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Betrayal Just Around the Corner



John Carter · Saturday School
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The *Betrayers of Kamigawa* previews have started, and the [prereleases](#) are coming up on January 22nd and 23rd. That's one short week away! As promised, Saturday School has a preview card from *Betrayers*, and this card is so big I had to use a shoehorn to fit it in (more on that later). Let's hit the books first, and then we'll sneak a look at the next big thing.

Before Betrayers

Q: I have a **Long-Forgotten Gohei**, a **Soilshaper**, and a **Kodama of the South Tree** in play. My question is if I play **Hideous Laughter**, will the **Soilshaper** survive? Will it get the South Tree's pump before the Laughter resolves? – Aaron

A: Kodama and **Soilshaper** both trigger from the Arcane spell, so they both stack on top of and resolve before **Hideous Laughter**. If you use KotST's ability to pump the **Soilshaper**, the **Soilshaper** will survive (thanks to the Tree and the Gohei).

Q: Let's say I block an opponent's vanilla large creature with a number of other creatures plus a **Bushi Tenderfoot**. Once the damage is on the stack, the opponent then plays **Candles' Glow** to prevent three of the damage. Assuming I can save Bushi in some manner does Bushi flip to become **Kenzo the Hardhearted**? -- Mike L.

A: The Glowing creature's controller decides which three points are prevented, so chances are Bushi will not flip. [CR 419.7b] Of course, if the large guy doesn't go to the graveyard, who damaged it doesn't matter.

Extra If you blocked with two Tenderf... (Footh? Feet?). If you blocked with two of the guy and had plenty of other damage aimed at the large creature, a cruel opponent could use the Glow on the other damage and have both BTs deal damage. Should the big creature die, both 'Feet would flip - causing state-based effects to kick in once the second Foot becomes Kenzo. Hardhearted indeed.

Q: I was wondering, if you were to **Reweave** a restricted card, such as a **Tolarian Academy**, and the player is unable to put another Legendary land into play, will he deck himself or does he still get to shuffle his library in the end? –Nick



A: **Reweave** doesn't deck anyone; you'll always get to shuffle. **Reweave** reads in part, "a card that shares a card type with the sacrificed permanent." **Tolarian Academy** has only one type: land. Legendary is a supertype. Reweaving a Legendary land means the land gets sacrificed, and that player reveals cards until a land is revealed, then he or she shuffles his or her library back together.

Reweaving an artifact land like **Vault of Whispers** will make the player reveal cards until an artifact, a land, or an artifact land is revealed. Not all the types have to match—just one.

Q: Does **Sensei Golden-Tail's** Training counter stack causing the original given Bushido 1 counter to a creature in the previous turn to a Bushido 2 the second turn?

If not, then if I use Golden-Tail's ability on a samurai with Bushido 2 then it is replaced with the Sensei's Bushido 1 counter right? --Sam

A: **Sensei Golden-Tail's** ability, not the counter, grants bushido, and the ability is cumulative (though there will be multiple triggers).

The training counter throws off many people. The only thing the training counter does is remind you which creatures have been to SGT's dojo. When the Sensei trains a creature it gains bushido 1 and becomes a Samurai. Training a creature that already has bushido means you wind up with a creature that has bushido multiple times. So a creature with "Bushido 2" would have "Bushido 2, bushido 1". This causes two triggers, one per bushido, but the final result is a total bonus of +3/+3.

Q: If I imprint **Keiga, the Tide Star** onto **Soul Foundry** and produce two copies of it, is it still affected by the legend rule, and will that mean I can take 2 of my opponent's creatures? --Nick

A: Yes, Legendary Creatures that are tokens are just as beholden to the Legend Rule as card-based creatures.

Way Before Betrayers

Q: I have a **Jackal Pup** enchanted with **Pariah**, and a **Spidersilk Armor** and **Rite of Passage** in play. If the **Jackal Pup** takes one damage, does this create an infinite loop of adding +1/+1 counters?

--J. Andy Plants

A: Close, but not quite. When the **Jackal Pup** takes damage you have two triggers. One trigger will damage you (but be sent to the Pup instead because of **Pariah**). The other trigger will put a +1/+1 counter on the Pup because of **Rites of Passage**. You can stack the Passage over the damage trigger a huge number of times (there is no "infinity" in Magic), but once that's all said and done you'll have to move on, and that means stacking the damage last. This would mean your 1,000,000 Pup with 999,999 damage on it takes a point and dies [CR 420] before the pending Rites trigger resolves.

Use something that increases the pooch's toughness by another point, and then you're in unbounded loop land [CR 421.4].

Q: Am I allowed to play **Dark Triumph** and then regenerate a creature I have previously played, such as **Restless Dead** or **Drudge Skeletons**, to satisfy the sacrificing of a creature? -- Suzannah L.

A: No, sacrifices can't be stopped with regeneration. Regenerating stops only things that say "destroy" and/or lethal damage. Sacrifices are more deadly than that.

Q: If I have **Chill** in play and you announce you are playing **Rabid Wombat**, can I respond to the announcement, before you pay the mana cost, and use **Sleight of Mind** to change **Chill** to increase to cost of green spells? Do the sub steps of 409.1 happen at once or can they be responded to individually? --James K.

get a creature with infinite power and toughness? --William G.

A: **Booster Tutor** doesn't target, so no. Even if it did read "target booster", **Gleemax** might let you make targeting choices, but a target booster is not a target binder. You could try for an **Odyssey** booster and hope

Extra I'll note that **Tempest** gives you **Krakilin** instead of **Ivy Elemental** along with some other X spells. Beyond that you could get **Rolling Thunder** to warm everyone up. But the thing that sends **Tempest** over the top with **Mox Lotus** and **Booster Tutor: Buyback**.

Q: I was wondering if an opponent is required to answer with "yes" and "no" (those words exactly, no substitutes like nope, yeah, nodding) during the "Seven Questions" game from the card **Head to Head**. I ask this to make sure it can be combined with **Keeper of the Sacred Word**. --Jorael

A: Nope. As long as the answer is truthful, it need not be exactly yes or no. For example, using thumbs up or thumbs down with **Goblin Mime** in play would work fine.

Tourney Tech, Etc.

Q: I was recently at a tournament, and was told that gold-bordered [World Championship cards](#) could be played... I was just wondering if it was actually legal to use these as replacement cards to avoid damage to the real one, or if I was informed incorrectly? --Derek S.

A: The World Championship decks are not allowed in sanctioned play at any level. [[DCI MtG Floor Rules 102](#)] It doesn't matter what type of sleeves the cards are in or whether you own other copies.

Q: I just purchased some **Shattering Pulses** signed by Donato Giancola - can I use them in sanctioned play? --Angelo R.

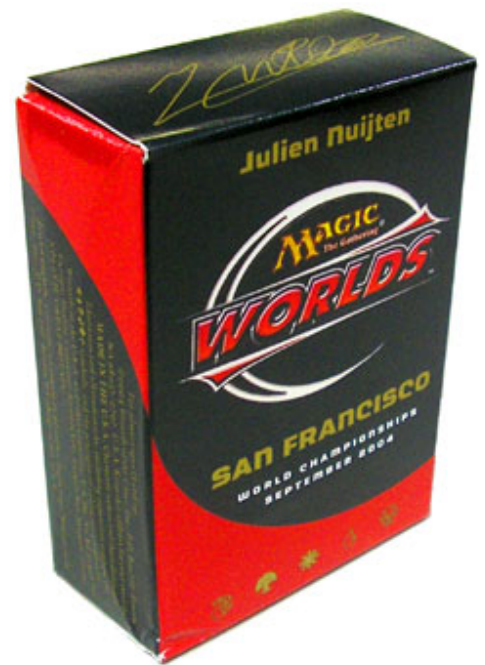
A: Absolutely. As long as the card is identifiable, artistic modifications and artist signatures are no problem. [[DCI UTR 28](#)] As a matter of fact, Pro Tours and Grand Prix events make a point of hosting artists so fans can meet the creative folks behind the iconic images of **Magic**.

Q: We have been trying to find out for about a year now which series the cards originate from that have the copyright year 1996 and are white bordered. Could you please help us out here? We know it's not *Fourth Edition* because that's 1995, and it isn't Fifth because that has 1997. So what came in between??? --Vincent

A: Normally I wouldn't get to answer questions like this, but I didn't want a nugget of **Magic** history to slip by... White bordered 1996 cards come in at least one variety and possibly two (even at Wizards' office researching releases nearly ten years old is difficult). The possible set is the [Rivals Quick Start Set](#) that was released in 1996. I wasn't able to find cards or scans to prove this though. The other option for which I did find scans is the [European and Asian Introductory Two-Player Sets](#).

And Finally Betrayers

Q: If you attack alone with Fumiko, and she gets +1/+1 from her bushido, making her 4/3, and then you attack



again, does she get +2/+2 if she's blocked a second time, making her 6/5? –A.A.R.

A: Not quite. She'll get +1/+1 from each combat for a total of +2/+2. Each time she has bushido 1. The second combat she has bushido 1 again, and the applied bonus is cumulative, but not the bushido itself varies based on the number of attackers.

Extra For instance, **Takeo, Samurai General** has "Each other Samurai you control gets +1/+1 for each point of bushido it has."

If you control Fumiko and Takeo, Fumiko would be a 3/2 (Bushido 0). If you attack with both, Fumiko's bushido would go to 2, and Takeo would make her a 5/4. If Fumiko is blocked, when her bushido resolves she'd get +2/+2 (assuming both are still alive), making her 7/6.

When combat ends, her bushido would return to 0 making her 5/4 (3/2 + 0/0 for Takeo + 2/2 for bushido trigger from earlier). If you attack with only Fumiko in a second combat, her bushido would go up to 1, not 3. If

she were blocked, she'd get +1/+1 from his trigger (for a total of +3/+3 from all of the bushido triggers). For the rest of combat she'd be, 7/6 because of Takeo's ability plus the triggers. After combat until the cleanup she'd be back to bushido 0 and would be 6/5.



Q: I was wondering for what period of time does a creature count as an "unblocked attacker?" Does this classification begin during the declare blockers step or following it? Does it end once the creature deals its combat damage or at the end of the combat phase? Regarding the ninjutsu ability, will it be possible to return an "unblocked attacker" to hand after first strike damage is on the stack? If so, will the ninja still do damage when regular combat damage goes on the stack? --Michael L.

A: A creature is unblocked from the time blockers are declared until the combat phase ends (or it otherwise leaves combat). This includes the declare blockers, combat damage, and end of combat steps.

Returning a first strike creature after first strike is on the stack will allow the first striker to deal combat damage and the ninja will deal its damage as normal during the remaining combat damage step.

Extra Yes, this means giving Higure, the Still Wind first strike means you can first strike with Higure, resolve his "search for a Ninja" ability, and ninjutsu that Ninja out via an unblocked creature (such as Higure) to deal damage.

I'd recommend that at the prerelease you kill attackers before you declare blockers (or Ninja tricks will be abound).

Today's Offering

In the past, I've snuck preview cards into Saturday School. The Patrons in particular, and the Offering ability in specific are so huge that sneaking them in anywhere is a challenge. So just what is a Patron? You've probably already seen their names in a [BOK vignette](#). Here's just one of the Patrons for your perusal:



I'm going to leave the strategic considerations to you and the other columnists, so what we're going to cover here is the way Offering turns playing spells on its proverbial ear.

Q: What what what!?!?

A: You mean “how does Offering work”?

Playing a spell has several steps, and Offering alters those rules. Let's cover only the parts that matter:

*You announce a spell and the spell goes on the stack [CR 409.1a]. Previously this was it for this step, but now if you're Offering, you also sacrifice a permanent as listed on the card.

*Once you get to the point where you figure out how much mana you actually have to spend, you process the total cost equation and lock in the result [CR 409.1f]. You might recall that the equation is **(mana cost + increases – reductions) = total cost**. Offering is a cost reduction. The amount of the reduction is based on what the mana cost of the sacrificed permanent was. You only pay for the leftover amount (if any) after figuring out the total cost. Remember though—mana cost includes color. We'll cover that in a minute

Questions about times when you can play Offering:

Q: Can I use Offering on my opponent's turn?

A: Of course. Offering does two things—it lets you play the card any time you could play an instant as well as reducing the total cost to play the spell.

Q: What if my opponent has played **Abeyance** this turn?

A: You can still Offer out a Patron. While **Abeyance** stops you from being allowed to play instants (etc.), the time when you could play instants is still there. In short, if you have priority, you can use the Offering ability regardless of whose turn it is and regardless of whether the stack is empty.

Q: Can **Orim's Chant** stop Offering?

A: If **Orim's Chant** has resolved, you won't be able to announce the spell regardless of Offering. If you're holding a Patron when you're targeted with **Orim's Chant**, you could respond to the Chant by Offering out the Patron.

Q: Can I play spells with Offering like normal?

A: Yes. If you want to pay "full price" for a card with offering, you can play it like normal at the time when that spell could normally be played.

Q: Can you **Flash Counter** a card with Offering?

A: No, the Patrons are creatures—you could **Remove Soul** them though. Counters that look for a specific type of spell will see what that type it is regardless of when the spell is played.



Q: Can I kill the creature my opponent would Offer to counter the spell with Offering?

A: No, by the time you know a Patron is coming its Offer has already been sacrificed. Your opponent might even respond to a kill spell by using the intended target as Offering food.

Questions about costs:

Q: Can I sacrifice a permanent that isn't the right type, or sacrifice nothing?

A: Whoa there, speedo. If you want to Offer out a Patron, you need to make the right sacrifices. In short, no.

Q: Can I use **Unnatural Selection** to make a **Darksteel Colossus** into a Snake and then Offer it for a Patron of the Orochi?

A: Yes. "Snake offering" only cares if the permanent is a Snake to get the process started. And no, being indestructible does not save a Snake-ified Colossus from being sacrificed—sacrifices trump indestructible. Don't forget that mana cost does include color however.

Q: Why do you mention that mana costs include color?

A: Offering is extra special in that it looks at cost reductions in a new way. Previous reducers like the [Tempest Medallions](#) and Edgewalker are slightly different. Offering can reduce both colored and generic mana costs from the total. Another big plus is that any "extra" or "off-color" parts of the mana costs aren't wasted—they apply to reducing the generic mana cost of the Patron.

For example:

I want to play Patron of the Orochi.

I use **Unnatural Selection** to turn the following creatures into Snakes.

Here's how the math works out...

Avatar of Might: 6GGG - 6GGG = 0

Darksteel Colossus: 6GGG - 11 = GGG (generic mana costs apply only to generic mana costs—extra generic mana cost reduction does nothing)

Ivy Elemental: 6GGG - XG (remember, X in play = 0) = 6G

Bringer of the Green Dawn: 6GGG - 7GGG = -1 (you'll pay 0)

Plated Slagwurm: 6GGG - 4GGGG = 1 (the extra G in the Slagwurm's mana cost reduces the generic mana cost portion of the total cost to play the Patron)

Rith the Awakener: 6GGG - 3GGGG* = 1GG (1e: 3GGGG* = (3 + 1 + 1 + G)). The G and * in the mana cost are off-color, therefore, they reduce the generic mana cost portion of the total cost to play the Patron.)

Q: How is this different than **Edgewalker**?

A: **Edgewalker** doesn't affect the generic mana cost of a spell. **Edgewalker's** text includes, "Cleric spells you play cost * less to play. This effect reduces only the amount of colored mana you pay." The wording on **Edgewalker** itself keeps the extra or off-color * or from reducing generic mana cost from the total to play. Offering uses extra or off-color portions of a mana cost to reduce generic mana cost from the total to play.

Q: What about **Trinisphere**?

A: **Trinisphere** sits around at the end of the total cost equation and makes sure people actually spend 3 or more mana. If a cost is reduced below 3, you'll have to spend at least 3 mana. For example, the Snake-ified Slagwurm would make the total cost to play be 1, and **Trinisphere** would bump that up to 3. The Snake-ified Rith would give a total cost to play of 1 that would be bumped up to 2 by **Trinisphere**.

Q: So how does this all fit together?

A: Let's say I have **Seshiro the Anointed** and want to play a **Patron of the Orochi**.

- 1) If I have priority I can announce the Patron, put it on the stack, and sacrifice Seshiro.
- 2) I do the total cost math and determine that 6 - 4 = 2. I lock in "2".
- 3) I tap some lands for enough mana.
- 4) I pay my 2. **Patron of the Orochi** is now officially "played" (and waiting to resolve).
- 5) Since I just played a spell, I get priority. If I pass and my opponent passes, the Patron will resolve and be put into play.

So there you have it—gigantic creatures that come flying out of your hand and sneaky ninjas diving in to stab you with little warning. And that's just the beginning of the *Betrayal*. Best of luck at [the prereleases!](#)

Class dismissed.

--Carter

as follows:

502.42. Offering

502.42a Offering is a static ability of a card that functions in any zone from which the card can be played. "[Text] offering" means "You may play this card any time you could play an instant by sacrificing a [text] permanent. If you do, the total cost to play this card is reduced by the sacrificed permanent's mana cost.

502.42b The permanent is sacrificed at the same time the spell is announced (see rule 409.1a). The total cost of the spell is reduced by the sacrificed permanent's mana cost (see rule 409.1f).

502.42c Generic mana in the sacrificed permanent's mana cost reduces generic mana in the total cost to play the card with offering. Colored mana in the sacrificed permanent's mana cost reduces mana of the same color in the total cost to play the card with offering. Colored mana in the sacrificed permanent's mana cost that does not match colored mana in colored mana cost of the card with offering, or is in excess of the card's colored mana cost, reduces that much generic mana in the total cost.



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