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I'm going to do something this week that I've never done before: I'm going to pick up where Mark Rosewater left off. Despite the widespread rumors that Rosewater and I loathe each other (he perceives me as a threat; I resent his cult status; he hates that I'm funnier than him; I just can't help it), nothing could be further from the truth. Well, I suppose "The Earth has secretly been invaded by a two-inch tall race of Venusians that burrow into the brains of everyone with the middle name Louis" is further from the truth. (Whew. That should get the heat off.) But Rosewater and I are pals. So, just to be clear:

- I did NOT run over Mark Rosewater's dog. That yippy little poodle flew about twenty feet after I rammed into it, but it absolutely never went under my car.
- Mark does NOT keep a voodoo doll of me in his desk. Mark is a practitioner of Santeria, not voodoo.
- I did NOT take the unofficial mascot of R&D (the brain-in-a-jar lovingly referred to as "Gleemax"), sauté it with some capers, and feed it to Mark. The store was out of capers.
- Mark did NOT slip a mickey into my traditional lunchtime Fuzzy Navel and then spend the next two hours whanging me on the head with a lead pipe. I have no memory of that whatsoever.

So, keeping that friendship in mind, I'm going to write the companion piece to Mark's "Flipping Out" column. He told you how the *Champions of Kamigawa* set's flip cards came into being. I'll tell you what to do with them.

You flip them.

C'mon, did you really need me to tell you that? I think you could have figured that one out on your own. Oh, you want more details? OK, fine.

Flip Your Wig

How to flip Kitsune Mystic seems pretty obvious. The trick to the Mystic isn't what to do with it before the flip, it's how to use it well once it's been flipped into Autumn-Tail, Kitsune Sage.

- It pairs well with Psionic Gift. You can keep passing the enchantment from one of your untapped creatures to the next. Each turn you can deal damage equal to the number of untapped creatures you control or the amount of mana you have available, whichever is less.
- It pairs well with Frozen Solid, especially if Psionic Gift is around too. Ping an enemy creature that's been Frozen Solid. Frozen Solid's ability triggers. Before it resolves (which would destroy the creature and send Frozen Solid to your graveyard), let Autumn-Tail move Frozen Solid to a different enemy creature. When Frozen Solid's ability resolves, the pinged creature dies even though it's no longer enchanted. When I ran this combo past John Carter,



the new **Magic** Rules Manager, to make sure I knew what I was talking about, he called me a bad, bad man.

- It pairs well with Unquestioned Authority to make whatever creature you want unblockable, immune to combat damage, and unable to be targeted by creatures. Note that Autumn-Tail itself never targets creatures, only enchantments, so it can move things onto and off of untargetable creatures.
- It pairs well with Persuasion. Move the enchantment to steal a creature from your opponent at instant speed. Attack or block with the purloined creature. Is it going to die from combat damage? Move Persuasion onto a different creature. The now-naked creature goes back to your opponent's side—then combat damage resolves and it croaks.
- It pairs well with stat-pumping enchantments so that whatever you need to have some extra beef can get it.

Still, Kitsune Mystic gets lonely without his buddy. More on that in a bit.

Like Peter Pan, Student of Elements just wants to fly. That's reasonably simple. Lots of effects (um, Flight? And Dragon Wings, Wings of Hope, Shimmering Wings, etc.) can do this. The problem is that most of them don't do too much beyond that, and that effect generally isn't worth a deck slot. But there are some creature enchantments that go above and beyond. Pemmin's Aura has a flying effect buried somewhere in there. Serra's Embrace tacks on +2/+2 and vigilance. (Hmmm, now you have a 5/5 vigilant flying Tobita, Master of Winds.) And Aboshan's Desire has an untargetability clause that, if you have both threshold and Autumn-Tail, can make any of your creatures untargetable for 1. Just remember: If you've got a flipped Student of Elements out, *don't play another one!* It'll flip automatically and both will fly away into your graveyard.



Like any fledgling mobster, Bushi Tenderfoot needs to get one clean hit under its belt before it can be a made man. It isn't going to pull this off in combat without some help. One method is to give it some extra muscle and run it out onto the battlefield. A better plan is to give it a machine gun. Mobsters love machine guns. Suit it up with Psionic Gift and it can take down an enemy 1-toughness stoolie to earn its bones. None of those around? Let it take a potshot at someone wearing cement shoes. Still no targets? Take a cue from *The Sopranos*: Sometimes you've gotta take out one of your own for the good of the family. Bushi Tenderfoot doesn't say it has to deal combat damage and it doesn't say it has to whack one of your opponent's creatures. In fact, the best possible use for Bushi Tenderfoot #2 is to let Bushi Tenderfoot #1 feed it the golden cannoli, if you know what I'm sayin'. You're not going to flip the second one, and Kenzo the Hardhearted—a 3/4 double striker with bushido 2—is a godfather-sized menace.

Rockshard Elemental wishes it were that formidable, and that thing costs 7 mana. Bada-bing, bada-boom.

All three of these flippers can happily coexist in one deck, but the Mystic's buddy is still missing. Nomad Mythmaker is a no-brainer for a creature-enchantment based deck. Thought Courier and Hapless Researcher serve a dual purpose here: They're cheap critters ready to be enchantmentally enhanced, and they filter through your deck tossing out excess flippers (because you don't want them) and mondo creature enchantments (because the Mythmaker can fish them out of your graveyard). Don't hesitate to use the Mythmaker to put Persuasion on one of your own creatures; Autumn-Tail can move it to one of your opponent's creatures from there.

Shopping for Pants



Main Deck

60 cards

2 Adarkar Wastes	2 Bushi Tenderfoot	2 Aboshan's Desire
2 Coastal Tower	3 Hapless Researcher	3 Frozen Solid
4 Flooded Strand	4 Kitsune Mystic	1 Mythic Proportions
9 Island	4 Nomad Mythmaker	2 Pemmin's Aura
6 Plains	2 Student of Elements	2 Persuasion
23 lands	4 Thought Courier	4 Psionic Gift
	19 creatures	2 Serra's Embrace
		2 Unquestioned Authority
		18 other spells

Flip-Flop

I lub land. This is a good time to be a landlubber, because there are a ton of cards in the Standard card pool that can slurp the lands out of your deck. It was back when Journeyer's Kite had an activation cost of 2 and Kodama's Reach cost 1 for a slightly different effect that I built a Door to Nothingness deck that won some games in the Future Future League. Budoka Gardener was a big part of that deck. Although the number and power level of the landifying effects has been reduced since then, there are still a ton of them about. How many are there? This next deck doesn't have Rampant Growth, Wood Elves, Solemn Simulacrum, Sylvan Scrying, Reap and Sow, or the Kite, so it's only got 16 ways to fetch lands from my library. Oh well.

Building a Budoka Gardener deck isn't enough for me. I want a Budoka Gardener-Orochi Eggwatcher deck. I want to parlay my huge tracts of land into huge stampedes of creatures. Meloku the Clouded Mirror is one good way to do it. If you've got a Gardener out, you can get those bounced lands back into play at a reasonable clip. With Azusa, Lost but Seeking (thanks, Matthew Smith), you can crank out the critters without falling behind in your land count at all. Other land-to-creature transformers include Beacon of Creation, Orochi Hatchery, Rude Awakening, and Pentavus (just because it's expensive).

Once you have a billion lands and a million token creatures, Dokai, Weaver of Life will bring forth the fatties and Shidako, Broodmistress will turn your 1/1 weenies into delicious, delicious food. If you haven't already won. You do have a million token creatures, after all.



Reforestation



Main Deck

60 cards

20 Forest	1 Azusa, Lost but Seeking	1 Beacon of Creation
2 Island	4 Budoka Gardener	4 Journey of Discovery
1 Minamo, School at Water's Edge	2 Meloku the Clouded Mirror	4 Kodama's Reach
1 Okina, Temple to the Grandfathers	3 Orochi Eggwatcher	1 Orochi Hatchery
24 lands	1 Pentavus	1 Rude Awakening
	4 Sakura-Tribe Elder	4 Sensei's Divining Top
	15 creatures	2 Strength of Cedars
		4 Wayfarer's Bauble
		21 other spells

As you filter the lands out of your deck, you should get better quality draws. But just to make sure, the deck includes Sensei's Divining Top. You can repeatedly use it to rearrange the top three cards of your library, and if you don't like anything you see, you can use one of the deck's *seventeen* methods of shuffling your library to see three entirely different cards.

Flippancy

Let's move on to the two black flippers. This pair of Rats, Nezumi Shortfang and Nezumi Graverobber, are... yikes. Have you seen these things? These are some flippin' good cards. How am I supposed to make goofy, improbable, held-together-by-duct-tape-and-pixie-dust decks out of *good* cards? That's just not my style, man. They can hang out with Jushi Apprentice, which also gets a bye this week. Next!

On the Flip Side

Akki Lavarunner? Initiate of Blood? Now we're on the right track again. The Lavarunner wants to deal damage to an opponent. It has haste, so it's trying to fool you into playing it and immediately attacking with it. No, Lavarunner, no! It's too dangerous! Well, what do you expect from a Goblin that runs on lava? Sure, you can send it out to play in the street if the way is clear, but like Bushi Tenderfoot, it doesn't say *combat* damage. Give it Arcane Teachings or Viridian Longbow and it's just as happy. Tok-Tok, Volcano Born isn't nuts or anything, but adding 1 extra damage to a bunch of little effects aimed at your opponent's head (Tok-Tok's ping, Honden of Infinite Rage, Spikeshot Goblin, Glacial Ray, Lava Spike, Kumano, etc.) can pay dividends.

Similar to Akki Lavarunner, Initiate of Blood also costs 4 mana. It also flips based on damage. And it is also helped by pingers and other red damage sources. Like Bushi Tenderfoot, it only has to kill a creature (not necessarily one of your opponent's), so it's quite happy to zotz your Initiate of Blood #2 if no suitable enemy creature can be found. Goka the Unjust can clear out just about any obstacle when supported by an Arcane Teaching Akki Lavarunner or a Viridian Longbowed Wall of Stone. (And before you complain again



about the extinction of Walls in **Magic**, think about the concept of a Wall of Stone being equipped with a longbow for a second. Huh? HUH???. Does "Creature – Wall" actually make any kind of sense? Take another look at Sunscape Familiar—the pile of bricks and mortar that somehow serves as the familiar of a guild—and tell me how flavorful that thing is.)

Because it likes all the same things as the red flippers, Bushi Tenderfoot squeaks into this deck too. Note that each of these three flippers survives Flamebreak when in its legendary form, so in Flamebreak goes. The Walls are early defense and late double-pinging action if Tok-Tok has anything to say about it. Kumano makes it in there because it helps or is helped by all of the flippers. And because it's Masticore. Let's not forget that.

Tender Feet Running on Lava

Main Deck
60 cards

4 Battlefield Forge	3 Akki Lavarunner	4 Arcane Teachings
1 Eiganjo Castle	3 Bushi Tenderfoot	3 Flamebreak
3 Mirrodin's Core	3 Initiate of Blood	4 Glacial Ray
15 Mountain	2 Kumano, Master Yamabushi	1 Honden of Infinite Rage
1 Shinka, the Bloodsoaked Keep	1 Spikeshot Goblin	4 Lava Spike
_____	4 Wall of Stone	1 Scythe of the Wretched
24 lands	_____	3 Viridian Longbow
	16 creatures	_____
		20 other spells

That deck used to have more white cards than that. I don't know where they all went. The Gardener deck used to have more blue creatures in it, too. That's so strange. It's almost like someone's sabotaging my column. But who would do something like that? Who would—ROSEWATER!!!!!!

Until next week, have fun flipping.
Mark

