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The story of "Barry's Land"

Magic Arcana
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In the days of the *Invasion* block, the domain mechanic loomed large. The more basic land types you controlled, the more powerful the effects you could generate with cards like **Allied Strategies**, **Tribal Flames**, and **Ordered Migration**. But not all of R&D's domain ideas made it to print.

One card, a nonbasic land card designed to have strong interactions with the domain mechanic, never made it onto cardboard. This is the story of "Barry's Land," as told by its designer, Mark Rosewater:



"Finally, one of my cards that didn't make it through the process. Barry's Land read as follows:

```
Barry's Land
Land
Barry's Land counts as a basic
land.
T: Add one colorless mana to
your mana pool.
```

"One of my favorite parts about this card was watching people's faces the first time I showed it to them. They would squint and ask, 'What else does it do?'

"I would always smile and say, 'Nothing. And I believe the card, as is, might be tournament viable.'

"As I'm sure some of you are confused by this card, let me explain. 'Barry' was R&D's codename for the domain cards. Also, its important to know that during *Invasion* development, the domain deck was very, very strong. In the end, R&D greatly weakened the domain cards as we were concerned of a monster block deck as rebels was to *Masques* block.

"My favorite part of design is coming up with just off the wall ideas. Barry's Land started as in joke. I talked about making a land that would allow the domain decks to 'go to 6'. The card quickly picked up fans and got put into *Invasion*. During *Invasion* development it was decided that the card was better if it came out after the domain decks already existed.

"In the FFL (Future Future League - R&D's oddly named internal league), Barry's Land became very popular. There were long debates on how many to put into the domain decks. All was looking good. And then came the rules team....

"R&D actually fought pretty hard for this card but in the end the rules team's 'we have no remotely elegant way to print this card'

won out. The end of this story is that it continues my kicked out of the set by the rules team streak increased by another set."

Mark told this story around the time of the release of *Planeshift*. But nowadays, with the [simplified wording](#) of basic lands in *Eighth Edition*, could Barry's Land get another shot at being printed? Paul Barclay's answer:

"Yes."

(Special thanks to William Spaniel of Valencia, California, whose email inspired this Arcana.)

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