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"Create Your Own Magic" Fiction Winner Dylan Fay

Magic Weekend 2006 wasn't just about [U.S. Nationals](#) and the [JSS Championships](#); it also played host to side events, a gigantic [Game of the Year](#), and [Magic contests](#) with fabulous, glittering prizes.

Magic Weekend attendees entered the Create Your Own Magic contest in four categories of creative **Magic**-related expression—game design, art, coverage, and fiction. Today we look at the winning fiction entry by Dylan Fay.

Dylan, 15, hails from Orlando, Florida and has been playing **Magic** since *Darksteel*. He was able to enter the Create Your Own Magic contest in Atlanta because he was qualified for the JSS Championships, and won a \$1000 scholarship. Here's his winning submission, the first chapter of an unfinished **Magic** story. Congratulations, Dylan!

"Monterra: Desegregation"

Chapter One

Princess Annah ran along the pine-lined paths of her home, eager for adventure. The young elf joyfully called to the inhabitants of her home, majestic Greenwell Forest. Calling up a rush of green mana, she leaped into a tree on the wings of a spell. Annah flitted from limb to limb in the endless row of evergreens, hardly paying any attention to where she was going. Suddenly she stopped, looking around curiously. This was the farthest she had ever been from home.

She was shocked to notice that the trees had begun to thin out. She was astounded to actually see *gaps* in the canopy overhead. But how could this be possible? She recalled lessons from when she was younger, and had a tutor.

"Greenwell Forest goes on forever," The old elf Geoffrey said. "The forest stretches out across the world, never ending. The green mana you use powers life on our plane." He gazed out at the stars scattered in the sky. "You are fortunate to have been born here, Annah," he said, looking down at her kindly. "Very fortunate."

Annah ran with a new determination. Her teacher had been wrong. If there were gaps, there was an end. She knew now where she was going. It was exhilarating... she was going to find an end to the forest she once thought boundless.



The trees stopped. The curious princess gazed out beyond her home.

The outside world was blue. A crystal sea streamed out from where the forest stopped. Far in the distance she thought she saw an archipelago, shrouded in mist. Excited by her discovery, she looked out to see a clear blue sky above her for the first time. Gazing back toward the islands, she spotted a small sail.

"I must tell father," she whispered to herself. Joyfully, she called again on her green magic. With a whispered word, Annah grew into a giant. Turning back to the forest, she ran swiftly toward her home.

A young blue mage's sky blue robes rustled as he strode to his small sailboat, twisted oak staff in hand. As a fifteen-year-old novice, he had not yet gained the rank to have a spell driven boat, like the masters who called on wind to aid their travels. He didn't really need their rank, as he had already taught himself much of the knowledge that came with it. Nevertheless, he dreamed of attaining the dark indigo robes that came with that rank.

He was, in fact, a bit cleverer than his elders assumed. Terence had secretly studied until he had been able to get into the locked rooms full of higher spell books. Once he'd broken the spell guarding the door, he'd gained access to powerful and dangerous magic. If the Mages knew what Terence had been looking at... but no, it was impossible. He covered his tracks very well.

But now was the time for a boat ride. The young mage had been taught at the Island's school for more than ten years. The history lessons he recited every day became a chant he knew by heart. "Marelevatio is the Island of the world. The sea stretches out to all corners of the plane. The blue magic binds us all. The sea binds the blue magic."

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But Terence's belief was shaken by a book he found at the top of the history shelf in the library he had broken into. A complicated spell was required to read it, and it took Terence two months to see the words and drawings appear on the parchment. What had appeared shocked him. It was a map, but not the map he had grown up learning.

It showed the sea that was Terence's home at the center of the world, but the Island wasn't the only thing on the map; other lands surrounded Marelevatio. He saw a forest to the south, marked in beautiful letters as Greenwell. A warning labeled a huge marsh in the north. The east had nothing drawn, a simple name revealing its nature—the Faba Plains. He gazed in wonder to the right side of the map, where ranges of mountains glittered in red ink. If that map held true, then his elders had lied. There was a world other than the sea in which he lived. A world Terence was going to find.

Shaking himself from his reverie, Terence cast a simple levitation spell to lift himself onto his ship. Whispering another word, he waved his hand. The ship slowly began to glide out to sea. The Council would probably confine him to the innermost areas of the Island if he told them what he found. He was going to have to find it himself.

* * *

Hawk's tall, lithe body stood fast in the wind and rain that lashed the high hill where he stood. His gray robes billowed out into a wide cloud behind him. No one color ruled in this realm. The Rogue Wizards blended all five colors, drawing the ire of the rest of Monterra.

Sweeping his staff into a wide arc, he weaved the three shafts of light that streamed from its head. Blue twisted between white and green, fusing into a bolt of light aquamarine. The light encased the wizard's body, and Hawk felt the wind and rain cease around him. His robes dried.

No mage restricted to one color could do *that*, he thought proudly, examining his armor of light. Suddenly he remembered what he had come home for, and his good mood vanished. Wheeling around, he strode quickly toward an oak tree at the base of the cliff. Stopping at its massive trunk, he smiled, thinking of what it hid.

"Venio," he whispered, and lifted his staff. Five soft beams of mana—black, red, white, green and blue, shot from the pole, hitting the five knots in the tree's bark.

The tree groaned and opened a hole in its middle that began to widen. The portal continued to grow until it was large enough for Hawk to step through, which he did, ducking his tall head under the door. The oak closed back in behind him. Dissipating his armor with a word, Hawk turned and walked down a torch lit hall.

He knew what he had to do next, but he really didn't want to. His news was bad, and the elders would not take it well. The Conclave of the Rogue Wizards was made up of the seven founders of the Golden Sect. They had founded the country as an asylum long ago, a secret place for those who wanted to learn the truth.

The leaders met in a room magically contained inside the oak. Hawk could count with his fingers and toes the number of people who knew where to find the Conclave. It was a rare piece of information—worth killing for. It was also rare for anyone other than the seven to come here. But Hawk had been sent by those same people to find information on a subject that troubled them. He'd found it...and it wasn't good.

Finally the wizard came to the entrance of the auditorium. His knock was answered immediately, as the door swung open. Hawk bowed.



"Enter," a voice called. Hawk straightened and walked to the center of the circular room, glancing at the seven thrones that ringed him. He was shocked to see another wizard, not of the seven, standing quietly in the corner. "Perhaps I should explain," the voice said, and Hawk saw one of the Conclave turn toward his companions. "Seven months ago I glimpsed a terrible vision in the scrying pools. At that time it was my responsibility to watch the pools and see any threat to us before it could do harm. The job cycles among us," he explained, turning back toward Hawk. "But what I saw was not simply a threat to the Golden Sect, but a threat faced by all of Monterra. A terrible army was gathering on a dismal land. These soldiers weren't normal; they were artificial. They had bodies of metal and liquid. I stirred the quicksilver and saw what must have been their commanders, and they were bending over a map. A map of Monterra." The Conclave

gaspd. Several began to murmur.

"Why weren't we told?" said one, standing up.

"Wait! There is more," the mage said. "I told Hawk, this boy, what I had seen." Hawk bristled at being called a "boy". The other Conclave members shook with rage that he had been told, and not them. "I asked him to travel to this place and see if what I had glimpsed was true. I do not know what happened afterward." He sat down.

Hawk took this as a signal to begin his story. "I made it to this place." The elders gasped. "No, I cannot tell you how, because I do not know. But I made it there. The scrying pool showed the truth. These abominations intend to invade Monterra and slaughter its inhabitants. Alone, we stand no chance. It is my sad duty to say that I believe we face total defeat." Hawk finished and stood, watching the face of each member in the Conclave. The leader stood again.

"It was my belief also that we faced defeat alone. I knew I had to contact the five nations," the wizard was interrupted by a chorus of angry voices.

"Outrageous! Those nations deny we exist! They deny that *each other* exist! They would never listen!"

"Silence!" screamed the standing mage. "Let Bacchus tell what their response was!" At this, the wizard Hawk had seen earlier stood.

"Esteemed members of the Conclave," he purred, bowing. "You were right. They want nothing to do with us. Several times I was lucky to escape their courts alive. Worse, they have called a Cloister. The five nations are meeting. They wish us destroyed." He turned to the one who had spoken earlier. "Yes they deny we exist. Yes they deny that any color of mana that they do not control exists. But they their leaders know we do. And they are meeting for the first Cloister in 3000 years to find out how to destroy our country."

Silence greeted his speech. "There is no hope for compromise?" asked one hopefully.

"The king of Marelevatio was almost sympathetic. He alone questioned whether the old order should be changed. But he is not enough to convince the Five to rethink their war on us."

"It is finished, then," whispered the Conclave leader. "Enemies from outside our world will find there is little to fight when they arrive. Mono-colored mana cannot compete against artificial beings."

* * *

His heavy boots made no sound on the temple's empty corridors. His black cape swished around his ankles. His helmet was tucked neatly under his right shoulder as he made his way up to the entrance of the command chamber. He stopped. Raising his hand to the knocker on the door, he tapped it twice. It swung open, and Former Evincar Roan walked through.

Twenty years had passed since that blasted planeswalker, Teferi, had killed Yawgmoth and scattered his armies. On one hand, Roan supposed he should be glad that Yawgmoth had not survived to give him the execution his failure deserved. Instead, the Evincar had used the twenty years to marshal every remaining Phyrexian in the Multiverse. Along the way, he found Yawgmoth's secrets. Another twenty years, and Roan could be a god more powerful than Yawgmoth ever dreamed. But with Phyrexia destroyed, the Evincar had nowhere to rule, and nowhere to create more machines with which to consolidate his power.

"Gelden, are the invasion plans complete?" Roan asked, looking sharply at one of his subordinates.

"Yesss Masssster," the machine hissed. "Its inhabitantss are sstill as disorganizzed as they were when the firsst negator touched their ssoil."

"Then there can be no opposition? I hope so for your sake, commander. I do not wish to lose any more machines than is absolutely necessary to secure this worthless plane. How long will it take for this world to be completely under my heel?"

"Four monthsss, no more."

"That fast? Surely there will be more resistance than that! What about the Golden Sect, won't they offer us a fight?"

"The other nations of Monterra are taking care of that themselves, my Lord," Gelden said. "We will have no trouble with these rogue wizards."

Roan laughed. "You'd be surprised at what some of these hero types can do, Gelden, very surprised. Don't underestimate them."

Gelden looked indignant. "Surely there is no way for them to compete with Phyrexian might! Surely nothing can!"

"Why don't you ask Crovax exactly what happens to idiots who underestimate heroes. If you can get him to talk—it's hard when you have no tongue...or body."

The commander understood the message. "I will not make his mistake, Lord Roan. Forgive me."

The Evincar's amused tone sharpened. "I do not forgive, Gelden. Don't forget it."

* * *

Water was swamping the boat. His robes were wet. Terence tried to get the sails to work, but the storm was buffeting them to hard. His boat capsized and he was swimming. But he couldn't see the sun; he was slipping, deeper into the ocean...

Terence jolted awake. Water had splashed into the boat, but it wasn't from a storm. Another ship had pulled up beside it. A beautiful crest adorned its wood, showing wind whipping a wave into a furious breaker. But no, that couldn't be, that was the symbol of...

No. Impossible. The young mage tore his eyes from the crest and looked up at the man who sailed the ship. As soon as he saw the violet robes, he cringed in fear and despair. It was Master Lenit, the leader of the *entire* island



of Marelevatio. As its "king" of sorts, he handled all the major decisions for the country. Terence had seen him twice in his life—including now.

Terence was in huge trouble. Lenit must have somehow found out what Terence had done. He groaned at his luck.

"Well, are you going to sit there staring at me or can I help you up?" The Master asked. Terence looked stupidly at him. "Very well then," Lenit said. "I'll help you up myself." He waved his hand, and Terence felt himself lifted and dropped gently on the larger ship's deck. Lenit pointed his finger at Terence's boat, which turned and began to sail toward Marelevatio. "Don't worry, it'll find its way there easily enough," Lenit said, noticing Terence's distressed look.

Terence found his voice. "But aren't you going to...take me back there and confine me to the school?" he asked in a strangled voice.

"My dear boy, of course not. I know what you came out here to do. You're coming with me, son, to Cloister. You wondered about the other lands in the world, and now you'll have your chance to learn. Maybe King Eledin will even teach you some green magic!"

"Wha...But I thought there was no other magic!"

"Yes, and I've always argued against teaching that terrible philosophy to children. It's wrong, you know," he said, turning toward Terence. "And I'm quite glad you found out. You're the first in decades to figure it out without any help. Most don't learn until they're in the Senate!"

"But what's a Cloister? And what do the other magics do? And what do the lands on the map mean? Oh, you wouldn't know about the map, but I have it right here."

Lenit chuckled. "Terence, son, I drew that map. Hawk and I researched it; took us twenty years to get it right. And we've got an entire journey to answer your other questions! Slow down!"

"Who's Hawk, master?"

"A friend," said Lenit shortly. "Now, if you'll excuse me, I've a nap to take, we old people need our sleep. Watch the boat while I'm gone, will you?"

Terence collapsed onto the cushioned navigation seat, confused more than enlightened. He'd begun to talk to his elder almost as a peer, and he guessed Lenit was right to put him straight. But it seemed awfully sudden, and he hadn't really answered the question...



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