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**W**elcome to Ur-Golem's Eye Week! I've been pushing for this for a couple of months now, and Scott Johns finally agreed with me that it was an idea whose time was long overdue. The timing is a little unusual—last week was also a theme week, and next week will be one too; we never do three in a row unless we're previewing a new set. But that's just how important Ur-Golem's Eye Week is! By now I'm sure Scott Wills has discussed in depth when you should first-pick the Eye out of your *Darksteel* pack ("Hmm, there's a Pristine Angel, but..."); Mark Rosewater traced its design origins back to Worn Powerstone in *Urza's Saga*, Sisay's Ring in *Visions*, and Sol Ring in Alpha; Rei Nakazawa's feature article revealed whether the Ur-Golem was pals with the Ur-Dragon; Anthony Alongi has shown how *you* can be the Ur-Golem in the Planeswalkers' Masquerade multiplayer format; and Adrian Sullivan has broken the card wide open by pairing it with things like, um, Fireball. I'm sure the highlight of tomorrow will be Aaron Forsythe's development column ("We decided to reprint Sisay's Ring but had to change its name for flavor reasons. Join me next week when...") But I don't want to get ahead of myself. I've got an Ur-Golem-size job to do.

### Which Deadly Sin Is This? How Deadly?

The first question that comes to mind when trying to break Ur-Golem's Eye is "What costs mana?" Luckily, lots of stuff does. For example, the activation cost of Avarice Totem costs mana, so that's a perfect spot for Ur-Golem's Eye to turn the game on its ear. Er, eye. I never quite figured out how to break Avarice Totem, probably because comboing it with the raw power that is Ur-Golem's Eye never occurred to me. But that's why I have an email account.

Alexis Long sent in this deck, and I haven't changed a card. It uses the combo of Avarice Totem + Tel-Jilad Stylus to steal all of your opponent's good permanents. Here's the key: Both the Totem and the Stylus are "cogs" (artifacts that cost 1 mana or less), so they're fetchable with Trinket Mage or, better, Artificer's Intuition. Fetch up a Totem and a Stylus and put them on the table. When your greed gets the better of you, trade your Totem for that shiny permanent of your opponent's that you've gotsta gotsta have. Then use the Stylus to sweep your Totem back from your opponent's side of the table to the bottom of your deck—*where you can search it up again with Artificer's Intuition*. More than half of the cards in this deck are artifacts (including—that's right—the megabroken Ur-Golem's Eye), so you'll usually draw something you can Intuit into a Totem. If you want to be mean (and I think you do), use the Stylus to take away your opponent's Totem after he pays 5 and tries to initiate a trade with it. Since the Totem is gone, the exchange will fail, and your opponent has uselessly spent 5 mana and—even more valuable—precious, precious sanity points. When you get your opponent down to 0 sanity, you win the game!

The deck isn't monodimensional. It has some back-up plans. If your opponent wises up and stops playing permanents, you still need a way to win the game. Alexis included the cog Chimeric Coils for that purpose. Point your Stylus-Intuition engine at that thing instead of the Totem and you can keep pseudo-Blazing your opponent. Turn the Coils into a creature, attack with it, then Stylus it into your library before you have to sacrifice it at the end of the turn. Search it up with Artificer's Intuition and



go again. If there are no blockers, your engine says "X2", Discard an artifact card from your hand: Deal X damage to your opponent" every turn.

The other plan is to use the annoying little Robo-Roach itself, Myr Servitor, which is a natural combo with Artificer's Intuition. It's always great to pitch a Servitor to fetch something up with the Intuition. Of course, the best thing to fetch is usually another Servitor. Which fetches the third. Which fetches the fourth. Play the fourth one, the other three will pop back out of the graveyard during your next upkeep, and you've thinned your deck while creating either a reasonable attacking force or a ridiculous blocking force. I did this while playing the deck on *Magic Online*, and I got criticized by some guy watching the game (not even my opponent!) for being unoriginal since apparently everyone and his horse is playing the Servitor + Intuition combo. Me. Unoriginal. The ultra-irony of this ironic comment is that I *was* being unoriginal since this is Alexis's deck. Even though I hadn't seen any other Servitors in the dozen games I played that night, I can easily believe it's a popular combo—so I switched into steal-all-relevant-permanents-with-Avarice Totem mode. Hey, that's the more fun thing to do anyway.

**Batting Avarice**  

**Main Deck**  
60 cards

4 Cloudpost	4 Myr Servitor	4 Artificer's Intuition
4 Darksteel Citadel	4 Trinket Mage	4 Avarice Totem
12 Island	_____	4 Chimeric Coils
4 Seat of the Synod	8 creatures	4 Conjuror's Bauble
_____		4 Tel-Jilad Stylus
24 lands		4 Ur-Golem's Eye
		4 Wayfarer's Bauble
		_____
		28 other spells

If your cog-joggers never show up, Avarice Totem can play the cat burglar all by itself... if you have 10 mana free. Pay 5 and activate the Totem targeting your own worst permanent. Before that resolves, pay another 5 and activate the Totem targeting your opponent's best permanent. The Totem and your opponent's goodie will swap. Then *your opponent's* Totem and your awful permanent will swap. (Note that if your opponent has enough mana open, he can derail your plans while he's got the Totem by activating it himself.) You've got the good thing, your opponent's got the bad thing, and you still have the Totem ready to go again. But how—*how?*—to generate 10 mana in a single turn? Oh, if only there were some sort of mana-generating Eye... perhaps from an Ur-Golem...

## You, Robots

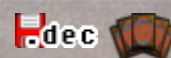
Darren Gamble emailed me a combo that is so unlikely, so counterintuitive, that I was in the middle of writing my response to him explaining, in great detail, why it didn't work when I realized that it *did* work after all. It baffles everyone the first time they see it. It defies expectations. It's oddly subversive because it feels like you pulled a fast one on the game itself. And it's in the middle of Darren's Golem theme deck.

Darren had been playing a casual Golem deck featuring the Urzatron for a while when *Fifth Dawn* came out. He knew immediately that Mycosynth Golem had to go into the deck, and he changed the lands to artifact lands to accommodate it. Every single card in Darren's deck (as well as my slightly modified version, below) is a Golem, a card that could fetch a Golem, or a card that helps play Golems. If you can play a Mycosynth Golem, you can then dump the rest of your Golemy hand on the table: Instant Golem Army! Just add affinity. Bosh, Iron Golem is a finisher, especially when it's chucking Mycosynth Golem at your opponent's head. Brass Herald, an awful *Apocalypse* and *Eighth Edition* rare, has a home here. You'll always choose "Golem" when you play it. That means its built-in Glorious Anthem makes it a 6-mana 3/3 rather than a 6-mana 2/2, and it'll fetch, on average, between one and two more Golems. Play it before you've found a Mycosynth Golem and it'll dig for Mr. Affinity. (If you don't find one, you might at least find another Brass Herald.) Play it after a Mycosynth Golem is on the table and it's free—and it'll churn up even more free Golems.

But that's not the combo. The combo is Emblazoned Golem + Mycosynth Golem. Darren wrote to me with fantastical tales of 33/34 Emblazoned Golems, and I didn't believe him. The kicker on that thing can't go above 5, right? It has a kicker of X, but you can only spend colored mana on X and no more than one mana of each color can be spent this way. There are no shenanigans here. Oh, but there are! There are shenanigans aplenty! It's a veritable shenaniganfest! Mycosynth Golem gives Emblazoned Golem affinity for artifacts. Emblazoned Golem says you can't *spend* colorless mana on X—but you can *reduce the cost* of X as much as you want. Nothing limits this X to being 5 or less. So if you have 10 artifacts in play (including Mycosynth Golem) when you play Emblazoned Golem, its total cost is reduced by 10. If you say you want the kicker to be 8, its total cost is 10, affinity makes it cost  $10 - 10 = 0$ , and you get a free 9/10 creature. If you say you want the kicker to be 12, its total cost is 14, affinity makes it cost  $12 - 10 = 2$ , and you only have to pay 4 mana for a 15/16 creature... and the restriction on X only applies to the mana you spend above the card's normal cost of 2. As Darren wrote to me, "Expect to explain this to your friends before they get walloped."



## Heavy Metal



### Main Deck 60 cards

2 Ancient Den

4 Battered Golem

3 Fabricate

4 Cloudpost	4 Bosh, Iron Golem	2 Skeleton Shard
4 Darksteel Citadel	4 Brass Herald	2 Talisman of Dominance
4 Great Furnace	3 Composite Golem	3 Talisman of Indulgence
1 Mirrodin's Core	4 Emblazoned Golem	2 Ur-Golem's Eye
4 Seat of the Synod	4 Mycosynth Golem	
2 Tree of Tales		12 other spells
4 Vault of Whispers	23 creatures	
25 lands		

My deck is a little different than Darren's. I lowered the number of Skeleton Shards and threw in some Fabricates (and bluified the mana base a little). While playing the deck, I usually wanted to fetch a Golem from my deck, not my graveyard. Also, Darren's deck includes a single Karn, Silver Golem and four copies of Urza's Incubator. The Incubator is no doubt fantastic: It reduces the cost of all your Golems by 2, which is huge when you're trying to get that first Brass Herald out. After Mycosynth Golem enters the picture, it reduces the cost of all your Golems by 3 since it's an affinity-helping artifact! Not that that's important, since Mycosynth Golem will make all of your Golems free anyway. It still helps your Emblazoned Golem grow to even more unnatural proportions. However, since Karn and the Incubator were the only cards preventing me from playing the deck on *Magic Online*, I replaced them. Karn and a couple of other random Golems became Composite Golems, which can pay Bosh's activation cost if you're tapped out because you just played Mycosynth Golem and, say, half a dozen other Golems. The Urza's Incubators became different mana accelerators: a couple of Talismans and a couple of—you know it!—Ur-Golem's Eyes. Oooh, how flavorful! Is there nothing that card can't do?

## Auction of the People


Conrad Corbett, who posts as Dragon Bloodthirsty on the message boards, sent in a 2-card conditional instant-kill combo: Phage the Untouchable + Thieves' Auction. If there is an even number of nontoken permanents—including Phage—on the board when Thieves' Auction resolves, your opponent will be forced to select Phage last and you'll win. This isn't the first time I've seen this idea. Byrnwyrn suggested it back in October of 2003, but he decided that Leveler + Thieves' Auction was better and sent me that deck instead. The idea of playing both of those permanents on the same turn, while also maintaining an even nontoken permanent count, didn't thrill me so the "Let's break Thieves' Auction" idea languished in my giant Inbox of No Return. Until now.



I love forcing my opponent to put Phage into play. It's easily my favorite alternate victory condition (alternate loss condition?) of all time. I've done it with Endless Whispers ("Whispers in the Dark") and I've done it with Summoner's Egg ("Cruel and Unusual"). So sure, I'll do it this way. But there is, of course, a third piece of the puzzle. Phage and the Auction cost and , respectively, which is a sizable glob of mana. You'll want to play these cards on consecutive turns as early in the game as possible, and that's why this combo couldn't possibly exist without (say it with me) the almighty, all-powerful *Ur-Golem's Eye*!!!!

The combo is also strongly helped by self-sacrificing permanents. Normally when you start a turn with Phage in play and Auction in your hand, you simply count the permanents. If there's an odd number, play a land before you play Thieves' Auction. If there's an even number, just Auction it up. *Remember not to count tokens!* (They'll get removed from the game, but they're not coming back so they won't be part of the Auction lot.) Sometimes, however, your opponent can adjust the number of permanents in play. Maybe she has a fetch land, a Spellbomb, or simply some untapped lands and a mystery card in her hand. In those cases, you have to match your opponent's trick. You put Thieves' Auction on the stack while an even number of returnable permanents are in play. Your opponent plays Caller of the Claw! You better sacrifice your Nantuko Husk to itself to even the count again. You always have a back-up plan, though: Your opponent might be dumb. A couple of times (once when I mistakenly called an Auction while a Squirrel token messed up my permanent count and I was slated to lose) my opponent apparently thought, "Ooh, Phage!" and drafted it immediately from the Auction pool. It didn't take too long in each case for my opponent to then think, "Ooh... Phage."

Does the deck end there? Nah. Over the past few months, the migraine-inducing combo of Thieves' Auction + Confusion in the Ranks has been brought to my attention a few times. (I'm *sure* I saw it in a headache commercial once.) Nathan Lee aka The Feared Avocado, Chris Peterson, and Andrew Who Has No Last Name all put forth the idea in email, while Dragon Bloodthirsty posted it in the message boards for my Phage + Summoner's Egg article. There's no strategic advantage to following up a Confusion in the Ranks with a Thieves' Auction—it just causes bloody chaos. Sounds fun to me!

**Sick as Thieves** 

**Main Deck**  
60 cards

2 Bloodstained Mire	2 Carrion Feeder	2 Confusion in the Ranks
6 Mountain	3 Nantuko Husk	4 Diabolic Tutor
1 Shadowblood Ridge	4 Phage the Untouchable	3 Night's Whisper
4 Sulfurous Springs	2 Skirk Prospector	2 Nuisance Engine
7 Swamp		3 Pyrite Spellbomb
4 Urborg Volcano	11 creatures	4 Talisman of Indulgence
		4 Thieves' Auction
		3 Ur-Golem's Eye
24 lands		
		25 other spells

Note that while Phage + Auction is good, and Confusion + Auction is good, Confusion + Phage is *not* a combo. Phage's ability won't trigger when it changes control (only when it comes into play in an unnatural fashion), so all you've done is give your opponent a quick means to kill you.

Until next week, have fun with Ur-Golem's Eye!  
Mark

