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What Do You Know, Part II

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Making Magic
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Welcome to Part II. If you're asking Part II of what, I'll have to refer you to my column of two weeks ago. (Obviously, [What Do You Know, Part I](#).) Today I am going to finish up my trivia romp through the expansions. But before I do let me address a few issues from the first half.

First up:

Question #4 (Legends)

What ability appears for the first time in **Magic** in *Legends* on one creature, yet there are two other cards in the set that neutralize the ability?

While I didn't get the question wrong, many readers pointed out that I didn't list all the cards capable of getting or granting plainswalk. The two most referenced cards (though not the only ones):



I particularly feel bad about missing the Slug.

Question #17 (Portal Second Age)

What real-world item appears in numerous *Portal Second Age* illustrations but never in the art of another **Magic** expansion?

This is the classic mistake I tend to make in my trivia questions. I make the question absolute when I don't have to. The question should have been "What real-world item was a part of the *Portal Second Age* style guide and shows up on numerous illustrations in the set yet has never purposefully been used in the world development of any other **Magic** world (although a few individual artists might have snuck one in)?"

Yes, it turns out that a few guns have found their way into art even though Wizards has made a conscious choice not to use guns in settings. The two that were brought up the most in threads and emails were these two:



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Finally, a number of readers complained that the article was a little light on design info, you know, the theme of MakingMagic. I've made an effort to fit in a few more design stories this week.

That being said, on with the trivia:

Question #28 (*Apocalypse*)

What cycle of creatures from *Apocalypse* were nicknamed the "Lego creatures" in design?

Click [here](#) for the answer.

The 'Volvers (Degavolver, Cetavolver, Necravolver, Rakavolver and Anavolver).



The reason I called them the Lego creatures was that you could put them together in a number of ways (four to be exact—no kicker, just small kicker, just big kicker, both kickers). The 'Volvers were the result of an interesting problem I had to solve in design. I loved the idea of having creatures that you could kick to improve by kicking in two different directions. Here was my problem: once you put the creature into play, how would you know what kickers were used when they were played?

I tried numerous things but none were very clean until I realized that I was putting a restriction on myself that I didn't need to. I was making both kickers equal. That is, I was allowing you to pay the same amount of mana on either side to get your bonus. By allowing the two sides to be unequal it allowed me to have one kicker put one +1/+1 counter on it while the other could put two. This way you could look at a creature and see whether it had zero, one, two or three +1/+1 counters on it. The number would tell you which kickers you did and didn't use.

This cycle, by the way was originally made with ally kickers because I designed it during *Planeshift* design. Mike Elliott (the *Planeshift* design team was Mike, Henry Stern and myself) had designed the Battlemages.



Both designs were good but it became clear that they were too close to be in the same set. One cycle had to move to *Apocalypse*. We went round and round because each of us really liked our design but in the end it became clear to me that the Battlemages made more sense in the set with "gating" (this is the nickname for the mechanic that forced you to bounce a card of the same type and color back to your hand—hey, didn't you read Part 1?) so I finally conceded the issue.

Question #29 (Odyssey)

Two cards in *Odyssey* use art that is cropped from one larger picture. In fact, a small piece of the larger art can be seen in both pieces. What are the two cards?

Click [here](#) for the answer.

Repentant Vampire and Gallantry



Hmmm, a black Vampire that becomes good and then attacks dark creatures, and a butt-kicking blonde. What so ever could the two of these be doing in the same art? They do make a cute couple though. (Perhaps I should have also reprinted a certain flying firebreather from *Tempest*.)

Question #30 (*Torment*)

One legendary creature in *Torment* is of a creature type not found anywhere else in the *Odyssey* block. What creature is it?

Click [here](#) for the answer.

Ambassador Laquatus



One of the offbeat things I did in *Odyssey* block was to replace most of the staple races with lesser known ones. Instead of Elves I used Druids and Centaurs. Instead of Goblins I used Dwarves. And instead of Merfolk I used

Cephalids. This would prove to be a bad idea as *Onslaught* would later become a tribal set all about the staple races (well, not Merfolk).

The problem was that in the novel, the author had made one character a merfolk not realizing that we were specifically leaving them out of the block. A little rewrite later and Laquatus becomes an ambassador from a place that has merfolk. To match the novel, Laquatus was allowed to be *Odyssey* block's lone Merfolk.

Question #31 (*Judgment*)

To stress the green-white theme of *Judgment*, the design team decided to only put green/white gold cards in the set. One of these cards was a redesign based on an artifact from *Alpha* that I had fond memories of. What is the gold card from *Judgment* and what was its Alpha inspiration?

Click [here](#) for the answer.

Mirari's Wake and Gauntlet of Might



One of the great joys of being a designer is taking cards you loved from the past, tweaking them and putting them out for modern audiences to enjoy. *Gauntlet of Might* was one such card. Then during *Judgment* design it dawned on me that the granting all your creatures +1/+1 felt very white and that making all your lands tap for an extra mana felt very green. Put them together and we'd have an awesome green-white card. I believe history proves I was correct.

Question #32 (*Onslaught*)

The art for the *Onslaught* version of *Shock* shows the spell hitting a famous tournament-caliber **Magic** creature. What's the creature?

Click [here](#) for the answer.

Psychatog



At the time *Psychatog* was the dominant creature in tournament play and we thought it would be funny to show the *Shock* taking out a 1/2 *Psychatog*. Yeah, that trick didn't work quite so well in actual tournaments as the opponent would have to have no cards in hand and one or no cards in the graveyard.

Question #33 (Legions)

The small sets for many years leading up to *Legions* had 143 cards. *Legions* had 145. Why?

Click [here](#) for the answer.

One of the long-standing rules for **Magic** expansions is that we make the same number of cards for each color. Yes, this is a rule we broke in *Torment* and *Judgment* and yes, there are few sets like *The Dark* that counted multicolored cards as half a card in each color making a different amount of monocolored cards. But all in all, it's one of the big rules we follows.

Legions created a problem for us because at the time small sets had 55 commons, 44 uncommons, and 44 rares. Remember that monocolored cards have to come in increments of five because there are always an equal number and **Magic** has five colors. Because the set was an all-creature set, we didn't have the luxury of using artifacts and lands like we normally do to fill out a rarity. We did talk about using artifact creatures but with *Mirrodin* around the corner it didn't seem like the right time to have being adding random artifact creatures. We also talked about having the colors be uneven but the idea was disliked by most of R&D.

This meant the only choice was to change each rarity to an increment of five. Rather than go down, we chose to go up. That's why *Legions* has 145 cards. Uncommon and rare went up from 44 to 45.

Question #34 (Scourge)

Scourge was the "dragon set." How many Dragons are in *Scourge*? (Note: I'm asking for how many creatures in the set have the word dragon on their card type line.)

Click [here](#) for the answer.

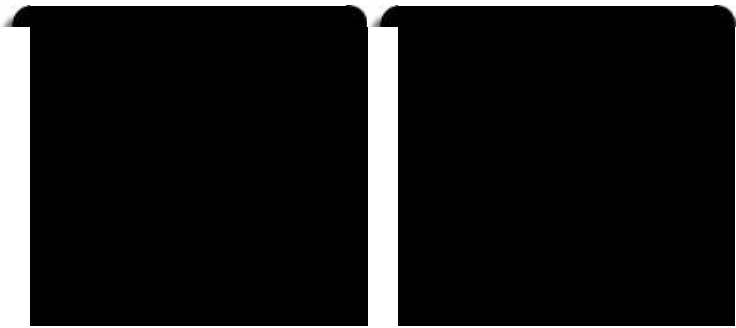
Four: *Bladewing the Risen*, *Dragon Mage*, *Dragon Tyrant* and *Eternal Dragon*.



Six more cards in the set have the word "dragon" in their rules text: *Bladewing's Thrall*, *Day of the Dragons*, *Dragonspeaker Shaman*, *Dragonstorm* and *Form of the Dragon* (I'm not counting the cards where "dragon" is mentioned but only because it is saying the name of the card.)



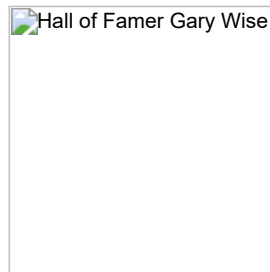
Finally, there are five cards with "dragon" showing up solely in their names: Dragon Breath, Dragon Fangs, Dragon Scales, Dragon Shadow and Dragon Wings (it was the "dragon enchantments" cycle).





Question #35 (Mirrodin)

Every year at the **Magic** Invitational all sixteen invitees turn in the card they want to see printed as their prize if they win the event. Each winner has had their card made (or an alternative if R&D rejects their initial card) save Antoine Ruel and Tiago Chan, whose cards have not yet made it to print. Tsuyoshi Fujita had his card (Gemstones Cavern) printed because we ran a promotion one year where the audience got to pick a submitted card they wanted to see get printed. Other than these cards, only one other Invitational submission has ever seen print. This card was in *Mirrodin* and was R&D's tweaked version of the card submitted by Pro Tour Hall of Famer Gary Wise. What is the card?



Click [here](#) for the answer.

Chalice of the Void



So what happened? Well, at the Invitational in Cape Town (in 2001) Gary just made a very cool card. Here's his version:

Artifact of Doom

2

Artifact

As Artifact of Doom comes into play, choose a number. Spells with a converted mana cost of the chosen number cannot be played.

I remembered the card while designing *Mirrodin* and put it in the file. My one change was to limit how cheaply you could lock a certain mana cost out. The trick was that I thought the card might have some use in Vintage if I kept the cost low to stop cheap cards. The ∞ cost was my way to make each increasing cost that much harder to stop. This way the card could easily shut down Moxes in Vintage without causing problems in Standard.

Question #36 (Darksteel)

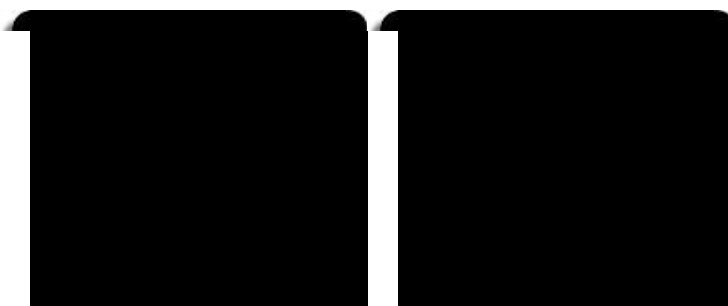
A classic cycle from *Alpha* was updated in *Darksteel*. Name the five cards from the cycle.

Click [here](#) for the answer.

Angel's Feather, Kraken's Eye, Demon's Horn, Dragon's Claw, and Wurm's Tooth



The *Alpha* version of these cards (Ivory Cup, Crystal Rod, Throne of Bone, Iron Star and Wooden Sphere) were known as the "lucky charms."





We updated them because we thought they would work better in the core set if we didn't need to worry the beginners with having to pay to get the life. We made them cost one more but took away the cost. (And of course, we made the trigger optional.)

The funny design story behind these cards is how long they took to see print. We'd wanted to do them for a while but it's tough to find a set that has room for a five-card cycle that doesn't connect into the set. Then along came *Mirrodin* block and its heavy artifact theme. The cards were in *Mirrodin* but got pushed off for space reasons. Then in *Darksteel*, Henry Stern (the set's lead developer) tried to kill them on the grounds that *Mirrodin* block was a bad choice for cards that cared about color. While the rest of us were sympathetic, we knew we needed the cards printed so we could advance them to the basic set and nowhere was going to make as much set as the artifact block so Henry sucked it up and kept the cards in the set.

Question #37 (*Fifth Dawn*)

The *Fifth Dawn* was the dawn of the fifth what? For bonus points, what color was it?

Click [here](#) for the answer.

The fifth sun. When the story started each color of mana had its own sun on Mirrodin except green. The fifth dawn was the dawning of the green sun, or lacuna as they called it in the story.



Question #38 (*Champions of Kamigawa*)

This *Champions of Kamigawa* card has reminder text which is fourteen times as long as its rules text. What is the card?

Click [here](#) for the answer.

Time Stop. Yes, three words of rules text and forty-two words of reminder text.



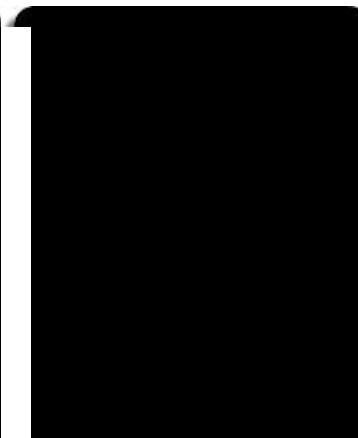
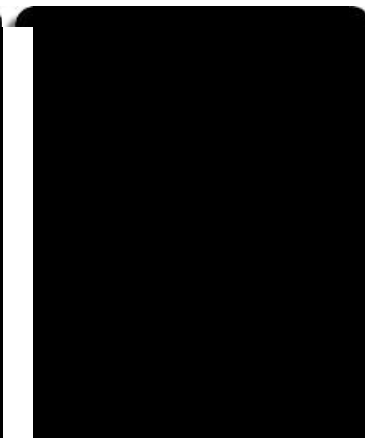
This card reflects a newer attitude we've had towards trying to make templates simpler to grok. (Check out my column [Between a Grok and a Hard Place](#) if you don't know what grok means.) The idea is when we have a card that has a simple concept but complicated execution to try and hide much of the rules ugliness in the reminder text.

Question #39 (*Unhinged*)

Other than their creature type, what mechanical connection did all the donkeys in *Unhinged* share?

Click [here](#) for the answer.

All the donkeys have either a power or toughness with a fraction.





Why did I do that? So they'd all be half-assed. No, really.

Question #40 (*Betrayers of Kamigawa*)

We often repeat cards. We much less frequently repeat cycles, especially in expert expansions. What five-card cycle was repeated in *Betrayers of Kamigawa*?

Click [here](#) for the answer.

The "Lobotomy" cycle from *Urza's Destiny* (Scour, Quash, Eradicate, Sowing Salt and Splinter).



They were chosen for repeats as their ability to remove threats from the game seemed like a good answer to a number of issues in Standard at the time (Eternal Witness, Kokousho, Goblin Charbelcher, Cloudpost, etc.).

Question #41 (*Saviors of Kamigawa*)

An Alpha misprint was the first card to leave this thing off unintentionally. *Saviors of Kamigawa* was the first to do it intentionally. What am I talking about and what *Saviors* card did it?

Click [here](#) for the answer.

The item in question is the mana cost. The Alpha *Cyclopean Tomb* accidentally left it off. *Evermind* just didn't need one.



The card was created because the *Saviors* design team (Brian Tinsman (lead), Brandon Bozzi, Devon Low and Brian Schneider) thought it would be cool to have a splice card that could only be spliced. Note that the card had to have the line "*Evermind* is blue" because without a mana cost the card is not blue without the text. (A card's color is defined by the colored mana symbols in its mana cost.)

Question #42 (*Ravnica*)

The frames used for the hybrid cards weren't designed for hybrid. What were they designed for?

Click [here](#) for the answer.

The frames were designed as a new take on the multicolor frames.



The idea for them started when several R&D members pointed out that multicolor frames were the only ones that didn't let you know what color your cards were. This fix, some thought, would fix this problem while still looking cool. The problem was that people had gotten used to the gold frames and we thought there would be a big resistance to the change. The majority of us agreed though that these are the frames we would have used if we could have retroactively done multicolor cards with them. The compromise was to add the colored pinlines that are now on all two-color gold cards.



When it came time to figure out what hybrid cards should look like, the very first suggestion was to try out the alternate multicolor frames. Everyone liked them so much that we never seriously pursued any other frame.

Question #43 (Guildpact)

Here's Niv-Mizzet, the Firemind.



When you translate his flavor text, what does it say?

Click [here](#) for the answer.

NIV-MIZZET. Let me walk you through it.

$$\text{“(Z->)90° - (E-N²W)90°t = 1”}$$

(Z - V) 90

Take the symbols and turn them 90 degrees.

That spells:

NIV

or NIV.

That's the hyphen in his name.

(E - N2W)90

N2 means to have the N twice. That makes it **(E - N N W)90**

Turn this sideways and you get:

W N N E

or MIZZE.

t

Is just a T.

= 1

This means equal 1 copy of his name.

Put it all together and you get NIV-MIZZET.

Question #44 (*Dissension*)

One of the *Dissension* split cards used a combination of names originally destined for the *Invasion* card *Assault // Battery* (or as I call it, *Assault & Battery*). Which split card is it?

Click [here](#) for the answer.

Hit // Run (a.k.a. Hit & Run). The creative team in *Invasion* thought it sounded too modern. *Wax // Wane*, by the way, was also changed. It was going to be called *Pride // Prejudice*. It was changed for referencing a real-world title.



Why was the name accepted this time? Either because it was a new creative team or because naming split cards just keeps getting harder and harder.

Question #45 (*Coldsnap*)

In the [original announcement](#) for *Coldsnap* (you know, the one where Randy Buehler explained we found the lost file in one of Richard Garfield's old filing cabinets), Randy put in a lot of clues that something wasn't quite right with the story. One such detail was the codename for *Coldsnap*. What was it?

Click [here](#) for the answer.

"Rock & Roll." The hidden joke in this name is that it's the third part of a three-series sequence. This is a technique we use to name sets in a single block (although at the time of *Ice Age* block we hadn't started that convention—yes, another clue). But if *Coldsnap* was "Rock & Roll," that would make *Ice Age* "Sex" and *Alliances* "Drugs," neither codenames we'd ever use. *Ice Age's* codename, incidentally, was "Ice Age," and *Alliances'* was "Quack." (This was back when we named codenames after Macintosh sound files so that they would make a noise whenever you opened the file.)

Question #46 (*Time Spiral*)

What *Time Spiral* card mashed together a rare *Legends* creature and an uncommon *Mirage* sorcery?

Click [here](#) for the answer.

Unyaro Bees. It took *Legend's* *Killer Bees* and mated it with *Mirage's* *Unyaro Bee Sting*.

Killer Bees + Unyaro Bee Sting = Unyaro Bees

One of the things we tried to do in *Time Spiral* design was to try and see if we could find two old nostalgic cards that overlapped in some creative element. My favorite that didn't manage to make it to print was Pirate **Ghost Ship**, which combined Alpha's **Pirate Ship** with *The Dark's* **Ghost Ship**. Both cards made it into the timeshifted sheet as a nod to one of design's pet cards.

Question #47 (*Planar Chaos*)

While the cards in *Planar Chaos* show many alternate realities, one alternate reality shows up on multiple cards. What happens in that reality?

Click [here](#) for the answer.

Selesnia is struck down in *Volrath's Stronghold* not by Crovax but by Mirri. This results in Mirri becoming cursed (and turning into a vampire) and Crovax being spared. The two, of course, go on to become very different people.



The final card is probably my favorite. **Keen Sense** is a green version of **Curiosity**. Since the timeshifted cards try to match the set that the original comes from, **Keen Sense** is set during the portion of *Weatherlight* Saga that takes place in *Exodus*. In the art of the original **Curiosity** in *Exodus*, we see an injured Mirri follow a cursed Crovax but in this alternate reality we see Crovax getting away from the cursed Mirri.



Question #48 (Future Sight)

What mechanic in *Future Sight* shows up in a vertical cycle—that is, on a three-card cycle of which one is common, one is uncommon, and one is rare?

Click [here](#) for the answer.

Morph. The vertical cycle consists of **Lumithread Field** at common, **Zoetic Cavern** at uncommon, and **Whetwheel** at rare.



When morph first showed up in *Onslaught* block it was only used on creatures. The vertical cycle shows morph being used on each of the other permanent types. (Yes, planeswalkers were hinted at on **Tarmogoyf**, but they didn't exist yet.)

Question #49 (Lorwyn)

Which of the following appeared for the first time in *Lorwyn*? (And yes, multicolor creatures count for purposes of this question.)

White Giant
White Merfolk
White Treefolk
Blue Elemental
Black Elf
Black Goblin
Black Faerie
Green Kithkin

Click [here](#) for the answer.

White Treefolk, Black Faeries and Green Kithkin.

Here are the cards that appeared earlier for each category:

White Giant



Click [here](#) to see the full list of white Giants.

White Merfolk



Blue Elemental



Click [here](#) to see the full list of white Giants.

Black Elf



Black Goblin





Question #50 (Morningtide)

What is the theme of *Morningtide*?

Click [here](#) for the answer.

Morningtide has a class-based tribal theme. Note that this doesn't mean we'll be giving up on the race-based tribal cards—just adding class-based ones to the mix. The idea behind *Morningtide* is that we want to make the "other" card type on all the humanoid creature cards also matter. Expect to see being a Rogue, Shaman, Soldier, Warrior, or Wizard (among others) start to have mechanical relevance. Plus, we have even more goodies for your Elemental, Elf, Faerie, Giant, Goblin, Kithkin, Merfolk and Treefolk decks. And more changelings! Check back in January when we start the previews for one of the "class"iest sets ever.



That's all the trivia I have for now. I hope you've enjoyed our little romp through the ins and outs of **Magic** through the years. Let me know if you'd like to see more (or not see more) in the future.

Join me next week when I examine how a creature's bark can be worse than its bite.

Until then, may recognize that in life the little things matter.

Mark Rosewater

*Mark Rosewater is Head **Magic** Designer. What this fancy title means is that he's in charge of **Magic** design. This gets him a lot of mail (which he actually reads). When not alternatively destroying and saving **Magic**, he likes to spend time with his family, do stereotypically geeky things (play games, read comics, watch a lot of science fiction, etc.) and write about himself in third person.*



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