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CARD OF THE DAY - MARCH, 2006

Posted in **Feature** on March 1, 2006



By Wizards of the Coast

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Card of the Day - vendredi 31 mars 2006



Mourning Thrull

Guildpact common. Though White is best known for the Spirit Link ability (it's even named after a white card!), the first creature ever printed with this ability was actually Black! Can you name him?

Card of the Day - jeudi 30 mars 2006



Orzhov Guildmage

Guildpact uncommon. One of the challenges with the guildmages was getting their two abilities to be relatively equal in power, since they each have mirrored mana costs. With the Orzhov Guildmage, the challenge was that causing life loss is, generally speaking, more powerful than gaining life. So, to keep the costs and the gain/loss numbers equal, R&D made the life gain side targeted, whereas the life loss side effects everybody in the game.

Card of the Day - mercredi 29 mars 2006



Debtors' Knell

Guildpact rare. Different abilities tend to have one color that is best at that ability, but then they also show up in one or two other colors, just with weaker effect or less frequency. Black is easily identified as the king of creature reanimation (moving a creature from the graveyard directly into play), but White dabbles in this area as well. Cards like Resurrection and Breath of Life have appeared at various times, and the repeating effect of Debtors' Knell is reminiscent of Reya Dawnbringer.

Card of the Day - mardi 28 mars 2006



Night/Day

Apocalypse uncommon. Designing gold cards is all about looking for where the colors in question either overlap or are opposed. The opposite effects of this split card inspired the idea for Orzhov Pontiff during *Guildpact* design.

Card of the Day - lundi 27 mars 2006



Pillory of the Sleepless

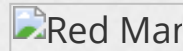
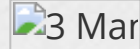
Guildpact common. A "Chinese menu" card that chooses one ability from each color and combines them, the black side of this card has never actually been printed! With the White side being Pacifism, the black side is the one point of damage per turn. That ability (a creature enchantment that deals one point of damage per turn to the creature's controller) originally began in green, starting with Wanderlust. The ability is now typically seen as black, but an exact version like Wanderlust (doing just one point per turn) has never been made.

Card of the Day - vendredi 24 mars 2006

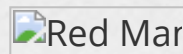
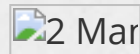


Keeper of the Nine Gales

Legions rare. This card is a good example of names that hint at a much deeper story waiting to be told. Cards with names as long as five or more words are historically quite rare. During Kamigawa some names got so long that some cards had to have their casting costs reconsidered to make room for all the letters! (For example,



takes up less space than



.) Under such extreme circumstances, such a change would only be made if the name was particularly good and the new mana cost would have (or already had been) considered reasonable.

Card of the Day - jeudi 23 mars 2006



Freyalise's Winds

Ice Age rare. This card was originally going to be called Phelddagrif's Winds! R&D wanted to use "Phelddagrif" as an anagram of Richard Garfield PhD to honor the game's creator. Continuity heard about the name and denied it. When asked why, the response was, "That doesn't sound like the name of a Goddess of Spring." Confronted with the question what Phelddagrif did sound like, the fateful answer was: "Umm, I don't know. A flying purple hippo?"

Card of the Day - mercredi 22 mars 2006



Gustcloak Savior

Onslaught rare. The gustcloak ability featured on several *Onslaught* cards was inspired by the *Exodus* enchantment Reconnaissance. Typically one of the biggest fears for new players is "attacking wrong" and having something bad happen to their creatures. Cards like this were designed for those players, giving them the option to just send in their creatures without having to worry, since they can wait to see what happens and then pull any creatures back out of combat if needed should something go wrong.

Card of the Day - mardi 21 mars 2006



Otherworldly Journey

Champions of Kamigawa uncommon. Design teams often try to keep sets focused on either +1/+1 counters (like *Shambling Shell*) or counters that serve as some kind of marker (like *Bloodthirsty Ogre*), to keep potential confusion to a minimum. Early in design, *Champions* featured mostly non-+1/+1 tokens, and at one point this was the only card in the file that actually had +1/+1 counters. The team debated losing the card, but decided they liked it so much that it was worth keeping anyway. In the end, a few other +1/+1 counter cards made it into the set as well, quite possibly because of the decision to keep *Otherworldly Journey*.

Card of the Day - lundi 20 mars 2006



Zephyr Falcon

Legends common. The ability that would eventually be called "vigilance" was very rare at first. Only Serra Angel had it in Alpha/Beta/Unlimited. Between *Arabian Nights* and *Antiquities*, only Yotian Soldier was printed. With *Legends*, however, four cards were printed involving vigilance. Showing just how wild the color pie was originally, those four cards feature a red enchantment, a green creature, a blue creature, and a BRG legend, putting the ability on all five colors!

Card of the Day - vendredi 17 mars 2006



Castle

Alpha uncommon. From Alpha through *Fifth Edition*, the various wordings of this card always removed the bonus for attacking creatures. For flavor reasons, the idea was that if your Serra Angel (or other vigilant creature) was attacking, she shouldn't get the defensive bonus since she's presumably not in the Castle anymore. The clunky text was dropped starting with *Sixth Edition*, an unusually late time for such an old card to get a functionally different wording.

Card of the Day - jeudi 16 mars 2006



Barter in Blood

Mirrodin uncommon. Sometimes opposite colors, for opposite reasons, end up getting similar abilities. In White's philosophy, wiping out creatures on both sides of the table is about fairness and balance. In Black's philosophy, it shows willingness to sacrifice one's own minions in the pursuit of destroying one's enemies (IE "power at any cost"). While White is the king of wiping out creatures on both sides of the table (see *Wrath of God* and its many variants), Black also gets this ability from time to time. However, because Black is only second best at this ability, there is usually some restriction attached, such as hitting only a limited number of creatures, or requiring more Swamps to kill larger creatures.

Card of the Day - mercredi 15 mars 2006



Trade Caravan

Homelands common. Around the time *Homelands* was being designed, Wizards of the Coast had a promotional program called the WotC Caravan Tour, which brought Wizards employees that worked on **Magic** and **Magic** artists to stores to promote the game. This card was named specifically as a nod to that tour.

Card of the Day - mardi 14 mars 2006



Mirror Mirror

Unglued rare. This card was actually designed before the idea for the “un” sets. It ended up not getting printed before *Unglued* because at the time, Wizards policy was to minimize cards that allowed your opponents to handle your cards. It was a natural fit once *Unglued* was conceived however. The first idea for the *Unglued* version was to mirror the card down the middle with everything: art, mana cost, rules text, you name it. That turned out too hard to read, but the printed version retains some throwbacks to that version.

Card of the Day - lundi 13 mars 2006



Phantasmal Fiend

Alliances common. Those that check Gatherer will notice that the entire line "Effects that alter Phantasmal Fiend's power alter its toughness instead, and vice versa" has been removed from the oracle wording of the card. The reason is that, after several rules changes along the way, this is now how the rules work anyway. When the card was printed it wasn't the case, but the designer must have gotten something right, because now all power/toughness swapping effects work this way automatically!

Card of the Day - vendredi 10 mars 2006



Lurking Jackals

Urza's Destiny uncommon. Can't see the jackals in the art? That's because they're "lurking" in silhouette up at the top!

Card of the Day - jeudi 9 mars 2006



Swamp Mosquito

Alliances common. Thanks to the Poison mechanic, this was effectively a 2/1 flier for two mana! It still didn't get much use, though.

Card of the Day - mercredi 8 mars 2006



Avatar of Woe

Prophecy rare. Part of a five card cycle from *Prophecy*, the inspiration was to have one avatar for each color which represented something that defines that color.

Card of the Day - mardi 7 mars 2006



Phyrexian Portal

Alliances rare. This card from way back in June 1996 was the inspiration for the "divvy" cycle from *Invasion*, which included cards like Fact or Fiction.

Card of the Day - lundi 6 mars 2006



Chance Encounter

Odyssey rare. The red member of an *Odyssey* cycle of alternative win condition cards (like *Battle of Wits*), the idea behind this card was to create a “luck” card that could reward planning and deckbuilding.

Card of the Day - vendredi 3 mars 2006



Volcanic Island

Beta rare. This was the last of the original cycle of dual lands to actually see print. Since *Volcanic Island* was inadvertently omitted from the Alpha set, only nine of the possible ten color combinations were originally available. *Volcanic Island* was added to the mix starting with the Beta set. Starting today, another *Volcanic Island* gains prominence in **Magic**, as coverage begins for Pro Tour-Honolulu!

Card of the Day - jeudi 2 mars 2006



Niv-Mizzet, the Firemind

Guildpact rare. As the Parun of the Izzet guild, Niv-Mizzet is the original guildmaster who signed the Guildpact 10,000 years ago. The smartest (and probably most vain) creature on the planet, he likes to make sure everyone knows who runs the show by naming things as much as possible by using the letters of his own name. Some examples include Nivix, Aerie of the Firemind, Mizzium Transreliquat (Mizzium being a new metal invented by the Firemind), and Invoke the Firemind. Even Wee Dragonauts refers to the Izzet Parun. Oh, and don't forget the name of the guild itself!

Card of the Day - mercredi 1 mars 2006



Schismotivate

Guildpact uncommon. Created by looking for effects that could be mirrored in Red and Blue, it's interesting that neither of these abilities were originally associated primarily with these colors. Granting +X/+0 began as primarily a black ability (see *Howl From Beyond*, but also notice *Berserk*) but moved to Red when the color pie shift occurred (see *Enrage*). The "shrink" ability has shown up all over the color pie (see "Honey, I Shrunk the Blue Cards" by Aaron Forsythe for more) but starting with *Ravnica* it is now primarily an ability for Blue mages.

Posted in **Feature** on March 1, 2006

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