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# Disruption Beats

Nate Heiss  
Building on a Budget  
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PRO TOUR-VALENCIA

I've been writing about *Fifth Dawn* for two weeks now, and I am still psyched about it! While I enjoyed [the Bauble deck](#) (and almost lost to a similar deck in a PTQ the following weekend...) and love [writing about Arc-Slogger](#), there is nothing I enjoy more than writing about a good budget black deck.

*Fifth Dawn* brings many awesome black cards to the mix – **Blind Creeper**, probably the best black 2-drop since *Wretched Anurid*, helps speed up the team without the pesky life loss. *Night's Whisper* is an awesome card drawer that helps you not run out of gas (compare it to Inspiration!). The least *Fifth Dawn* card I am going to use is **Grafted Wargear**. Adrian Sullivan wrote a [SCS article](#) on the card when it came out, but no one has really talked about it since. Let me put it this way: This card is amazing...it is like a 3/2 Haste for 3 mana that never dies. Ok, it's not quite that good, but it seems that way in many games. This is especially true when it's being equipped by an especially dangerous creature like, say...**Headhunter**.



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Ah, and now we begin talking about disruption. I have said many times in the past that a good beatdown deck has two things – speed and disruption. While the black deck's speed is not blindingly fast like an Affinity deck, it still can pound out the damage quickly. What Black can do that other beatdown decks cannot is strip their opponent of any answers. I am putting some underused cards to work for this purpose – **Hollow Specter**, **Headhunter**, and **Blackmail** will make sure that your opponent's hand is nothing more than a memory. It is a little tougher to deal with a 6/5 **Blind Creeper** when you had to discard your **Wrath of God** last turn, isn't it?



### Building on a Budget: Disruption Beats (less than 30 Tickets)

| Main Deck<br>60 cards |                  |                   |
|-----------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 22 Swamp              | 4 Carrion Feeder | 4 Dark Banishing  |
|                       | 4 Headhunter     | 4 Blackmail       |
| 22 lands              | 2 Nekrataal      | 4 Grafted Wargear |
|                       | 4 Hollow Specter | 4 Night's Whisper |
|                       | 4 Grimclaw Bats  |                   |
|                       | 4 Blind Creeper  |                   |
|                       |                  | 16 other spells   |
|                       | 22 creatures     |                   |



*Headhunter*, art by Matt Cavotta

The basic game plan is to lay out some early beats while ripping apart your opponent's hand. When you have to choose between beats vs. disruption, you should usually go with the disruption, since if you wait too long or play out your threats first, your opponent might use up the cards that you wanted to knock out of their hand. Many times, you will have to play out that **Headhunter** before the **Blind Creeper**. This is fine, since the **Blind Creeper** is safer with fewer cards in your opponent's hand anyhow. Your disruption will force them to commit to the board, where you can **Dark Banish** or **Nekrataal** their threats away. Meanwhile, your creatures will be plugging away at their life total.

Don't forget about the other guys on the front line – **Grimclaw Bats** and **Carrion Feeder**. While I don't talk much about these creatures, they are also of very high quality and should not be underestimated.

## Tips on playing the Deck

- Be careful with your **Blind Creepers** – only play spells before combat if you absolutely need to. Playing a **Grafted Wargear** is fine, since you lose 1 point of damage but gain 3. Likewise, if playing a **Nekrataal** or **Dark Banishing** will allow you a much better attack, you might gain even though your guy is getting a -1/-1.

- **Blackmail** can be a tricky card – you either want to use it right away or wait until your opponent only has three or four cards left in their hand to ensure plucking a spicy one. Basically, on your first turn you have to decide when to use it. Look at your hand – if you are going to be busy casting spells for the next few turns, you might want to utilize the mana right away. However, if your hand is a little weak, you might want to hold off, making sure you get a stronger spell. Keep in mind that you might not be able to cast **Blackmail** when you might otherwise want to later due to **Blind Creeper** death.
- Remember that you will always want to leave at least 1 mana up for **Hollow Specter**.
- Against control, you might want to hold your creature threats until you have destroyed their hand with **Headhunters/Blackmail/Hollow Specter**. They will be forced to use their **Wrath of Gods** on your unthreatening creatures because otherwise they will lose them anyhow. Then you are safe to drop your armada.



## Adding More Money to the Deck

I really like **Chrome Mox** in here. There are a lot of 2-drops in this deck, and **Chrome Mox** will help you get them all out very quickly. **Night's Whisper** helps recoup the card disadvantage from the Mox. **Sword of Fire and Ice** would also make a decent addition – I would be careful of having too much equipment in the deck though. If you are one for meta-gaming, then adding red for anti-artifact cards might be wise. Using **Bloodstained Mire** will allow you to use **Electrostatic Bolt**, **Shatter**, **Magma Jet**, or some other means of blowing up things, although **Smother** might serve you just as well (except against **Myr Enforcer** and **Somber Hoverguard**).

Until next time, **Ritual** out a **Specter**!

-Nate Heiss  
NateHeiss on **Magic Online**



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