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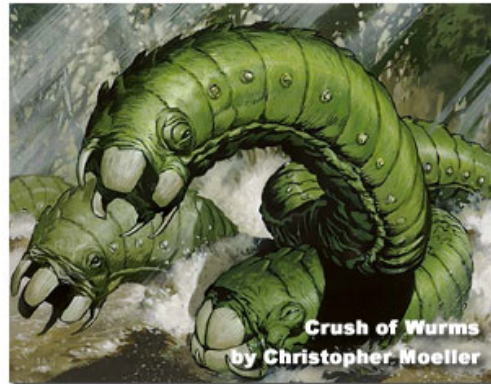
Sketches: Higure, the Still Wind

Magic Arcana
 Tuesday, January 11, 2005

Welcome to another edition of [Sketches](#)! Yesterday Mark Rosewater [reviewed](#) *Betrayers of Kamigawa's Higure, the Still Wind*, an ability-filled legendary ninja. Let's look behind the scenes of the creation of that art piece. But first, some background on the previous work of the artist, Christopher Moeller.

Artist Portfolio

Christopher Moeller has contributed over 100 pieces of **Magic** card art since *Urza's Saga*. You can see his work on such cards as *Showers of Sparks*, *Tidal Kraken*, *Stormscape Battlemage*, *Crush of Wurms*, *Raven-Guild Initiate*, the *Mirrodin Triskelion*, and *Bringer of the Red Dawn*, among many others.



Art Description

The first step of the creation of a card's art is its art description. The art description tells the artist what the card will do, what its flavor is, and what the mood of the illustration should be. Here were the instructions given to Chris for *Higure, the Still Wind*:

- Color: Blue*
- Location: Doesn't matter; should probably be a night scene*
- Action: When you want something done quickly/cheaply, you hire a black-aligned ninja. When you want it done *right* you hire a blue-aligned ninja. This is a master blue-aligned human ninja, the height of artfulness. This character is *able* to assassinate as well as anyone, but is more suited to spying and thieving-type jobs.*
- Focus: the human ninja (male or female)*
- Mood: I will never leave a trace.*
- Notes: This is a legendary creature and should look it.*

Next the artist submits one or more sketches with his vision of the art description.

Sketch

Here's Mr. Moeller's initial sketch submitted for *Higure, the Still Wind* (called "Leiko, the Silent Hand" during playtest):

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Higure, the Still Wind sketch by Christopher Moeller

As you know, the Kamigawa block is inspired by Japanese mythology, but with a **Magic** twist -- and its ninja are no exception. **Magic's** version of these traditional secretive warriors need to show all the legendary stealth and prowess of the ninja while at the same time placing them in a context of powerful magic and gritty fantasy. Chris's Higure captures this well -- we can see that the figure is escaping from a mission, several steps ahead of his pursuers, about to make it worse for them with a smoking device.

Final Art

In full color Higure comes truly to life. And so does the background around him -- note the ogre bruiser (using a spiked club similar to **Sokenzan Bruiser**) recruited to help guard the building -- unsuccessfully, we might add.



Higure, the Still Wind final art by Christopher Moeller

Finished Card

And here's how you'll see the card in its final state, in booster packs of *Betrayers of Kamigawa*. Get ready to sneak in with ninja (with a little help from Chris Moeller) at the [prerelease!](#)



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