RNG whether or not you survive long enough to take the safety snap and the time I spent doing this was literally just me rolling the dice until the game decided I was allowed to win. No progression, no lesson, no room to improve in a reasonable manner beyond literally unlocking ultra instinct levels of dodging...

But hey, I could be totally wrong, I was gung ho about my strat, maybe there is a way to survive the bomb without using the camera, a more attrition focused strategy rather than the quick rush that I went for.

[Youkai Extermination "Youkai Power Spoiler"](#)

This is another instance of "It's not amazing or anything, but it's inoffensive and overall pleasant." I enjoyed my time with this spell once I understood it. It's thematically appropriate, Youkai powers are drained from Aya/Hatate, in the form of danmaku energy that is instantly converted to Sanae's side, then sucked into her. The bullets come out from you and go to her in a neat formation, it's elegant, it's simple and it's effective. It's a rhythmic spell, where you dodge from behind, but there's no pressure from the top and the behind dodging isn't random, it's linear so it's more of a consistency test. Using the camera on the attack takes a chunk out of the current wave, but it doesn't change the way you move, you'll still tap to the side as you would if the bullets were still there, so no pressure to match some kind of timer.

The spell is chill enough in fact, that it's very satisfying to hold onto the camera shots for the wave crossover points where you can get some meaty shots.

I do like the few variations that we do get, but I kinda wish there were more, or that they were at least spaced evenly, rather than 2,6,2 for the different behaviours the bullets took.

Good simple, admittedly easy but fun spell that looks cool and is thematically sound.

[Snake Sign "Bind Snake Come On"](#)

Fuck this one as well. I get that you're supposed to just sit in the middle and the lasers at the very least are consistent in that regard, but I still have no idea what controls the horizontal lasers and if you can predict their patterns in a way that allows you to proactively dodge rather than reactively dodge, because news flash, my attention is a little split trying to deal with the tight laser net I'm being penned into while also avoiding the talismans. Said talismans can make it hard enough to stay in the middle when the vertical lasers come down, so adding the annoyance of having to look away from them to visually track the horizontal lasers... It just leaves a bad taste in my mouth. Clearly I managed to do it twice, that was enough to prove that doing that repeatedly could net a no item cap, but I wanted to get this video done today, so no way I was gonna waste my time and energy grinding out the no item on something that was annoying me.

[Snake Sign "Green Snake Come On"](#)

DON'T BOOP THE SNOOT.

Sanae is a boss I had mixed feelings about, on the one hand I knew her boss fight was arguably the easiest of all the stage 5 bosses, on the other I have no experience fighting Lunatic Sanae, plus she's late in DS Extra which had proven to be a problem in the past with Reimu and Marisa both giving me a rough time. SA extra is something I've never attempted and while midbosses usually aren't hard, well I didn't know what to expect going into this. Both positive and negative expectations, going in and... it turned out only very slightly worse than expected. I had a clear hiccup on "Night with Overly Bright Guest Stars" and "Bind Snake Come On" from ISC gave me trouble enough that I used items for it, but everything else was a quick and easy affair, a nice deal considering 22 spells is quite a lot.

I have a tracker to keep an eye on my progress and that tracker is starting to dwindle. I've long since passed the halfway point on covering all the characters and so I decided to check how much more I have to do. I have 30 characters with spells left, one of them is Tojiko who can't hold her own video so that's effectively 29 videos left maximum, which would have this series ending in late September this year. I do intend to speed things along when the chance arises, pairing or even grouping multiple characters together for a single video if the theme aligns nicely, lowering the potential video count down quite a bit. It's hard to say "we're in the home stretch" but every week is a step closer to that. It's been a year since I changed to this video format, and since then I've had only a single innovation, so I welcome the ride to the end knowing I lost all the steam I had ages ago, I'll still put in the same effort I've always

done and these videos are at a point where I'm satisfied with them, so changes or not, it's all fine.

And so with that, I await next week.

Sourcing:

[Intro art](#), [Ending art](#). Thumbnail portrait from MoF, 24 artworks total.

Music:

[The Primal Scene of Japan the Girl Saw](#)

[Faith is for the Transient People](#)

There I did your waifu ya fuckin' traitor, ARE YOU HAPPY NOW PARSEE?!