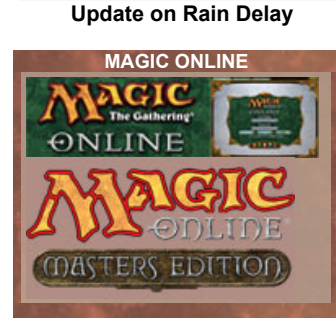
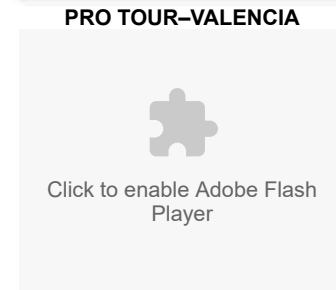


Home > Games > Magic > Magicthegathering.com > Columns



Die and Be Reborn

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Uncommon Knowledge
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Rotlung Reanimator is a strange little creature. On the surface it appears to be nothing more than **Headless Horseman** or **Scathe Zombies**. Maybe it reiterates **Penumbra Bobcat** a tad. And just a minute, didn't **Sarcomancy** also put a 2/2 zombie token into play?

Who am I kidding, folks? This guy doesn't resemble any particular creature ever seen before in **Magic** history.

The nexus between undead and priest, **Magic's** premiere zombie cleric takes those of faith who have fallen and converts them to the cause of the living dead. It doesn't just take your clerics and turn them into 2/2 bodies—it itself returns from the dead, along with your opponent's creatures of the appropriate type. In a set dedicated to tribal creatures, this ability is far from negligible.

Replacement Predecessors

There exist other cards in the **Magic** bureau that pay dividends in creatures once they hit the graveyard. The first was **Rukh Egg**, a fairly impotent creature from *Arabian Nights* which transformed into a gigantic flyer upon death. Other notable creatures of this type were **Liege of**

Hollows (the first to put multiple creatures into play), **Pattern of Rebirth/Gamekeeper** (searching the library for replacements), **Haunted Angel** (giving your opponent a creature as a drawback) and the three **Penumbra** creatures from *Apocalypse* (**Bobcat**, **Kavu** and **Wurm**).

The closest creature analogous to the Reanimator is **Penumbra Bobcat**. In the simplest terms possible, they both die and leave ability-less replicas of themselves. Rotlung already takes the nod in this category, since it has an additional point of toughness for no additional mana. The similarities end there. The Bobcat doesn't benefit from any other creatures on the board dying, whereas the "zombie" (or should I refer to Rotlung Reanimator as a "clerbie?") keeps on chugging out zombie after zombie from the corpses of **Samite Healers**, **Selfless Exorcists**, and **Dedicated Martyrs**.



His Clerical Companions

Wait, those are the *not-so-great* clerics currently in Type 2. Let's try this again: the zombie keeps on chugging out zombie after zombie from the corpses of **Benevolent Bodyguard** (who pulls the double duty of protecting **Rotlung Reanimator** plus turning into a 2/2), **Pilgrims of Justice** and **Virtue** (damage prevention plus creature recursion) and **Beloved Chaplain** (even if your opponents thinks they can kill him, they can't kill him).

I smell a decklist coming on.

Zombic Clerbies		Type 2 Rotlung Reanimator deck	
Main Deck 60 cards		Sideboard	
4 City of Brass	4 Shared Triumph	3 Disciple of Grace	
4 Grand Coliseum	2 Smother	3 Disciple of Malice	
5 Swamp	4 Wrath of God	3 Nova Cleric	
7 Plains	10 other spells	3 Pilgrim of Justice	
3 Starlit Sanctum		1 True Believer	
23 lands		2 Smother	
3 Beloved Chaplain		15 sideboard cards	

- 3 Benevolent Bodyguard
- 4 Braids, Cabal Minion
- 3 Cabal Archon
- 1 Devoted Caretaker
- 1 Disciple of Grace
- 1 Disciple of Malice
- 1 Doubtless One
- 1 Nova Cleric
- 1 Pilgrim of Justice
- 4 Rotlung Reanimator
- 1 Teroh's Faithful
- 2 True Believer
- 1 Weathered Wayfarer

27 creatures

I realize there's a ton of cards that you may not know just yet, but all will be clear after the prerelease this Saturday. Basically, this deck packs a ton of good utility Clerics (all of the creatures in this deck except Braids are Clerics), sacrifice them with **Rotlung Reanimator** in play using **Starlit Sanctum**, **Braids**, and **Cabal Archon**, or just **Wrath** away to leave you with a horde of Zombies in play to your opponent's empty board. **Braids** enables each of your Clerics to work double duty, since they'll be sacrificed twice a piece to the dementia mage.



It's not often I get to walk in the shoes of our resident deck building genius Jay Moldenhauer-Salazar (who will also be tackling Clerics tomorrow), so I'll take advantage of this opportunity while I can. I figure it can't hurt to throw another self-made deck into the fray after my results [last time](#).

Rolling back the time machine to the Extended format, we find so many top-notch clerics that you couldn't fit them all into a deck even if you wanted to. Extended rotates in November of 2002 (the same time *Onslaught* becomes tournament legal), meaning that *Ice Age* block, *Mirage* block and *Fifth Edition* are going to be gone. Since you'll be playing with *Onslaught*, we'll assume deck building will be confined to November Extended rules.

Wrath of Zombic Clerbie Death

Extended Rotlung Reanimator deck 📄

Main Deck <i>60 cards</i>	Sideboard
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 Bloodstained Mire 4 Caves of Koilos 4 Grand Coliseum 5 Plains 3 Starlit Sanctum 5 Swamp 1 Volrath's Stronghold 2 Windswept Heath <p style="margin-top: 10px;">26 lands</p> <hr style="width: 100%;"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Academy Rector 2 Benevolent Bodyguard 4 Mother of Runes 4 Rotlung Reanimator 4 Soltari Monk 4 Soltari Priest 2 Soltari Visionary <p style="margin-top: 10px;">21 creatures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 Duress 4 Living Death 1 Recurring Nightmare 4 Wrath of God <p style="margin-top: 10px; text-align: center;">13 other spells</p> <hr style="width: 100%;"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 Academy Rector 2 Circle of Protection: Green 1 Circle of Protection: Red 2 Light of Day 2 Monk Realist 2 Pilgrim of Justice 3 True Believer <p style="margin-top: 10px;">15 sideboard cards</p>

Mother of Runes, **Soltari Monk**, and **Soltari Priest** all belong to the genus Cleric. Pretty convenient for **Rotlung Reanimator**, since it can take advantage of three of the best white weenies ever printed. This deck works as a threat during all portions of the game: it can beat down pretty heavily with shadow creatures backed by **Benevolent Bodyguard** and **Mother of Runes** early in the game, drop **Rotlung Reanimator** and cast **Wrath of God/Living Death** in the midgame to leave you with a tremendous creature advantage, and play "which way are

the creatures going" with [Living Death](#), [Volrath's Stronghold](#), [Recurring Nightmare](#), and [Starlit Sanctum](#) in the late game.

All of this is possible because of the [Scathe Zombies](#) who finally made good.

All hail [Rotlung Reanimator](#), the chief Zombic Clerbie.

Next Week: Staples

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*Ben Bleiweiss has written about his obsession with **Magic: The Gathering** for over a decade. He's travelled the world because of **Magic**, both as a player and a writer. When not spending time playing **Magic**, writing about **Magic**, or thinking about **Magic**, Ben is employed by [StarCityGames.com](#), where he works with **Magic** cards all day long. He lives with his wife in Virginia, and they sleep comfortably at night under their Orgg down comforter.*



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