

Why Your Friends in Particular Suck By: Not Dagda

This is exactly what it says on the tin, but let me expand on it a little more before getting into the meat of it. This is not a fan fiction, poem, or anything with a semblance of story. I've replayed Apocalypse a few times, mostly because I consider the game to be on the same level as crack. It's definitely killing my brain but I can't stop doing it. Every run I've gone Massacre route, and eventually I felt like trying to document the actions and words of the game's Partners to fully express why I think so little of (Most) of the cast. Everything listed here is pretty much the main reason I listen to Dagda, without this all his stuff is just gibberish to me.

I was originally going to do yet another playthrough for this event to make sure I didn't miss anything, but eventually got bored (surprisingly) and resorted to taking a set of notes that I had fully finished from another playthrough and expanding on that, which is what you're about to read. Before it was just a list but for the event I added some extra paragraphs to each partner section just to make my thoughts on them clearer. Everything should be self-explanatory, but I know where I am I'll cover my bases. "Notes/Quotes" is anything mostly neutral about the character that I felt is worth saying regardless, and obviously direct Quotes from within the game. Mostly written in the order they happen in game. "Good" and "Bad" is the stuff they do IN UNIVERSE that I consider helpful and unhelpful, generally only attributed to them if Nanashi couldn't get the exact same effect on his own. "Gameplay" is the reason I specified In-Universe earlier, I'm not telling you Nozomi is a good friend to Nanashi because Photo Flash is helpful, those are completely different situations. They are however, still worth noting to give a general idea on their performances in battle.

Hopefully my autism will bring you some amusement, and sorry if my formatting is shit I haven't written anything "Professionally" in years at this point.

Oh also all of this is based on the English script, obviously. I don't speak moonrune so if they're different/better/worse in the original Japanese script that's cool, but I do not care.

Asahi

Notes/Quotes:

- "We need to become Hunters, if only to honor Nikkari and Manabu"

- "How can he not be proud that his daughter wants to follow in his footsteps?" She says, after just reporting the deaths of 2 veteran hunters and asking to become one herself

- Can't come up with the idea of recruiting demons herself and needs the protag to figure it out for her

- Literally retarded, states the obvious multiple times

- Childhood friend love interest, in an SMT game. Part of a love triangle later because of course

- Called the association for backup before warning Flynn about the Divine Powers, even if it meant nothing in the end (Even then, it's something you would've been able to do too)

- "I just wanted to make a name for myself as a hunter."

- "What a Magnificent Ass."

- "Can't get what Gaston said out of my head. Am I just a glorified Groupie following you around? I never thought about it. I know I'm just there for support, not on the frontlines like you... I just thought becoming an actual Hunter would be enough..."

- "Oh, Dad'll be fine. Death couldn't kill him"

- "You're right, Gast--er, SIR Gaston. I'm useless without Nanashi. I get in the way. But despite that, I don't want to be away from you guys."

- "So, no! You can't have him! I've got a debt to repay!"

- Once again gets used as bait by Adramelch after rescuing Flynn, but you're given the choice to not give a shit and attack anyway.

- "I don't usually wear makeup!"

^ Half the cosmetic relics specify her as using it or at least know how to use it

- "Does this mean that I'm the only one not pulling her weight in battle...? ...No, I'm trying my hardest. Sure, I'm not much help when it comes to laying down the hurt, but I know how to heal really well, right?" -Inbox #45

^ Hate to break it to ya, but no, you don't. Isabaeu completely usurps Asahi's role as healer by also having Mediarama *and* Diarahan, something Asahi doesn't even have, on top of actual attack potential. All she has going for her is Me Patra and Cheer, which still isn't really much.

- One of the first to stand up to defend Flynn after beating Krishna in the Divine Powers (Whether she truly did anything I'm not sure, but this is a step up from her usual game since she singles herself out rather than referring to a group)

Gameplay:

+ Healer, likely to spend turns topping off health

- Low damage, nothing to do if you're already healed

- Demons can refuse to heal, either attacking the enemy instead or taunting, raising attack before their turn

- Can't fight without demons

- Does not Awaken before the route split

Good:

+ Gets eaten by Shesha in your place

Bad:

- (If you choose a name that isn't "Nanashi") Asahi will continually call you Nanashi even after being told it meant "No-name". Whether that's bad or just neutral is subjective, sure, but I'd sure as shit be insulted.

- Suggests going to Sky Tower while you're still weaklings, only to narrowly avoid death by Flynn saving you (Dagda forces you, but Asahi brings up the idea and likely would've tried guiltling you to anyway)

- Does a complete 180 and goes from wanting to be hunters to honor fallen comrades to an impatient retard willing to listen to Odin for more power to rise the ranks. While you can say no to his request and walk away, if Asahi is your partner she will insist you go back and listen to him.

^Only realizes it's a bad idea at the very end when Dagda, a person she knows barely anything about, is name dropped

-Her existence was viable bait to get Flynn, who had a good chance at defeating the Divine Powers right there, to drop his weapon in surrender.

-Is the reason Boss dies, for if she didn't randomly decide he couldn't take care of himself and storm off he wouldn't have died to take a hit for her.

Surprisingly, Asahi's not the absolute worst partner in my opinion. Bottom 3 for sure, likely number 2, but at least she knew when to kill herself unlike someone else here. I remember trying really hard to see if there was anything outright good/helpful that she did herself, and the best I got was calling the association while Flynn was fighting the Divine Powers. Even then, that might've just made things worse by giving the DP an audience and forcing Flynn's hand harder because now if he didn't take the bait everyone would know he's willing to let a little girl die. I don't recall any other attempts at being directly helpful to any cause, much less any that helped.

Aside from that, I personally find her character to be more grating than anything. She acts as a mouthpiece for what would be a Bonds Nanashi and as you can guess, that doesn't go over well for someone like me on top of every other problem mouthpieces have. Her dying was the best thing she ever did, and it being to save Nanashi is only half the reason for it. At least interactions with her help reveal Nanashi's canon characteristics, but random trash in the streets of Tokyo do that better.

In terms of Gameplay she's just okay. Keep in mind I did Massacre and never Bonds, so certain characters have never awakened for me, Asahi included. I will try to keep that from weighing down my opinions on their gameplay usage since just because they don't Awaken on Massacre doesn't mean they don't awaken Period. If nothing else, it'll tell you how long it takes for them to Awaken on Bonds since obviously they can't do that after the route split.

Navarre

Notes/Quotes:

-"I happened upon a lady Hunter bathing in a river and I lost my balance and my belt caught my ankles and..."

Gameplay:

+Amazing type coverage thanks to battle items

+When not attacking, he's directly buffing you

-Falls off late game as the spell stones do not surpass Med damage (Sans hama/mudo)

-Isabaeu is a straight up upgrade to him, no reason to use him when she's an option

-Does not Awaken, at all apparently

Good:

-none

+Being able to see him

Bad:

-none

On a completely different note, Navarre is the Partner I have the least to say about. He just, doesn't DO anything. He's a mascot character they knew wouldn't actually sell so they almost immediately wrote in Chiro to take that spot instead. There is at least ONE thing I can talk about related to him, and that's the Jade Dagger. The reason I didn't put that as a redeeming feat of his is the idea that theoretically, he's not the only one who can use it before Nanashi becomes a true Godslayer.

Oberon just says it's "Meant for the undead" so you could potentially just recruit a Poltergeist and have it use the knife instead, or go crazy and have a true American Patriot use it to break up walls like Leon Kennedy. And seeing as Oberon made the damn thing it's possible that ANY demon could hold and use it, I just single out the undead ones specifically to be safe. The one thing Navarre does and he not only does it very shittily by being arrogant, but Nanashi has so many more options than him.

Nozomi

Notes/Quotes:

- "Homeslice went bananacakes"

- Only slightly more competent than Asahi

- "I think we should keep knowledge of Dagda to ourselves. There's just too much room for misunderstanding."

- Tells you how to reach ame-no-habakiri, but the method is so obvious that it's unneeded (Instructions are literally in a chest)

^ Said instructions are also incredibly obvious and if they weren't she doesn't give you a hint on them either way.

- Danu: "Perhaps the Creator God is holding humanity back from it's full potential As Krishna said, slaves to their own bodies and prisoners of this universe.

...But it's still life."

- "Gotta make sure the Forest stays safe!" (She says as she plans to leave it behind, never visit again without Nanashi making the active decision to, instead of hanging back to stop the literal flaming wall of trees)

- "But you could stand to work with us more, Gaston. You're not a one-man army."

- "Ignore Gaston. Contrary to what he may say, no one can go it alone. It's only when we work together that we accomplish great things." - Girl who has no good feats listed as of this point outside of purely gameplay, and 3 good feats across the entire board listed.

- "If we're talking about someone who just follows people around, it'd be Senor Spookadour."

^Implying a ghost booger can and should be able to do as much as a living human, and forgetting his important role in removing soul dagger barriers, something that's debatably only possible with him at this point (Even if he isn't the only one who can he's still doing it)

- "I wish I didn't have to. I really do. I feel awful. But I had to do what's in the best interest of the people of Tokyo, and right now that's band together. If people start thinking there's a traitor among us now, everything we've worked so hard for will fall apart. I did what I had to do to prevent that." -Inbox #24

- "Must feel real tough. Bunch of adults ganging up on a couple of kids." >Nozomi's glowing performance at having your back

- "Hey, I'm just a fairy queen. Virtuous wasn't one of the job requirements."

- "As fun as this romcom routine is, let's just get out of here already."

- "Nice work, homeslice!"

- "For humans to truly be free, we need to take gods and demons out of the equation."

Gameplay:

+Focuses Gun element, has a couple ailment skills

+Photo Flash is consistently good

+Blank Bullet tears hordes

-Weak skillset as the game goes on

-Does not Awaken before the route split

^That's especially important for her as this makes her a terrible goddess choice. You can at least say someone like Asahi as a goddess is good without awakening because free heals but not Nozomi, because she's an early partner none of her moves go beyond High damage (And that's if any of them do, I'm 90% sure they're all Med and don't feel like checking)

^^If I havent removed this take it with a lot of salt, Im looking it up and some sources say she does awaken pre-split but I swear to god I dont remember her ever awakening. Even if she does most of her attacks are still naturally weaker than others, so the boost offsets it rather than making it stronger when compared to other awakenings

Good:

+Absorbed the remainder of Inanna so she couldn't control Toki again

Bad:

-While getting unrelated photos, the fairy forest was attacked and burned without her or Danu's protection

-Everything after Tsukiji Konganji

^All of it

-Decided it would be a good idea to tell EVERYONE in the Hunter's Association that Nanashi and Asahi are the SOLE reason the Divine Powers are out. Telling everyone that two hunters, rookies and children at that, are the reason that 1)Flynn's Gone 2)The Divine Powers are out 3)Shesa is a thing and 4)Why Tokyo is in an even worse state than before. All to "Get past it and move on" and "Act like adults and take responsibility for their actions". This is, by a massive lead, the biggest fuck you your partners do to you. Nozomi would've been the entire reason the

Association falls apart, stops trusting each other, and even more people just give up and hand themselves to the DP for a way out.

The bad section used to be a lot longer, I cut out most of it because it's just expanding on the Cafe Florida incident so I could move it here for brevity. It is easily the most defining fuck up out of all the partners. Nozomi is who I was referring to earlier as being the absolute worst Partner in the game's story. She is not just an ankle weight, she is straight up poison by actively doing stuff that goes AGAINST the group. At least later on with Toki, that stuff was done while she was outwardly stating herself to not be on your side, just working with you because your goals aligned.

She claims to "Have your backs" as if her word means *anything* to the Hunters. She says it like she's some legend to them that they all know and respect when in reality she's some bitch who suddenly left the hunters to fuck off to some place of vague-existence called the "Fairy Forest" to be their "Queen". Best case scenario she'd convince 3 of them to not immediately behead you with her tits, at worst her word would make the situation worse because it's coming from someone who abandoned them for god knows how long to help protect demons under the guise of being innocent fairies.

I cannot stress enough how retarded of a move this is, especially with it being hypocrisy when you remember she's the one who suggested keeping dagda a secret and that there was "too much room for misunderstanding". The only reason you don't get skinned and beheaded by the hunters is because Shinjuku is attacked almost immediately and you're sent there as a test of loyalty because literally no one else has access to their comps now. They said you had a second chance before but be honest, hunters would have gone after you on their own accord thinking Fujiwara was betraying them too and then you'd have hunter blood on your hands for defending yourself at worst, or the association would be in further shambles because Fujiwara would have to give special protection to who is seen as a traitor.

Aside from all that, she's surprisingly the first gameplay Partner that I'd say is outright good. Some people would say that about Navarre instead and I can understand, but personally I find his buffs too inconsistent, and he doesn't do a lot of damage with the stones even when every attack you're using is at the same level. It all comes down to preference I suppose, but man Blank Bullet is the only thing that keeps her in that Main Partner slot for me until I get a later Partner.

Hallelujah

Notes/Quotes:

-A spy for the Ashura-Kai, although it goes nowhere

-"Eh... Being able to see you (Navarre) isn't really a check in the plus column..."

-"How anyone could trust a demon is beyond me" -Random Hunter pre-reveal

-"Bullshit, I'd know if the Ashura-Kai were in on this."

- "Tarted-up clown"? Can't believe you got fashion advice from an angel!"
- Is actually half demon, not revealed until the Azrael fight in Mikado
- "I lived in fear that it would come out. I'm sorry I didn't tell you."
- "Aren't you scared? I'm a demon! That has to at least be weird."
^Asahi: "Not... really. I mean, Nanashi hasn't been human for a while now, so..."
^^Nozomi: "Dude, no one cares if you're a demon."
- Breaks up a fight between Gaeans and Ahura-Kai members in Camp Ichigaya. Doesn't really help you or do anything seeing as it was petty insults, and feels more like a cheap attempt to make him seem useful last minute
- "I don't care whose side I'm on, or what enemies I make. So long as I make those decisions myself. I help whoever I feel is right"
- "That dude talks like someone from a shitty anime or something..." -Inbox #63
- Takes credit for Abe's defeat regardless of if he was your main partner at the time

Gameplay:

+ Literally just Chiro pre-reveal, you can replace him with that demon entirely on a NG+
+ Demon form has incredibly strong Agi and Bufu attacks
+ Awakens pre-split
- If you have to use him pre-reveal outside of the harder difficulties, you suck.
- No help without Demons (When that matters at least)
- Demon form comes in very late, after you've already had at least a taste of every Partner in the game, and by that point frankly there's better options.

Good:

- None

Bad:

(This one is so hypocritical that it deserves to be here rather than as a note)

-(To Gaston) "What do you know about any of this? You'd never be brave enough to stand up like she just did."

^Big talk, but it's said to who's arguably the most courageous man in the group outside Nanashi. The man who was willing to fight Shesha alone. The man who leapt to Toki's rescue and attacked Inanna's remnants. Coming from the kid who has done literally nothing so far. Not even an attempt that backfired, because if he did that than at least he had the courage to try *something*.

(Quote continued) "You always go on about you code and your strength, but when have you done anything but bitch!?"

^Again, look who's talking here. Hallelujah is the kid who's done nothing but whine about the current situation, stand in the background like an afterthought, and talk about not having parents. Hallelujah's done nothing *but* bitch and whine. It's especially terrible when you factor in he's hiding his demon form, something that could be invaluable at this point to everyone.

- Held onto the fact he was half demon until it was literally do or die.

Hallelujah is, weird. It feels like they were originally planning on having him do something actually important with the Ashura-Kai but it really doesn't go anywhere. He ended up blending into the background for me, more so than Navarre despite actually having more about him listed somehow. He could've acted as a regular devil summoner instead to have more identity because funnily enough outside Asahi no other partner really "Summons" demons, they're all Adepts. I don't think I have more say, I'm really trying. A demon form did not do him any good, it's both very forgettable (As in, I forgot about it again until reaching this line) and terrible in design.

Gaston

Notes/Quotes:

- "I alone am enough to defeat Shesha"

-(Referring to the first good bit) While Gaston does get angry at you for dealing the killing blow, ultimately it does not worsen the situation as Shesha is dealt with.

-(Referring to Asahi) "You're a pimple on his (Nanashi) ass! You're nothing! You've latched yourself on to what little reputation he has earned and fed off of it like a parasite! You have no right to speak to me like this!"

^Worth noting in this same conversation, Nozomi doesn't immediately antagonize or go against what Gaston is saying, rather telling Asahi to calm down and calling him an Ally.

- "I would never lose to such a pathetic enemy (Shesha) alone!"

- Even against Odin he will refuse to admit his lack of strength and attempt to keep standing longer than anyone else.

- "I will still fight, demons or no!"

- Tried to seal a jar with little success

-(To Asahi) "'Fight alongside you all again'? Just when did you fight with us before? All you did was get in the way."

- "Now's your time to shine! Deliver the final blow against this damned snake!"

-(To Hallelujah) "You have no reason to apologize to me..."

- "I am a Samurai, and my Code will not allow me to turn a blind eye to this."

- "Hallelujah... When we escaped Mikado, you thanked me. Ever since then my mind has been racing. What is it that I truly want? Now that the choice is in front of me, I know my answer. Merkabah. I will not answer to your expectations. I will answer to the people! I want to be a Samurai who has earned the gratitude of the people!"

- Breaks the Spear of Michael in response to Merkabah demanding he kill Nanashi

^Consider this an honorary good, it didn't technically help but damn does it raise my opinion of him

- "I simply cannot fathom how the existence of others would lead to one's ruin."

^Isn't the entire point of modern SMT games that demons fuck over humanity at every turn with their law and chaos shuffling? Isn't their mere existence a blight on humans?

- "Save... I don't know about that. There's nothing for me here. No one needs me. No one recognizes me. Why should I stay here? This is no longer my country. So, I will head to Tokyo."

- "Don't call me 'Sir.' I am no longer in a position to be called 'Sir.'"

Gameplay:

- +Has the highest physical attack of all party members
- +Fights fine without demons
- +Awakens pre-split
- Will steal press turns occasionally to do his own attack
- ^This one flaw essentially makes him unusable outside Shesha fights, and a shitty choice for Goddess because FOR SOME REASON he retains that even when he's your only choice of Partner.

Good:

- +Rather than hanging back and being a coward against Shesha, he puts his money where his mouth is and literally leaps at it with Michael's Spear to impale it (This may be due to him being my main partner however, didn't check). While you are still the one to finish him off, he is actually a major help in your second encounter with Shesha.
- +Jumps in to save Toki from Inanna's Remnants
- +Along with Isabeau, stands to defend Flynn from Krishna in Tsukiji
- +Tells you where your equipment is while in jail, and leaves you a sword. Also informs Nanashi that he should be able to use demons with or without a phone, but Dagda would have told him if he didn't.

Bad:

- Surprisingly none!

Gaston is the best Partner (In-Universe) and that is not up for debate. It's just a plain fact. It feels like they wanted to set him up as this miserable coward hiding behind status like Navarre was, but really he genuinely means all the threats he dishes. He gets upset about not having glory for killing Shesha, yes, but he is far from lacking the courage to get it himself. I feel like the good section should speak for itself at this point, what else can I add before I start sounding too gay?

Isabeau

Notes/Quotes:

- Brought hunters from the sky tower to medics in the beginning of the game
- "As soon as I heard the angels were converging on Konganji, I decided to come myself."
- Along with Gaston, stands to defend Flynn from Krishna in Tsukiji

Gameplay:

- +Literally just a better navarre and asahi
- +Starts with mediarama when you get her, making her immediately superior to asahi who likely does not have it yet
- +Has the -dyne versions of the four main elements, making her attack potential greater than Navarre at the cost of no status items or hama/mudo
- Main downside is all her skills are stuff you can do, nothing exactly unique

+Does not Awaken at all, which can be plus because you don't miss anything for making her a Goddess

Good:

-None (For Nanashi directly at least)

Bad:

-None (For Nanashi directly at least)

Isabeau is definitely the weirdest Partner to me, at least for this argument. Like, can you really consider her part of Nanashi's friend group? It's so infrequent when she's an option and for most of the game she is out trying to do what (I assume) Flynn did by this point in the timeline in vanilla 4 since he's not able to. It never feels like she's a friend to Nanashi or anyone else in the group, more just a convenience. She just, happens to be in the area you're in trying to do the same thing you're there to do 9 times out of 10.

It's so bad to me that I almost considered not including her at all. She's so disjointed from everyone else I do not think she can factor into being one of Nanashi's anchors. Her dying in the fight against all the Partners felt more like a casualty than a murder, you know? Like she happened to be in the wrong place in the wrong time rather than being someone I actively wanted somewhere, gone or not

Toki

Notes/Quotes:

- "Master" count (Not counting repeatable dialogue): 25

- "Well done. You've stolen my heart yet again."

- "We're not safe yet. Also, he's mine."

- "I felt a sob story coming so I went to look for our stuff."

- "I'll go wherever he goes"

- "Whatever choice you make, I'll be with you." (Foreshadowing)

Gameplay:

+Great for DPS in general since most attacks Pierce even if they are phys

+Chews through hordes, more so than Nozomi

+Fights fine without demons

+Awakens pre-split

+With Temporal Blade and Sneak Attack, she's great DPS, but as a consequence she can make scouting demons annoying at times

+Hiding can be seen as a downside however as that means more hits are directed at you than with any other partner, but it's at least balanced out with sneak attack giving her more attack potential while alive.

Good:

+Helps you sneak into Tsukiji Konganji

+Even though she fought you and swears you'll "pay for it", she still provides the escape from the Divine Powers with a flashbang
+Sealed the aether jars, something Nanashi can only debatably do (He is stated multiple times to not be human anymore so it may not affect him)

Bad:

-Opposes you for a bit after joining, being the only partner to actively fight against you at one point before massacre.

^Worth noting personally, at the very least she was honest about opposing you, not denying it makes it that much better than everyone else

-Used as the vessel for Inanna's revival, and Meitraya's as a result.

Toki is the best Partner (Gameplay) and that is not up for debate. It's just a plain fact. Insta killing hordes (Sometimes multiple in a row) is incredibly satisfying to see, and Sneak Attack lets her attack in the in between turns, straight up just letting her get more hits in than anyone else. Aside from her in gameplay, I feel like she's the most honest in her actions out of every other Partner (Minus the obvious line everyone screams at when talking about her). She's only a detriment when she outright states she's against you, and when she truly switches sides it's all benefits. She really should've stuck with you if you sided with Dagda, everything points to it but she just doesn't.

Overall, I consider only 2 Partners to be people I wanted kept around, Gaston and Toki. And seeing as Gaston keeps being a turn thief in massacre, the choice of who alone to take was already made for me. Everyone else is either worthless or just actively hindering Nanashi, minus Isabeau who's just there.

That's... that's it. Sorry I didn't write an actual story for this, so hopefully this is good enough! I actually had fun finally putting these notes to use and expanding on them a little. Maybe I'll revamp this if there's ever an Apocalypse event, we'll see.

Now if you'll excuse me, I have to go makeout with my wife Mirai for religious reasons

