Spriting Guidelines for the Belnades Sisters

I don't think I'm up to the job of drawing sprites for my Belnades sisters project. I've never had much patience for drawing, and the coding is going to be a big job in and of itself. So I'm gonna need to ask someone else to tackle the job for me. I've provided old illustrations of roughly how I envision them to look, but I'll admit that there are inaccuracies, as I used a preset character designer for the job and it didn't have all the options I wanted (in addition to the issue of there being only one available body type, which wasn't even really the one I wanted — these are Sonic OCs and should have those sort of proportions), and I tend to consider personality and powers a higher priority than appearance when it comes to making OCs anyways. Here are some things I want whoever tackles the job of drawing the sprites for the Belnades sisters to keep in mind — basically, some notes on their personalities, character traits, and mannerisms, as well as their power quirks.

All four Belnades sisters' power is derived from the necklaces they wear, which they inherited from their late mother, Jane Belnades. (The only reason Jane had all four necklaces was that she was the sole survivor of an attempted genocide on her bloodline (well, not quite the *sole* survivor — there was at least one other who survived due to living in Japan, the absolute last place Mysto would look, and would later be the grandmother of Yoko Belnades)… and when the sorceress who killed the rest of the Belnades bloodline, Mysto Majora Kijadhimov, sent a massive horde of coyotes, the Dastardly Pack, to finish the job, Jane and her husband James ended up giving their lives to ensure that all of their children made it out alive. It's kind of a sensitive subject for them. Especially since Mysto is a close friend and ally of Dr. Eggman, who she sees as a kindred spirit… yes, she's come to blows with Sonic and company and the Belnades sisters multiple times… But enough of that, it's kind of irrelevant to the scope of these sprinting guidelines.) The Belnades sisters should be clutching the gemstone of their necklace in one hand whenever they're firing or charging their Holy Bolt or using their special powers (Annie's healing, Sonja's chronokinesis (time control), Flora's spells, or Cassandra's mimicry (well, Cassandra only needs to clutch her necklace when firing her Copy Bolt or activating a mimicry)). They also share a double-jump which involves spinning their bodies really fast like a top so their tails can generate extra lift (well, each of the sisters only has one tail, so they can't outright fly like Tails can). I want to have the "EATSHIT" sprites for CrossMomentum compatibility — especially for Annie, as one of her abilities requires her to be knocked down. Also, the necklaces are meant to have teardrop-shaped gemstones, but that wasn't an option in the character designer I used.

Annie is rather timid by nature and easily frightened, but she's not a *coward* per se; she'll still willingly face danger head-on for the greater good and/or for the sake of her friends and allies, but she'll be nervous and on edge while doing so. (It does help that she's well aware that she can take fairly ridiculous amounts of damage that would be enough to kill most people twice over and still survive to fight another day, though; if she's stuck in a truly terrible and life-threatening situation that she has no way out of by herself, she's still likely to break down in fearful hysterics and start crying, screaming for help at the top of her lungs, begging for her life, etc., etc.) Annie's aware that she's attractive, but is rather modest about it. As one would expect from a healer, she's incredibly compassionate, even to her enemies (even if you provoke her into a fight and she beats you up, she'll probably heal your injuries afterwards), but she *can* be quite aggressive if she feels slighted, jilted, or threatened. Deep down, however, much of this aggressive side stems from insecurity; Annie secretly worries that she's not worthy of being close friends with Sonic and the gang or of being Tails's love interest (in particular, she's a bit sensitive about not being anywhere near as talented at mechanics, engineering, and other such technology-related fields as Tails is, so she might get especially insecure and aggressive if a girl who *does* share Tails's aptitude for those subjects shows up... and that goes double if the other girl actually takes an interest in him...)

Annie's supposed to have four bangs arranged in a square shape, but that wasn't an option in the designer I used. Her fashion sense is pretty spot-on, though; she prefers T-shirts and shorts. And yes, she does intentionally wear clothes that match her fur color. She has a slight mischievous streak and enjoys teasing people that way (though not to *nearly* the same extent as Cassandra). And yes, she does wear the same kind of shoes and gloves as Tails, because she likes and idolizes him that darn much. As for body shape, Annie's a bit pudgier than her sisters, despite her healing powers burning a lot of calories (her sisters' powers burn a lot of calories as well (with the mild exception of Flora's), and Annie doesn't overeat or anything (heck, her favorite food is blueberries, and those aren't exactly high-fat), but somehow, she's still *very slightly* on the chubby side). Some specific sprites Annie will need will include clutching her necklace in one hand while reaching out to touch someone with the other, both standing and kneeling (for her healing and revival abilities) and carrying a character in her arms, with another set having her clutch her necklace while carrying someone; she also needs to have jumping sprites while carrying, since unlike Dirfex, she can actually jump and double-jump while carrying someone (the catch being that she can only carry friends and carrying robots and other heavy characters slows her down).

Sonja is generally wise and level-headed, and despite being able to see into the past and future (think Shulk from Xenoblade Chronicles), she is *not* a fatalist; she knows full well that the future isn't set in stone, and anything she foresees in the future can fail to happen under the right circumstances. However, Sonja does have a somewhat weak sense of self-preservation; she's self-sacrificing to a fault, has a notable reckless streak, and is a *bit* too reliant on her precognition and chronokinesis to keep herself safe from harm. Her tendencies to neglect her own safety and well-being have gotten her kidnapped or nearly flat-out killed on several occasions, creating huge headaches for her siblings and her boyfriend, Reuben Synk, when they have to bail her out of trouble for the umpteenth time. Annie may be danger-prone, but she doesn't go actively *looking* for trouble like Sonja does. (It doesn't help that just about every power thief who catches wind of Sonja's power tends to start preying upon her, given how much potential the power to foresee the future and control time has for wreaking havoc and subjugating people; Sonja herself would never abuse her power like that, but the same can't be said for her many enemies. Knowing that her power could cause catastrophe in the wrong hands has actually made Sonja slightly suicidal, exacerbating the aforementioned reckless streak and extremely self-sacrificial tendencies.)

Note on the physical appearance: Sonja is supposed to wear a toga and have twin ponytails in her hairdo. I forgot the ponytails, but the toga straight-up wasn't an option in the character designer and I had to go with mummy wrappings to convey the idea that Sonja has a *very* antiquated fashion sense... as in, she likes clothing that's *centuries* out of fashion, with Roman-style togas being her favorite. No, she doesn't wear much under the toga (just a bra and underwear at most... sometimes not even that). Yes, she *has* suffered wardrobe malfunctions. Yes, it tends to be awkward. No, she's not budging on the fashion sense. She really likes to wear togas. Don't ask me where she gets them; probably the same supplier that college fraternities use for their toga parties. Her body shape should be somewhat slender, I suppose. As for action sprites, Sonja should have sprites where she's clutching her necklace in very deep concentration for the default version of her rewind (which immobilizes her), as well as some sort of dodging sprites for her Chrono Evasion. Sonja should also have some power-using sprites where she's visibly sweating and severely exerting herself, for the heavier versions of her time slow ability. (Annie could also have such sprites for if she's below 65% energy when starting to revive someone, but that's not a high priority.)

Flora's deeply religious (not in an obnoxious way, though) and can draw upon her faith for comfort, so she's normally somewhat unflappable, resolute, and dignified. She's also deeply caring and sensitive to the needs of others. (However, she does have a severe phobia of arthropods, especially ants, to the point where if she's confronted by a bug-like adversary (especially the giant queen ant which captured and nearly are her as a child — long story), it's gonna take some effort for her to stand her ground. This might show up in an Easter egg or something. Maybe she could look more nervous around bug-like characters and enemies, like Motobug.) Flora does have an exuberant and energetic side, though, but that side of her is mostly only shown to people she's close to, like her siblings and her boyfriend, Phillip Schneider.

Flora's dress is supposed to be one-piece, but I remember not being satisfied with the other dress icons in the designer — there was nothing that looked enough like a knee-high white variation of Princess Peach's dress or a simple dress. Flora is very short due to childhood malnutrition tied to the hungry ant monster incident. Incidentally, the spells I've given Flora in SRB2 — Holy Flame, Blue Splash, and Holy Lightning — are the exact same spells that Sypha and Yoko Belnades use in Castlevania 3: Dracula's Curse and Castlevania: Dawn of Sorrow (this is not a coincidence, as Flora is Sypha's descendant), and Flora should strike essentially the same poses as Yoko does when she casts the spells (well, she should make a similar motion to what Sypha does in Castlevania Judgment when casting Frost Shield and Icicle Blades, but if she transitions it all the way to Blue Splash, she should use Yoko's pose for that… okay, maybe Flora should be a *bit* less flamboyant than Yoko; she's not trying to put on a show for the audience). The sprites I have in mind are available on the Castlevania wiki; I linked to the pages for the Belnades spells in the main design document. (And, yes, the flame blast, icicle, and lightning orb objects that Flora generates should use the sprites straight out of Castlevania: Dawn of Sorrow as well. I tried ripping those sprites from the wiki, but it proved to be a hassle to isolate the objects from Yoko. The Holy Flame sprites will have to be split into the larger explosion and the longer flame, as I plan for those to have different properties in SRB2, which will necessitate them being separate objects. The ice obelisks for Frost Shield should be a lower-polygon version of the model from Castlevania Judgment, but the wiki doesn't have an image of said model by itself, so, uh, you'll have to improvise a bit.) Flora's barrier spell should have her reaching forward with her right arm (like Annie does for her healing, except directed at a point in space rather than a person) to project the barrier while clutching her necklace with her left hand (for the wall version), or thrusting her arm into the air or towards the ground (I haven't decided

which) for the dome version (or she could just be deep in concentration like Annie and Sonja are for their powers that require them to stay in place).

Cassandra is extremely confident in herself — her looks, her skills, her powers, etc. She's fearless, cocky, and shamelessly flirtatious (though she's *not* a nymphomaniac and stops at teasing; she reserves actual intimacy for her boyfriend, Arthur Calibur). Indeed, Cassandra believes that showing fear or pain is a sign of weakness, so if anything does manage to scare or hurt her, she'll suppress those emotions and get *mad* at the transgressor. (Thus, her pain and death sprites should look less shocked or hurt and more furious that she's been hit or defeated — less "aw crud" and more "I'll make you pay for that!".) She does have a more mature side that she shows in truly serious situations, though, and she's a great person to turn to for knowledge and advice. Incidentally, Cassandra is good friends with Princess Peach and the Mario Bros. (she spent some time working for Peach as a diplomat for the Mushroom Kingdom after her parents died), so that could lead to some Easter eggs.

The appearance I gave Cassandra in the designer is actually mostly spot-on, and the only issues I have are the "one body shape not allowing for diversity" (she should be a *little* taller and larger-chested (what? She's supposed to be sexy!)), "the necklace should be teardrop-shaped", and "why is the chest/belly fur sticking out from beneath the clothes" problems that her sisters have. Canonically, when Cassandra mimics someone, she takes on elements of their physical appearance, including their outfit. I am *not* going to ask you to make variant sprites of Cassandra dressed up as and performing the skills of every character who's ever been posted to the SRB2 message board. That would be **completely insane**. Coding Cassandra will be enough of a hassle as is (I plan to attach energy costs to the abilities Cassandra borrows from other characters, both to stay true to her canonical limitations and to try to achieve some measure of balance in a character who can literally do just about anything, and that might force me to essentially copy-paste everyone's code into Cassandra's .pk3 just so I can attach energy costs to various abilities, oh God help me…). Instead, my plan is to have the sprites of whoever Cassandra is copying or mimicking overlaid as a translucent aura of sorts over Cassandra's sprite, and that aura will be performing the specific actions of the copied/mimicked character while Cassandra herself performs more generic actions such as Superman-like levitation, throwing punches and kicks, diving, making weapon-swinging motions, etc. This will still require a lot of sprites, but similar actions will be able to share the same sprites on Cassandra's end (and she won't actually have to change her clothes), saving a *lot* of time and effort.