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Sketches: Bottle Gnomes, Old and New

This week's "Sketches" takes a stroll down memory lane as we look at the *Mirrodin* reprint of a *Tempest* favorite, **Bottle Gnomes**. Before we get to Ben Thompson's task of illustrating the updated Gnomes, let's set the wayback machine to 1997 and look at Kaja Foglio's original painting.

0. Original Art

The first **Bottle Gnomes** lived happily in many *Tempest* block sideboards. They were chumped-and-chugged by many a control mage looking to slow down speedy red weenie decks. As *Tempest* rotated out of Standard, so generally did the aggressive red decks, so the three Gnomes with their round, life-giving bellies marched their way off to Extended.



1. Art Description

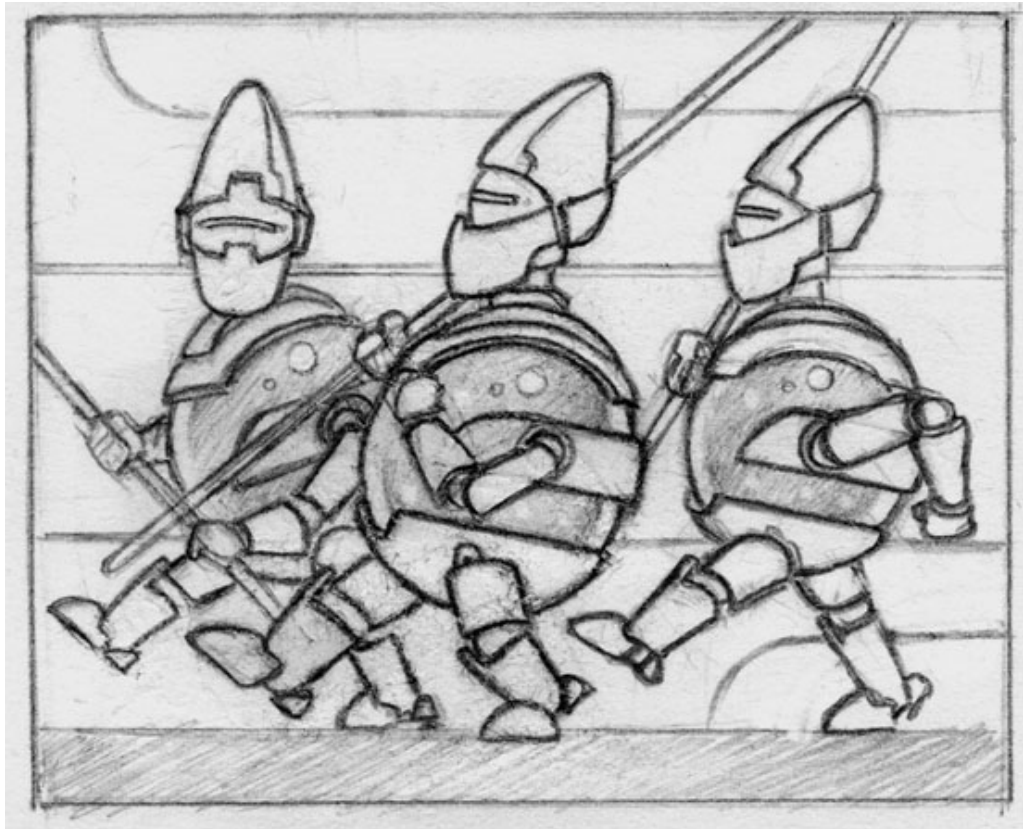
Fast forward to *Mirrodin* design, just when *Onslaught* block had started a resurgence in fast red weenie decks. The Gnomes were recruited again, and needed updated art. Here were the instructions given to Ben Thompson for the project:

"Color: Artifact (neutral to colors)
 Location: Inside the 'Lumengrid'
 Action: Show three 'Bottle Gnomes' full of magical blue lymph liquid
 Notes: Refer to the previous Bottle Gnomes art, but update them so they look like they're from this 'metal world.'"

We learned about Lumengrid, the Vedalken city featured on [Seat of the Synod](#), in [Monday's Magic Arcana](#). "Lymph," in the *Mirrodin* universe, is the **magical fluid** that permeates the Quicksilver Sea and that is given off by **blinkmoths**.

2. Sketches

Here is Ben's initial sketch:



We recognize the round, potion-like bellies and their diminutive size. What's new is a sleeker, more organically metallic look, and a plucky marching pose. The art team liked Ben's combination of new and old, and bade him proceed.

3. Final Art



The new Gnomes have a pleasing familiarity yet an attractive new look. That blue liquid looks as chuggably refreshing as ever, but we know that in *Mirrodin* it's delicious "lymph." Maybe the plane of Rath had some sort of proto-lymph?

4. Card

Lastly, here is both versions of the card, as you can see it in booster packs, old and new.



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