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My Name Is Joey Fatone, and I'll Be Your Waiter

Matt Cavotta
Taste the Magic
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PRO TOUR-VALENCIA

Oh my goodness, where to start. There is so much flavorful goodness in *Future Sight* that it resembles the menu from the Cheesecake Factory. If you have not been to this restaurant before, its menu is about 30 pages long, replete with tasty dishes from all around the multiverse—er... world—and, of course, a fat selection of sweet, sweet cheesecake. If you go there when you're really hungry, it's almost like torture. You almost have to pick a page at random and not look at the rest, or you'll starve to death by the time you make a decision. *Future Sight* is just like that. Where do you start?

I wanted to talk about cool names, thought-provoking flavor text, hidden gems, home runs, and the many flavors of the future, but there's just not enough hours in the day to write it all or for you to read it all. So I picked a page at random. I decided to narrow down the wide selection of delicious items to just artwork. Then I narrowed down that artwork to just "timeshifted" cards. Then I narrowed further to just timeshifted cards from the New Kids on the Block. No, Jordan, Jonathan, Joe, Donnie, and Danny are not **Magic** artists. I like to think they are not artists at all, but rather the unfortunate product of someone's evil pact with the devil. No, the new kids I am speaking of are the large host of artists that broke into **Magic** in *Future Sight*.

Art director Jeremy Jarvis wanted to get in on the "future" parade along with the designers, developers, and writers—so he dove into some uncharted territory as well. *Future Sight* has more new artists than any other set since Alpha. He was also tasked with overseeing the design of the new timeshifted card frame. If you haven't already done so, I encourage all of you to listen to the *Future Sight* [podcast](#)—in it, Jarvis describes in detail his fingerprint on *Future Sight*, and he does so with the wit and wile of an angry cabbie. It's good stuff. Anyway, the timeshifted card frames were designed to accommodate a larger illustration, with some of the art showing through a semi-transparent text box. The artists really went to town with the extra real estate. But some of the art gets hidden behind the type line, and the semi-transparent text box is a bit too "semi" for me. In defense of Jarvis and his graphic designers, the art for this set was commissioned before a final card face design was made. They knew that a transparent text box was in the plans, but did not know exactly how to communicate its limitations to the artist. So what does this mean? It means I am going to pump up my paint-pushing brethren and show you the whole full meal deal, sans obstruction, and I'm going to show it to you larger than life. (What's the deal with the boy band references today?)

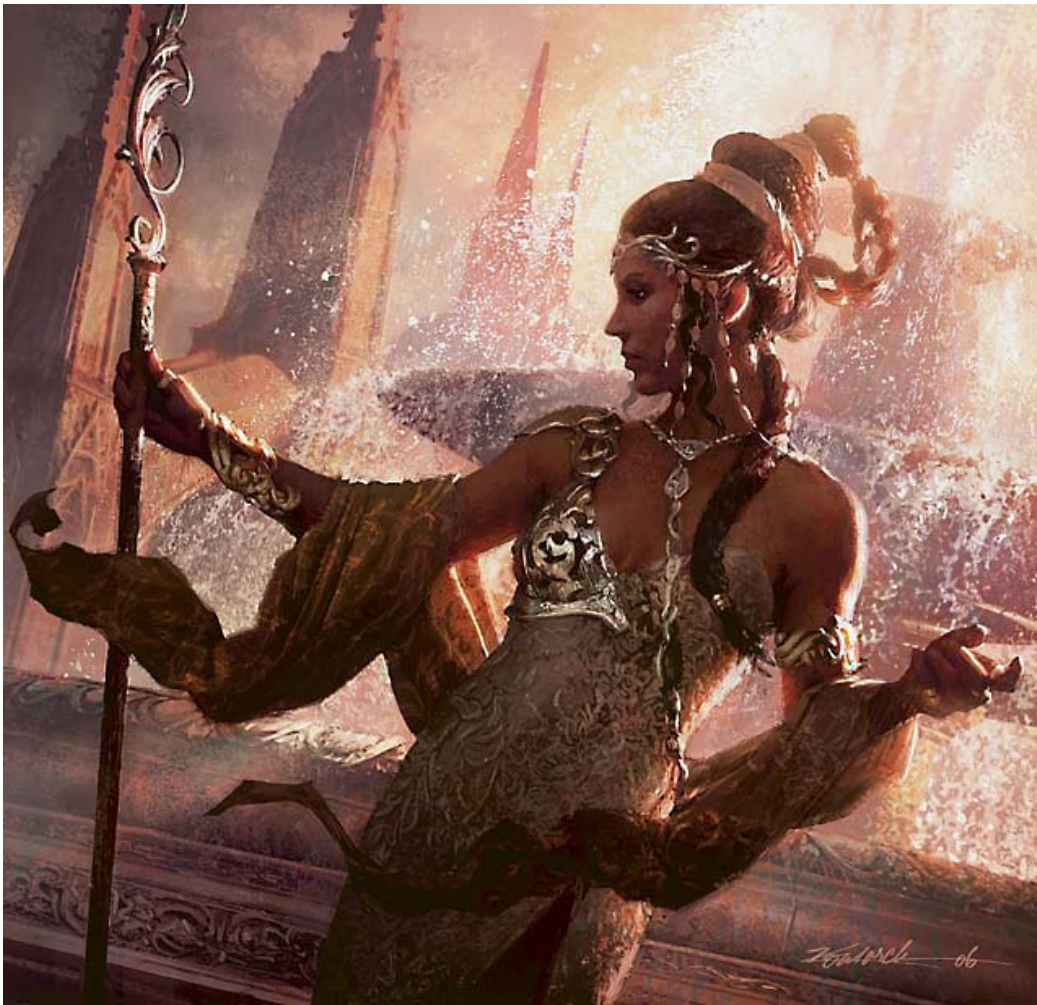


I picked some timeshifted cards illustrated by new artists that I think are cool. Mind you, these are not the only ones I think are cool. Also, let it be known that the old dogs kicked ass with timeshifted frames as well. In fact, all the dogs, both old and new, really came up big in *Future Sight*, whether on timeshifted cards or the regular ones. But, we can't cover them all today. For now, let's look at just this one page of the *Future Sight* menu, starting with:

Oriss, Samite Guardian

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Oh my goodness, is that beautiful or what? Michael Komarck is new to **Magic**, but I reeeeeaaally hope he sticks around for a long time. The lighting alone can drop a jaw, not to mention the striking composition and the solid drawing. Look at the difference in surface quality between the skin, the cloth, and the metal. That's not easy stuff to handle, and Komarck really delivers. This is one of my favorites in this, or any, **Magic** set. (Of course, I could not lead with my numero uno fave, that would be anti-climactic...)

Second Wind



New kid Matt Stewart dishes up this dandy for all you high fantasy lovers out there. Classic style, rich color, and drama make this an easy sell to the ren-fair lords and wenches who have been waiting for Magic to return to its high fantasy roots. Take heart, good folk, the future may take **Magic** back to your medieval paradise. But for now, enjoy this little snapshot. I do.

Korlash, Heir to Blackblade



Who better to re-envision the Blackblade than a dude named Daarken? And he does not disappoint. This guy looks awesome. There are all sorts of subtle horrors dancing around in the dark shadows of this painting. The color is understated, and the focus is on the famous blade. The oily wetness of the figure is both disturbing and eye-catching. Creepy. And mighty.

Boldwyr Intimidator



This giant by Esad Ribic could have been a poster-boy for Subordinated Viewpoint in my [Show Me The Blubber](#) article a few weeks back. Ribic skillfully delivers a figure, foreshortened from below. This is something that many artists avoid because it's so hard to do well. But this is not what I really dig about this piece. I love the color. [Boldwyrr Intimidator](#) states that "cowards can't block warriors." I say that cowards can't handle color like this either. Making bright aqua work with pink is not easy. Making those colors look tough (and not like an old lady's bathroom wallpaper) is a work of wonder.

Bloodshot Trainee



Here's a little secret between you and me—I work really hard to make my art look like I don't work really hard at it. Some of my favorite art is the kind where you can really see that the image just slipped skillfully off the artist's fingers. This is that sort of image. Lucio Parrillo delivers a strong statement without getting caught up in noodling the little details. I can learn a lot from this guy.

Whip-Spine Drake



Jeremy Jarvis is proud to present a timeshifted card that represents a future in which traditional watercolors are still used. Eric Fortune will probably be a name you see on **Magic** cards in the future, and not just because he's a watercolor wiz. His drawing is solid and use of color is strong. I particularly like the little accent of red on the extremities. It's also cool to see that **Magic** might be going to cupcakes in the sky world. I mean, who doesn't like cupcakes?

Mistmeadow Skulk



Could it be? Another watercolorist? Is Jeremy Jarvis's secret agenda becoming clearer? If it brings in artists like Omar Rayyan, he can do whatever he wants. I love this painting. Even though it's a possessed kithkin with a deadly weapon, there is an innocence to the delivery that makes me smile inside. I could spend an hour just looking at the creepy trees in the background. I had the pleasure of hanging out with Omar, and he's a lot like his work—raw and mysterious, but warm and irresistibly likeable. If all artists are an embodiment of their artistic style, Omar is in good shape. I, on the other hand, have problems. ;)

Henchfiend of Ukor



Ladies and gentlemen, behold. Henchfiend is my favorite all-around card in this set. The name alone makes me grin and fear the power of the mysterious Ukori, all at the same time. The art is 100% ass-kicking mastery. Nils Hamm is a new guy that I am happy to report WILL be doing more cards in the future. Look at the gruesome, gritty impasto. (That's where paint starts to build up into thick clumps.) There's a feeling of an open wound, a nightmarish quality that befits this foul creature. The face is a horror, with eyes that fool you into thinking you're seeing double. I bow down to the henchfiend, and to Hamm. (If this is how cool the minions are, imagine the complete awesomeness of Ukori himself! I can't wait 'til *that Magic* set comes out.)

I am stuffed, and that was just one page of the menu. It's easy to fill up when the portions are this big. (I have come to know that any articles in which I roll out the full size art are slam-dunks.) Chalk me up for two points, and look for me to go reverse windmill from the foul line in the coming weeks. How did I start at boy bands and end up with basketball? I told you, I have problems.

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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