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## Betrayal on the Streets

John Carter  
Saturday School  
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Send your rules questions to **Magic Rules Manager John Carter**. Can't find the answer to your question somewhere else, like the [Magic Comprehensive Rules](#)? Maybe he's already answered it! Try the [Saturday School Searchable Rules Database](#).

We're back from [Japan](#), and what a week it was. The Pros were abuzz with talk of [the modified payout](#) for Pro Tour Philadelphia and the new [Pro Player's Lounge](#) at the PT. Tournament organizers everywhere took note as the Pro Tour stepped away from Rochester draft in favor of formats the public tends to prefer (though you certainly can still Rochester locally if your area wants to).

### Betrayers Abound

**Q:** If I have [Umezawa's Jitte](#) unequipped on the field, with charge counters on it, can I still play its second two abilities involving them? -- Thorn

**A:** Actually, you can play all three abilities. The "equipped creature gets +2/+2 until end of turn" ability will do nothing unless equipped, but the other two abilities are fully functional whether the Jitte is on something or not.

**Q:** Say you were to equip [Umezawa's Jitte](#) to a creature with double strike. Could you, in response to the first strike portion of damage going on the stack, remove the two counters this generated to give the equipped creature +4/+4 until the end of the turn before the 'normal' round of combat damage is assigned? --Joe B.

**A:** Yes, you can remove the two counters from the first strike trigger before regular combat damage is assigned. Do note that you're not "responding" to first strike-- you're letting the damage and then the trigger resolve, and then you're activating the Jitte.



**Q:** I have a question about the [Kira](#), [Great Glass-Spinner](#) and [Aether Vial](#) combo. If you react to other player announcing a spell that targets your creature by putting Kira into play with Vial, isn't that creature already targeted? --Valteri R.

**A:** "Bombo" would be a better term than combo. Kira must be in play before a player announces the spell in order to trigger. [Aether Vialing](#) a Kira into play will have no effect on spells already on the stack. If a second spell gets played that turn targeting the same creature, Kira wouldn't trigger that time either because the game knows that the spell is the second one that turn (even though Kira herself was around for only one announcement).

**Q:** [Genju of the Realm](#) is on a [Blinkmoth Nexus](#). The Nexus animates itself (and this resolves), and then the Genju animates the Nexus. The land should be a very large flying trampler, correct?

**A:** Yes, you'll have an 8/12 Legendary Land Artifact Creature - Blinkmoth Spirit with Flying, trample, and the Blinkmoth abilities.

**Q:** Is it possible to announce playing [Sickening Shoal](#) and splice [Horobi's Whisper](#) removing from the game the Whisper itself to pay the Shoal's alternate cost? --Dave P.

**A:** Yes, the Whisper is still in your hand, and paying costs (like removing the Whisper) comes after you've announced the spell and any splices.

**Q:** Can you play [Devouring Greed](#) and splice on [Horobi's Whisper](#) with only two cards in your graveyard if you're sacrificing two Spirits to the Greed?

**A:** Yes, you can. While mana must be in your pool before paying costs, the costs themselves are paid in any order. You can sacrifice the Spirits for the additional cost on the Greed and then remove the two cards plus the two Spirits to pay for the Whisper's splice.



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**\*Extra\*** Be aware that this wouldn't work if the Spirits you sacrifice are tokens-- they're in the graveyard until state-based effects are checked, but they're not actually cards. And also remember that the **Devouring Greed** is still on the Stack, so it can't be one of the cards removed for a spliced-on Whisper.

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**Q:** Could you clear something up for me? With regard to **Minamo's Meddling**, where it says "each card with the same name as a card spliced onto that spell." does it mean "any card" (as opposed to "one card")? --Dave D.

**A:** Yes, any copies of a spliced-on card will be discarded. If you play **Devouring Greed** and splice on a **Horobi's Whisper**, playing **Minamo's Meddling** would cause you to discard all copies of **Horobi's Whisper** that are in your hand no matter how many you spliced. If you're holding some other card that wasn't spliced on, that card would be fine.

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**Q:** I have a **Shirei, Shizo's Caretaker** in play. If I sacrifice a **Bile Urchin** at the end of my turn, will it be returned into play during that end-of-turn step? And if so, can I repeat this enough times to win the game? --M. M.

**A:** No, "at end of turn" triggers occur only once per turn-- as the end of turn step begins. Sacrificing something after the @EOT triggers have gone on the stack (ie: the first chance you get during the EOT step) will mean the sacrificed creature won't be back until the next EOT.

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**Q:** **Shirei, Shizo's Caretaker** effectively says it resurrects any creature of yours that was offed if it had 1 or less power. My question is this: does it mean printed power or power at the time it was sent to the 'yard. --James M.

**A:** **Shirei** looks for the power of the creature just before it died. **Sickening Shoal** to kill a **Kokusho, the Evening Star** (via having 0 or less toughness) would mean **Kokusho** will come back.

**\*Extra\*** The decision to return the Caretakered creature is made at the end of turn, not when **Shirei** originally triggers. The reason is that **Shirei's** trigger (Whenever a creature with power 1 or less...) sets up a delayed triggered ability. Delayed triggered abilities often don't have the trigger words (when, whenever, at) listed at the beginning of the trigger event, so **Shirei** is slightly confusing if you read the text without recognizing the ability. The "you may" refers specifically to returning the creature, not to the whole delayed triggered ability. A less elegant but perhaps easier to understand way to read **Shirei** would be:

"Whenever a creature with power 1 or less is put into your graveyard from play, [at end of turn] you may return that creature card to play under your control if **Shirei, Shizo's Caretaker** is still in play."

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**Q:** What happens if I **Wear Away** targeting a **Pattern of Rebirth** and splice on a **Horobi's Whisper** targeting the creature that has the Pattern on it? --Paul S.

**A:** Spells with spliced parts are executed in the order written starting with the original spell and then adding the splice portions in the order the player specified. In this case, since the **Wear Away** is the base spell, the Pattern would be destroyed, and then the previously enchanted creature would be destroyed. The Pattern doesn't trigger.

**\*Extra\*** If you splice **Wear Away** onto **Horobi's Whisper** instead, you'll get the opposite effect. The creature will be destroyed which triggers the Pattern, and then the **Wear Away** part will destroy the Pattern. Then the game would check state-based effects (which would have put the Pattern in the graveyard if it were still around), the Pattern trigger would get stacked, and the active player would get priority. Be careful how you're announcing your spliced spells, and be sure to think about their order before you get started!

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**Q:** If I have a **Gutwrencher Oni** in play and I don't have an Ogre, and don't have any cards in my hand to discard, what happens? --Dan J.

**A:** Nothing happens. If you had a card when the triggered ability resolves, you'd have to discard it. If you don't, you do nothing and proceed to your draw step.

**\*Extra\*** Yes, you can respond to the trigger by playing the last card in your hand if it's an instant, and you won't have to discard-- assuming the instant doesn't draw you cards.

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**Q:** An article mentioned that as long as a point of trample damage made it to the opponent that creature was considered unblocked. Is this true? --Bryce

**A:** No, it's not true. A creature is unblocked only if no blockers are declared for it during the blockers step [CR 309.2f] or if a spell or ability specifically says so (like a **Ninja** when you use **Ninjutsu** [CR 502.43c]). Doing a point of trample (having crushed a blocker) would trigger an ability like **Hypnotic Specter's**, but it wouldn't trigger abilities based on being unblocked.

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**Q:** I control a non-flying creature and a **Jugan, the Rising Star**. My opponent attacks me with **Ryusei, the Falling Star**, I block with **Jugan**, and both Dragons die. Can **Jugan** save my other creature from **Ryusei**? --Sjoerd



**A:** Yes, because he is the active player his abilities will go on the stack before yours, and they'll resolve in the opposite order [CR Glossary: LIFO]. By the time Ryusei's ability deals 5 to all non-flying creatures, your lucky creature has already received five +1/+1 counters from Jugan. If it were your turn (or if the creatures' controllers were reversed), the opposite would be true.

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## Yo, Uyo

**Q:** I have an **Uyo, Silent Prophet** and a 1/1 creature who is attacking my opponent. He decides to let it go unblocked, so I **Strength of Cedars** the creature, giving it +10/+10, then I copy the spell using Uyo's ability. I say the creature gets another +10/+10; my opponent argues that it only gets an additional +8/+8. Who's right? --Evan

**A:** Your opponent is closer, but not quite right. In order to copy the spell with Uyo, the spell must still be on the stack. **Strength of Cedars** doesn't figure out what its bonus will be until it's resolving-- at which time Uyo can't be used. So if the creature got +10/+10, then the spell had resolved and wouldn't be a legal target for Uyo. If you use Uyo before the spell resolves, then you'll get two Strengths that give a bonus according to the lands in play as they resolve. In this case, that's +8/+8 twice (a 17/17 creature).

**\*Extra\*** Don't forget you can reuse Uyo for added trickiness. So let's play **Strength of Cedars** while you have 10 lands out. Five are tapped for the Cedars. While that's on the stack, use Uyo targeting the Cedars and have the new copy target the 1/1. Be sure to let the copy resolve (+8/+8... 9/9). After the copy resolves, use Uyo again before the original resolves. When the second copy resolves, you have 6 lands, so the creature gets +6/+6 (15/15). Now let the original Cedars resolve for another +6/+6-- that's a 21/21 creature. GG!

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Fernando O. also had several questions about Uyo (and making copies), and since copies are getting a lot of press lately, let's just do them all together.

**Q:** If I play **Swallowing Plague** for five damage, and then I copy it with **Uyo, Silent Prophet**, will I do ten damage?

**A:** Yes, in total you'll do ten damage (5 and 5). Uyo copies a given spell-- including the mode, value of X, splice, kicker, and so forth.

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**Q:** If I copy **Glacial Ray** with Uyo while my **Thief of Hope** is in play, will my opponent lose two life?

**A:** Using Uyo to copy an Arcane spell doesn't trigger **Thief of Hope**-- only one life will be lost/gained. Copying a spell is different than playing a spell or playing a copy.

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**Q:** May I splice onto an Arcane spell that is imprinted on **Isochron Scepter** when I play the copy? And, will spiritcraft trigger with that copy?

**A:** Yes, and yes. **Isochron Scepter** makes copies of a card that you can then play. Playing an Arcane spell will allow you to splice on cards that are in your hand and will trigger things that look for "Spirit or Arcane" (ie: Spiritcraft). Uyo, on the other hand, just makes a copy that by definition is put directly on the stack [CR 503.10].

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## Pre-Champions

**Q:** During a game, a friend activated his **Myr Incubator** to put 30 1/1 Myr tokens into play. I played **Echoing Decay** on one of the Myr tokens. My friend sacrificed the targeted Myr to a **Krark-Clan Ironworks**. What happens to the other tokens? --Cyril M.

**A:** The other tokens stay in play because the **Echoing Decay** will be countered for lack of a target.

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**Q:** If a card has an ability such as giving yourself colorless mana, can that mana be used as any color or as a colorless? --Jonathan

**A:** Colorless mana can be used only to pay for generic mana costs-- it's not as useful as colored mana. Both colorless mana and generic mana costs are written using the number in a grey circle. Anytime you see "colorless mana", you know you're talking about the stuff that's in your mana pool. Anytime you see "generic mana cost" (sometimes written as "generic mana" when the context talks only about costs) you know you're talking about the cost of a card or an ability.

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**Q:** My friends and I are wondering if the effect of a **Millstone** and similar spells (**Brain Freeze**) can be the cause of a player losing the game. --Wilbur R.

**A:** No, **Millstone** itself will not kill a player. The player still has to attempt to draw from their library and fail [CR 420.5g]

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**Q:** In Gatherer there is a ruling for **Enduring Renewal** that states: "Enduring Renewal only affects creatures that are 'drawn'. It doesn't affect cards that are put into your hand from your library, or from anywhere else." People I play against are playing **Boomerang** on my creatures and then after I return the creature to play they insist that **Enduring Renewal** will not bring them back from my graveyard later because of the ruling **Enduring Renewal** only affects creatures that are drawn. -- Cordell

**A:** Any creature in play that you control will be saved by **Enduring Renewal**. **Enduring Renewal** does three things: 1) Makes you play with your hand revealed, 2) puts creature cards you draw into the graveyard, and 3) puts creatures that go to the graveyard from play back into your hand. The ruling you're referring to only applies to the second ability (drawing creatures). The third ability (dying creatures) works fine. The ruling was made so that people who played cards like **Eladamri's Call** or **Impulse** would understand that since neither of those is a "draw" effect, then **Enduring Renewal** would not notice them. The third ability will return creatures regardless of how they got into play or where they had been previously.

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**Q:** How can [the "Life" deck](#) from [PT Columbus](#) activate a **Nomads en-Kor** so many times?

**A:** When the *6th Edition* rules update was made, extraneous rules baggage was removed. This includes the "interrupt window" and the "damage prevention and redirection window". Instead, prevention and redirection could be played at any time regardless of what damage possibilities there were, and they'd wait around on that turn in case anything happened. Previously, prevention and redirection could only be played while damage was being dealt, and only prevention and redirection (and mana sources to pay for them) were playable at that time-- a convoluted system at best. These days prevention and redirection can be played at any time regardless of whether there's any damage to prevent, and they wait around until the end of the turn in case anything happens. Rules savvy players have realized that the "free" en-Kor ability can be used as many times as they want, even when without impending damage. So closing a nightmare of a rules window opened a door for deck designers to let their understanding of the rules help them get a life (or a million).

**\*Extra\*** Magic debuted at GenCon in 1993 (8/19/93 - 8/22/93). The *6th Edition* rules update is dated 4/23/99. With an interim of five years, eight months and four days, December 27, 2004 was the line where **Magic** has spent as much time under the *6th Edition* rules system as it did before *6th Edition* existed!

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**Q:** Can I **Living Wish** back a creature in the absolutely-removed-from-the-freaking-game-forever zone? --Jeffrey B.

**A:** Absofreakinpositiflippinlutu NOT.

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Now that *Betrayers of Kamigawa* is in stores everywhere, I look forward to helping with whatever sneakiness comes to mind-- Ninja or not. I might not be able to reply to every email Saturday School receives, but you can bet I won't let you miss a juicy one.

Class dismissed.

--Carter



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