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# Time Twists and Destinies Interchange

Matt Cavotta  
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PRO TOUR-VALENCIA

Dominaria's time rifts continue to make life more and more bizarre for its struggling inhabitants. The hand of Time brings the menaces of yesterday forward to cause havoc again today. The foes of ages past are deadly, but their methods and weaknesses are known. Dominarians can use this knowledge to survive the rifts and those who step through them. But the rifts are fracturing further, changing shape, changing direction.

The rifts reach into infinite time streams, bringing the divergent products of alternate pasts into the present.

The hand of Time reaches not just backward but also into a temporal kaleidoscope, pointing to infinite pasts that facet and twist and branch from every moment. Through this twisting, ever-changing array of moments, Time grabs hold of just one. It could be the one we all know, the one in which the cat chose to kill the mouse that lay trapped beneath its paw. Or it could be the one in which the cat succumbs to an alien feeling of pity and sheathes its claws. Each of these moments begins a new timeline, creates a new cat, a new world into which the time rifts may open.



In the present, a cat is at a similar crossroads. Does this proud cat warrior of the wilderness remain in the tattered forest, or does she leave the fungal hollows behind and join with those who would follow the ways of a renowned ancestor?

"Join us, Shikka. Come with us away from all these sad memories."

Shikka thinks for a moment, looking around at the dry gray of the forest. An alien feeling of hopelessness washes over her, then away as soon as it had come.

"No," replies Shikka. "I will not forsake our natural duty. I will not leave the forest."

"But this *is* no forest any longer."

"These mossy twigs are more forest than your Jedit is feline! Why would you follow one who turned from the forest when it was lush and vibrant? What can his lack of pride do for us now?"

Shikka has silenced her companion. His whiskers twitch and his nose crinkles.

"We have no one else," he replies.

With that, Shikka decides to stay, and convinces Talack to do the same. She waves off the small band of dragoons that had been awaiting them. The mercenaries grumble, then turn and follow the path out of the forest. Shikka and Talack turn the opposite way and bound silently toward the heart of the forest.



Days pass, and many of the forest's cats trade word of the arrival of Mirri. Some claim to have seen her, though they do not seem sure of their words. Spirits sink as time passes and none catch even the faintest scent of a new cat. Many begin to wonder why she would return and not seek out her own kind. Others begin to wonder if she has returned at all. These thoughts cast a shadow on the hearts of the cats, but blacker still would their hearts grow upon Mirri's return.

The appearance of the feline heroine steals the breath of all who see her. She does not leap from a high perch, landing silently in proper feline fashion. No, her arrival is heralded by her own horrific shrieks, rustling the naked branches of the brittle canopy. High above the trees a dark form hovers, then slowly comes to earth with unnatural slowness. None can move as their eyes recognize the form that is unmistakably that of their most beloved ancestor. But their noses, no, their very instincts, tell them that this being before them is no cat at all.

Thoughts race in Shikka's mind. "How could this be?" "Who could this be?"

It is Mirri, or at least one of the many Mirris that prowl the multifacets of time. This Mirri, so dark and different from the hero Shikka had always imagined, is just one tiny twist from the noble cat warrior of feline legend.

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Long ago, in one of many moments that spawn a million more, a cat felt an alien feeling of hesitation. It was Mirri, engaged in battle to protect her friend Crovax from Selenia the Dark Angel. In *this* moment, Mirri did not falter, did not give in to hesitation. Instead, Mirri embraced her warrior's instincts and attacked savagely.

A hero fails, a martyr falls. Time twists and destinies interchange.

The



kaleidoscope turned but slightly, and it was Mirri, not Crovax, who delivered the Death Stroke to Selenia. In turn, it was Mirri, not Crovax, who received Selenia's Phyrexian curse. In a fit of guilt and shame, Crovax retreated. The curse that would have immediately taken the mind of the human it was

meant for wrenched the mind of a cat much more slowly. Still holding on to shreds of her compassion, Mirri pursued Crovax.

Crovax sensed that Mirri wasn't ready for the curse taking hold of her. Weeping in his heart, he fled.

Crovax was destined for an angel's curse, but one warped timeline saw the noble redeemed.

Crovax was devastated. His heart was filled with guilt over Mirri's twisted fate. Before the battle with Selenia, his mind was giving way to madness. But this turn of events had awakened the heroic warrior that had always waited within him. He vowed to save Mirri from this curse.

But Mirri would not give it up willingly. This curse had brought her unfathomable power, and she did not hesitate to use it. She ripped through Rath like a tempest of blades, her fangs and claws claiming life after life, each death granting her more power. Her might did not go unnoticed. Soon Mirri was pitted against Volrath. She slew him easily and became the new Evincar of Rath. In just a short while much changed at the Stronghold. The reign of iron-fisted males and their barbaric ways had ended. Mirri brought a more swift and sinister style to the running of Rath.

Rath's new evincar eliminated the brutish moggs and took a new slave race, one more reminiscent of her own feline grace.

She was just getting comfortable with her new situation when her past, and her future, crept up on her. Consumed by the building of her new world, Mirri did not take notice of Crovax's presence in the Stronghold, or of the mounting energy that had begun to grow in the throne room.

Crovax called out to his old friend.

"Mirri. You saved me from the dark fate that now holds you."

Without turning to face him, she snapped back, "It is no darker a fate than your own - gripped by guilt, hunting a quarry you cannot find! The Mirri you knew is gone."

In a sudden burst of feline agility and vampiric quickness, Mirri leapt across the room at Crovax. In a sudden burst of bluish light and planar energy, a line tore across the room and opened a rift to the future. Both Crovax and Mirri were swept up in its vacuum.

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The blood begins to swirl and spray before even the cats can react. One falls, two fall, then three, as Mirri wets her fangs on what seems like nothing more than pillars of fur and blood. Mirri resolves to take them all, these savages - reminders of the shame and weakness of her former life. But her plans are thwarted, as a familiar gaze of duty and pain meets her own.

In cover of a hollowed tree, Shikka lets curiosity get the better of her. She stops, hunkers down, and looks back. The slaughter has stopped. A stranger has drawn the attention of Mirr - of that creature.



"Shikka! What are you doing?" a voice calls out. It is Talack, loping by with all the speed he can muster. Shikka takes one last glance back, then follows. She races through the forest with the sound of a struggle fading behind her.

As days and weeks pass, the cats begin to seek each other out again. They need each other - for protection from the Mirri-thing, and from the cats that have risen from their crumpled deaths to follow her. And they need each other for comfort. Their spirits have been torn, their hopes dashed. Who could they look to now? Do they take up arms with **Jedit's Dragoons**? Their protection would be cold comfort - so far from the embrace of the forest. No, Jedit is not the answer. But perhaps it is this **new hero** that many speak of. They say he is strong. Shikka does not have the heart to hope.



*Matt Cavotta has always been a fantasy goober. At various points in his gooberhood, he has used his nerdy knowledge to become a professional goober. He went from scribbling pictures of his own **D&D** characters to illustrating books and cards for his two favorite games; **D&D** and **Magic**. Then he channeled his inner 7th level Illusionist/3rd level Bard and landed himself a job at Wizards as a writer. He continues to cast his illusion spells each morning, lest they find out he's just another goober.*



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