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Sketches: Flames of the Blood Hand

Magic Arcana

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Welcome to another edition of [Sketches](#)! This time we take a behind the scenes look at the illustration of *Betrayers of Kamigawa*'s unpreventable burn spell **Flames of the Blood Hand**. But first, some background on the artist, Aleksi Briclot.

Artist Portfolio

Horobi's Whisper art by Aleksi Briclot

Although [Aleksi Briclot](#) is new to **Magic** illustration, having debuted in *Champions of Kamigawa* with **Oni Possession**, he's no newcomer to otherworldly illustration. He's an established video game concept illustrator and comic artist (see his [website](#)). His other artist credits include **Aura Barbs** and the Limited powerhouse **Horobi's Whisper** in *Betrayers*. Welcome aboard, Aleks!

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 Aleks for **Flames of the Blood Hand**:

Show a red-aligned ogre who knows how to use fire magic and is casting a powerful damage spell. From his hands or some magical object we see this brilliant white-hot fire attack of your design. This is supernatural fire that can't be extinguished, so maybe the flames are a strange color, or seem stylized/otherworldly somehow.

Along with the art description, Aleks would have had access to the Kamigawa style guide to see concept illustrations of what ogres look like in Kamigawa -- for an idea of what he might have seen, check out **Sokenzan Bruiser**, **Villainous Ogre** or **Ogre Marauder**, for example.

The next step is to submit sketches of his vision of the art description.

Sketches

Here's Aleks's full-color initial sketch submitted for **Flames of the Blood Hand**:

Flames of the Blood Hand sketch
Flames of the Blood Hand sketch 1 by Aleksi Briclot

There was some concern that the pose of the ogre looked as if he was being *struck* by a flame effect rather than *producing* one. But as you can see, there's definite potential here for a mean, nasty fire-spell. Here's Aleks's second submission.

Flames of the Blood Hand sketch
Flames of the Blood Hand sketch 2 by Aleksi Briclot

Here you can see much more clearly that the ogre is the agent here, in command and ready to blast the viewer. His claw radiates that supernatural, unavoidable heat from the art description.

Final Art

In the finished art, Briclot refines the flame effect with cool tracers and sparks, and the detail of the ogre's armor becomes extremely polished.

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Flames of the Blood Hand final art by Aleksí Briclot

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 burn out your opponent (with a little help from Aleksí Briclot) with *Flames of the Blood Hand*!



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