

## Readers' *Scourge* ideas MagicTheGathering.Combos

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This month, MagicTheGathering.Combos is focusing on reader submissions. Each of the *Scourge* combos listed below was sent in by one of our readers. While many people sent in the same ideas, I gave credit to the first person to send in any given combo. For their efforts, these ten people will be receiving *Scourge* deck protector boxes in the mail.

Before we begin, I want to go over a couple common misconceptions. Lots of people sent in combos that don't really work, so I'll explain why for the most popular ones.

- **Stifle** does not combo with **Phyrexian Dreadnought**. To [paraphrase](#) our resident judge, Rune Horvik, Phyrexian Dreadnought's ability has been given errata so that it is a replacement ability, not a triggered ability.
- There is no "infinite" combo using just **Wirewood Symbiote**, **Elvish Aberration**, and **Caller of the Claw**. The reason is that the Symbiote can only be used *once per turn*; you can't repeatedly untap the Aberration and bounce the Caller.
- **Phage the Untouchable** enchanted with **Extra Arms** doesn't allow you to kill an opponent right when you attack. The damage done by Phage because of Extra Arms is not considered "combat damage" even though it happens during the combat phase. Combat damage has a very specific definition: "Combat damage is dealt during the combat damage step of the combat phase by attacking creatures and blocking creatures. It doesn't include damage dealt by spells and abilities during the combat phase."
- The same holds true for **Mercurial Kite** enchanted by **Psionic Gift**. The Kite needs to deal combat damage for its "lockdown" ability to work, and damage generated by the Gifted ability is never considered combat damage. This combo was erroneously listed as legal in this article's first incarnation.

All clear? Then let's begin.

### Decree of Annihilation + The Cheese Stands Alone

Sent in by: **Danny White**



I normally don't include *Unglued* cards in this column, since they can't be used in tournament-legal decks and some playgroups frown upon them as well, but this combo is too perfect to ignore.

When played, Decree of Annihilation wipes out just about everything—lands, artifacts, creatures, graveyards, even players' hands—but leaves enchantments in tact. The Cheese Stands Alone can win you the game outright, but it requires that you have no other cards in play and no cards in hand. How much more do I need to tell you?

## Dawn Elemental + Pariah

Sent in by: **David Farthing**

Pariah made for a good combo with Cho-Manno, Revolutionary back in the days of *Mercadian Masques*, so it's no surprise that it works well with Dawn Elemental, a card with the same text as Cho-Manno and flying to boot.

The gist is this: with this combination in play, you cannot be damaged. Not by creatures, not by spells, nothing. Any damage you would take is redirected to the Elemental via Pariah, and the Elemental's ability prevents it all, every last drop. Granted, every color has a way to break up this combo (even red, with Pinpoint Avalanche and Flaring Pain), but against many decks this combo is virtually game over.



## Root Elemental + Skirk Alarmist

Sent in by: **KiDd**

Talk about explosive! Many people have fooled around with Skirk Alarmist as a potential combo piece, since it allows you to skirt the high morph costs of larger creatures. Of course, then you have to sacrifice the creature, making the Alarmist akin to Sneak Attack.

Just as there are creatures that work particularly well with Sneak Attack (like Nesting Wurm, Symbiotic Wurm, and Penumbra Wurm), there are creatures that work exceptionally well with Skirk Alarmist. Root Elemental is one such monster.

The ideal plan involves a face-down Root Elemental on turn three, which is then flipped up at the end of the opponent's next turn with the Alarmist. If you're really lucky, you can drop something insane like Akroma, Angel of Wrath and attack for 12, but any large creature that might normally be playable in your deck, like Rockshard Elemental or Imperial Hellkite, is okay too. Yes, you'll have to sacrifice the Elemental at the end of the turn, but you'll get to keep whatever fatty you dropped out with it.



## Day of the Dragons + Dimensional Breach

Sent in by: **MikeHopN64**

Day of the Dragons is one of those cards that I don't really like using as part of MagicTheGathering.Combos, since it often wins games all by itself, meaning most decks involving it lack a lot of the "cleverness" that the best combos radiate. When Day of the Dragons is only *half* of what you need to win the game, you're obviously sandbagging it.



In any event, the Day is one of the most popular *Scourge* cards, and was one of the most referenced in the emails I received for this column. So I chose the weirdest of them all.

You're playing blue-white, you have a bunch of little fliers or healers in play, and then—BAM—you drop Day of the Dragons. Now you have a vast army of 5/5 fliers. For argument's sake, let's say that doesn't win you the game. Maybe your opponent plays Wrath of God on his next turn, or plays and uses a Planar Guide. Now what? You could bounce the Day and replay it, but why take the well-traveled road? Use Dimensional Breach!

The Breach will remove all permanents in play from the game, including Day of the Dragons. That means the table will be empty—except for the slew of little guys you had hidden away under the Day. As your opponent struggles to rebuild his board position, use the little guys to try and win, or simply bring back Day of the Dragons again right away and end it quickly.

Another reader suggested using Upheaval instead of Dimensional Breach, but the **Magic** playing population has seen enough of Upheaval lately, thank you very much.

## Alpha Status + Mistform Ultimus

Sent in by: **Garrett Oliver**

This one's simple. You have creatures out, your opponent has creatures out, and you slap an Alpha Status on your Mistform Ultimus. Alpha Status will give the Ultimus +2/+2 for each other creature in play that shares a creature type with it, which should be every creature in play (the obvious exceptions are those without types, like face-down creatures and some artifact creatures).



What to do with you 23/23 Ultimus is up to you. Perhaps a Dragon Fangs would help get the damage through, or a Wonder, or an Armadillo Cloak...

## Sliver Overlord + Imagecrafter

Sent in by: **Peter Bajurny**

Sliver Overlord is the first Sliver that makes you hope your opponent has Slivers! Instead of granting them abilities, he allows you to steal them permanently for three mana each.

The cheapest and easiest way to make sure your opponent actually has Slivers is to use the little 1/1 Imagecrafter from *Onslaught*. Once the Overlord comes out, simply use the Imagecrafter to turn an opponent's creature into a Sliver, pay 3, and enjoy your new recruit! Because the Overlord only cares that it's target is a Sliver when its ability is announced and resolves, you'll get to keep the creatures even once they stop being Slivers.



Other ways to make the Overlord rule over your opponent's team include Unnatural Selection, Mistform Mutant, and Artificial Evolution.

## Vengeful Dead + Tombstone Stairwell

Sent it by: **Scottie Bellinger**

Scottie used one word to describe his combo: "Pain."

After a long, drawn out game involving many creatures dying, you'll want to drop out both pieces of this combo. On your opponent's upkeep, each of you will get a handful of 2/2 Zombie tokens from Tombstone Stairwell (a rare from the *Mirage* set), and at the end of the turn, all those tokens will die.



As a rules refresher: Yes, tokens go to the graveyard when they die, at which point they cease to exist. So each token will trigger Vengeful Dead on its way to the bin. Hence, "pain." And if your opponent survives it for a turn, it'll all happen again on your turn.

This combo also works well in multiplayer games; the Dead hits each opponent for each dying Zombie.

## Tendrils of Agony + Aluren + Cavern Harpy

Sent in by: **Philip Flanagan**

Aluren and Cavern Harpy made up the backbone of a powerful Extended deck last year. The combo therein was a little convoluted, however. First, you'd get out Aluren, and then a Wirewood Savage. Then you'd play the Harpy for free and gate itself, drawing a card each time until you found what you needed—usually either a Soul Warden and



a Maggot Carrier or a Cloud of Faeries and a Stroke of Genius.

Well you can throw all that mess out the window now, as *Scourge* makes the whole process a lot simpler. With Aluren in play, you can play and replay Cavern Harpy for no mana an arbitrary number of times. And nothing goes with an arbitrary number of spells like storm cards. Since Tendrils of Agony costs only four mana and will outright kill an opponent instead of hopefully decking him, it's the best fit. Of course, you can try Brain Freeze or Mind's Desire in its spot if you choose.

## Dragon Scales + Oath of Druids

Sent in by: **Kenneth Nagle**

This is a nifty use of the Dragon enchantments from *Scourge*. You need to get Oath of Druids into play and have your opponent play a creature. Then you let your deck do its thing.

When you activate the Oath, you'll want to flip at least one enchantment into the graveyard before hitting a six-mana creature. The creature—it could be Thorn Elemental, Eternal Dragon, Visara the Dreadful, whatever—would then come into play and the enchantment would leap out of the graveyard onto it, giving you a massive creature that doesn't tap to attack.



Another reader suggested a similar combo with the Oath hopefully turning up a 20/20 Cognivore with Dragon Breath, allowing you to attack for lethal damage immediately. Of course, your deck has to be arranged in a precise way for this to work perfectly, but if it did I'm sure people's jaws would drop.

\* \* \*

On to the decks... Here's Kenneth's Oath of Druids deck that uses the Dragon parts as described above. It also has a heavy cycling theme, with Lightning Rift and Astral Slide. He says that it does quite well in both duels and multiplayer play.

Make Your Own Dragon

## Casual deck – Kenneth Nagle

The next deck is a fun one that I was playing casually long before *Scourge* came out. It utilizes Nomad Mythmaker and lots of various creature enchantments—most notably, four copies of Pariah. Dawn Elemental was a natural fit once *Scourge* was released.

Death By Enchantments

## **Online Extended deck**

This last deck is based on the Skirk Alarmist/Root Elemental interaction (I built it almost immediately after receiving KiDd's email). It features a slew of large creatures, including a single Akroma that can't be put into play by any means except flipping Root Elemental. It also features a few "trickier" morphs, like Willbender and Voidmage Apprentice just to keep the opposition guessing. It is a bit rare-intensive, but most of them are inexpensive and easy to trade for.

Not Sneak Attack

## **Standard deck**

That's it for this installment of MagicTheGathering.Combos. I'll be back next month to take a crack at some of the new *Eighth Edition* cards, so stay tuned.

Send questions and comments to [editor@wizards.com](mailto:editor@wizards.com).