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# Vorthos Visits a Travel Agent

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Taste the Magic  
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PRO TOUR-VALENCIA

Last week we took the hat off some *Future Sight* timeshifted art and let its hair down. This week is Timeshifted Week, so again we're dealing with the cardboard of the future. This time, however, we're going to take in bits and pieces from all over the card—art, names, and flavor text. Also, this week I'm going to try not to butcher the truth. They say the pen is mightier than the sword, but the cleaver can do damage both ways. Last week I said that Jeremy Jarvis lead the design of the *Future Sight* timeshifted card frames. Not the case. I also said that Eric Fortune paints in watercolors, and that Jarvis had a secret plot to employ watercolorists. Well, I've been informed that Eric Fortune did not use watercolors on his **Magic** art, and that sort of kills my whole conspiracy theory on Jarvis and his evil watercolor plot. Surely there's something else we can blame on him. Um... I hear he was one of the people who kept voting for Sanjaya. Anyway, last week Abdullah the Butcher, this week Jimmy "Superfly" Snuka.

When you're a planeswalker (and you are), it's pretty tough to figure out where to go on vacation. Not only do you have your choice of all the ritzy joints on your own planet, but you can hop across the Blind Eternities to any other plane in the multiverse. But who knows what all those uncharted worlds are like? You can't just pick at random; the plane might be completely covered in roiling magma. You also can't keep going to the same tropical resort in Jamuraa you've been going to since you were little. Do you visit Ravnica? I hear political strife is not good for relaxation. How about Kamigawa? I think the people are a little too preoccupied to offer any hospitality. Mirrodin? Everything's metal—not a single comfortable lounge chair on the plane. What to do, what to do? I know, let's visit a travel agent and look at some brochures.

The travel agent is *Future Sight*, and the brochures are its timeshifted cards. With obviously strange mechanics and creature types that stick out like a sore thumb, *Future Sight* timeshifted cards represent the things the game might do in the future. *Future Sight* art and names and flavor text suggest new *places* **Magic** might go, new *planes* it might visit. The travel agent we're going to see has offices just outside a recurring time rift, with a perfect view of the wondrous visions from beyond. Let's see what she has to show us.



Many of the timeshifted cards have creative elements general enough to leave us guessing as to what sort of world they come from. Bound In Silence, **Thunderblade Charge**, and **Edge of Autumn** could be from just about anywhere—even right here on Dominaria. Some cards even offer hints that we might be visiting Dominaria again sometime in the years to come. **Bloodshot Trainee**, **Flowstone Embrace**, and **Aven Mindcensor** all have words in their names that are connected to Dominaria (Bloodshot, Flowstone, and Aven.) Sure, the future of Dominaria is interesting, but we're *planeswalkers*—let's stretch out our legs and get out of Dodge.

Let's start with the cards that really lob their pitches for new worlds, the ones that show obvious changes in more than one place on the card. **Shah of Naar Isle** is one of these softballers. Hey, look at the art, is that plane covered in roiling magma? Why yes it is, but it also sports an Arabian-inspired island palace and one of its imperious leaders. **Magic** has explored some Arabian culture and legend in the card set *Arabian Nights*. Perhaps, one day, it will explore it again in the same adaptive way it did with Scandinavian culture in *Ice Age* and Eastern European culture in *Ravnica*. I'd visit this place, but I'd be sure to pack my fire-retardant swim trunks.

**Nacatl War-Pride** presents a possible world flavor that has intrigued D&D goobers like me ever since the old Deities & Demigods book opened our eyes to the myths of Central America. The culture of the Aztecs and Mayans has fascinated goobers and non-goobers for centuries. Here, on **Nacatl War-Pride**, we see a bit of the elaborate costuming of the Aztecs. Also, the word Nacatl has the signature staccato of Aztec words. Even the particular type of cat warrior is significant. Jaguars are a dominant big cat in Central and South America. I, for one, would love to see **Magic** work its...um, magic with this rich and beautiful culture as a starting point. The costuming and architecture alone would be a treat. Then sprinkle in evil shamans, warrior heroes, and the undead—winner. (Secretly, I'd also like to see it happen just to



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hear all the click-clicking and tongue-twisting at the pre-release as players bust out card names like Qetlantahuatl Warrior and Utlantactatzla, Lord of the Metletli. OK, those names would never happen. Sekki would quit and the person in charge of **Magic** Creative would be fired. ; )

One of my favorite future trips spreads across two cards, **Imperiosaur** and **Muraganda Petroglyphs**. In the art, names, and flavor text, these two cards give us a glimpse of a world in which magic and prehistoric creatures coexist. Both cards mention the Muraganda, a civilization of enlightened folk who appreciate magic and the simplicity of nature.

*Some mages forsake their scrolls and libraries to learn at the feet of ancient trees and sacred stones.*

I'd surely visit this place—dinosaurs have fascinated me since Marshall, Will, and Holly took a routine expedition. But I doubt things would be as peachy as Olanti would have you think.

**Magic** is not known for visiting places in which everybody gets along. Somebody, somewhere is enslaving dinosaurs and preparing them to crush the Muraganda. Somebody else is destroying their sacred caves, and the petroglyphs along with them. Yup, there's always trouble afoot when **Magic** comes to town. Still, I think a world in which soulful, prehistoric cultures struggle against those of intellect and progress would be cool. Hogwash—you had me at magic and dinosaurs.

Petroglyphs and **Imperiosaur** have a connection that is quite obvious. Some other cards may be from the same future world, but are bit more subtle in advertising it. I mentioned **Second Wind** and the high fantasy world it suggests in its art. You can find the same sort of tone in the flavor text of **Street Wraith** and **Patrician's Scorn**.

*The lamps on Wyndmoor Street snuff themselves at midnight and refuse to relight, afraid to illuminate what lies in the darkness.*

*Lady Farisa's contempt of tawdry kitsch grew even more infamous after her death.*

It's a topic of debate in the Creative team whether or not to revisit high fantasy. While the genre does have many rabid fans, (including a lot of **Magic** players), avoiding this old-school look and feel does help **Magic** set itself apart as a whole new kind of fantasy world. I don't have the answer, but since we're just talking about places we'd like to take a holiday, I'll say that I wouldn't mind visiting Wyn

**Future Sight** also gives us peeks into smaller facets of upcoming **Magic** worlds. Some cards do not boldly say what sort of world they are from, but do make a statement about a particular place, sect, or event that would be an interesting addition to a future **Magic** world. Let's flip through the one-page brochures:

#### Lumithread Field

*Having conquered the Bastion of Suns, the Ota took its light for their own.*

The Bastion of Suns sounds like a mighty outfit. I'd like to see if they seek revenge upon the Ota. But maybe they deserved it. Maybe they were some sort of totalitarian regime, keeping the light from the people. Maybe now that the Ota have the light they will become corrupted by its power and, in turn, they will become the ironic dark force. Yeah, I'd visit this place.

#### Arcanum Wings

*Nobles don wings to reach the sky villas of their peers, exchanging them for more fashionable attire upon arrival.*

Sky villas and swanky clothing sounds like a nifty vacation spot. It also sounds like the kind of place you might end up feeling a bit guilty visiting—with all the miserable folk starving and plotting coups down below. Perhaps not such a great place for a vacation, but an interesting place for **Magic** to witness some Ravnica-esque class struggle.

#### Ramosian Revivalist

Are we heading back to Mercadia, or have the time rifts scattered Ramos's followers across the multiverse?

#### Witch's Mist

*"Hear us, Overmother. Let the strong thrive under your gelatinous hand, and let the weak writhe under your serrated heel." —Prayer of the devoted*

Cool. I'd go there just to see what the Overmother's gelatinous hand looks like. The "devoted" seem like a pretty scary lot. I think I'll just planeswalk in, have a peek, and 'walk out. Same goes for the Yixlid. Look at this freak:

#### Yixlid Jailer



I would not want to hang out with him in his creepy prison zone, but I'd follow him to the place where he gets his duds. The tight vinyl and leather are likely to attract an interesting crowd for people-watching, but the glowing goggles are something I'd actually like to have for myself. I would not expect the Yixlid to be a huge part of **Magic's** future. The Yixlid culture seems a little too freaky and deviant. The combination of tight vinyl clothing, bindings, leather gags, and dead people does not lead down a road **Magic** is likely to travel. Well, not for more than one card. ; )



#### Storm Entity

*Dweldian magi don't enter the Realm of Thrones when they die. Instead their souls are drawn to great works of magic.*

Oooh, so which place do we want to visit? The place where the Dweldians live, or the place they go when they die? The cool thing about **Magic** is that we don't have to decide. Kamigawa let us stand on both sides of the living/spirit world fence, and so did Ravnica. So what happens to Dweldian warlords—do they go to the Realm of Thrones, or are their souls drawn into great weapons? Are Dweldian chefs drawn into great pastry?

#### Centaur Omenreader

*The wisdom of the omenreaders is legendary. Creatures travel for miles through icy peril to seek their counsel.*

Could it be? Another Ice Age? Wait a minute, didn't we just do another Ice Age?

#### Graven Cairns

This card is one of my favorites in the set. The art is awesome, and the implications of its flavor text are too nerd-ilicious to deny.

*Shamans of Kar-Sengir claim that their sun sets because it can no longer bear the gaze of those pain-carved cliffs.*

Kar-Sengir? What's that? Is that "Sengir" *THE* Sengir? If so, what's the deal with the "Kar" part? And they have shamans? Oh my, does this have the makings of a cool story. So an alternate timeline Baron Sengir got married to vampire queen Liannis Kar.... No, wait, **Sengir Vampires** are a favorite summons of the angry planeswalker, Vax Kar, and she mutates and improves them until they become a whole new race of overmonsters that demand the worship of the poor saps who carved the **Graven Cairns**... No, wait, the Kar (unrelated to the Kor) are a peaceful people with a magical bloodline. When bitten by Sengir vampires, they do not become undead vampire-slaves. Instead, their blood is altered and they gain strange powers or flight and strength. But also, they gain dark ambitions and uncontrollable passion for power. I am definitely visiting these pain-carven cliffs. Hopefully, **Magic** will too.



In fact, I am going to the **Graven Cairns** right now. You are free to hang out with our travel agent and look through the many more brochures she has on vacation spots of the future. There are more I'd love to share with you, but I really want to see the stony bowls into which blood-darkened waters spill from the mouths of the Cairns. There are the **Burnwillows** and the fungus-philiac **Ibblians**. Oh, and **Arturan Conjurers**. And the wise **Githri**. I could go on, but instead... I will just go.

*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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