

## But Wait, There's More

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*Making Magic*  
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Welcome to *Morningtide* Preview Week, Part II: This Time It's Personal. Last week I explained *Morningtide*'s "class matters" theme and the kinship mechanic. This week I'll be talking about everything else going on in the set. This, of course, includes another preview card. And, if you haven't have the good fortune of checking out [the \*Morningtide\* minisite](#), this will be a preview heaven as I'm going to use a number of cards previewed elsewhere (in magazines and such, all compiled on the minisite) to illustrate what I'm talking about.

Before I jump into it, I want to stress that I'm showing off a bunch of stuff (although nothing that hasn't already been officially previewed in some media outlet). Still I'm giving away a bunch of info and I know there are people who want to walk into the Prerelease knowing as little as possible. My hat's off to you. If you are one of these people, please stop reading now and come back after you go to the [Prerelease](#) this Saturday and/or Sunday. For those who are unsure whether to continue, please note that I will be talking about the different areas the set will be covering but I will not be giving away all the details. Yes, you will see specific cards, but I will try my best to hint at what remains rather than just tell you.

Since last week was all about class, I've decided that I start today with the most class-relevant things and work my way down the ladder. And yes, there are a few things in the set that aren't about class, or even tribal at all for that matter. So sit back and let me give you a little hint of things to come.

For each section I'm going to show off one or more cards. Once again, each of these cards save my preview card has already been previewed somewhere else, be it in another article or in a magazine, and currently is featured on the *Morningtide* minisite. For drama purposes (I do so love being dramatic), I've hidden each section along with its card so you won't know what subset I'm talking about until you get there. For the first subset of cards, click [here](#).

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## New Lords

"Lord" is a slang term used by R&D (especially slang now that the Lord creature type is no more) to refer to a creature that boosts other creatures of a particular creature type. Usually that bonus is +1/+1 and some ability, often a keyword. *Morningtide* has decided to shake this up by having its lords play around with +1/+1 counters. Note that these cards don't all work the same as demonstrated by the three cards I've shown you above.

The reason behind the design was twofold. First, it was a neat twist on the lords. Rather than boost them as a static effect, these lords use +1/+1 counters. This allows for the lords' effects to survive after they are no longer around. Second, *Morningtide* has a "+1/+1 counter matters" sub-theme and these lords play into it. This is why in addition to boosting the creatures with +1/+1 counters all these lords also make the +1/+1 counters have a secondary importance.

Next, click [here](#).



## Bannerets

Creatures like these are often called "familiars" due to the cycle that appeared in *Planeshift*. Instead of color, *Morningtide*'s cycle (yes, it's a cycle—I'll leave it to you to figure out what color does what) reduces the cost for a specific race and class, always what the creature itself is. Which of course raises the question: Does Frogtosser Banneret reduce a Goblin Rogue's cost by two? The answer is no. It would if we had written the cost reduction as two abilities, but we didn't because, well, development said we shouldn't. (Yes, there was a version in design that wrote it out as two abilities.) Why both race and class? I would suggest you take a look at [last week's column](#) for that answer. The *Lorwyn* design team talked about having the bannerets in *Lorwyn* but once we knew we were saving class for *Morningtide*, we knew we had to save some tribal stuff and we felt like class fit the flavor of the mechanic. Then when we realized that we didn't want to single out only class on commons in *Morningtide* (once

again, if this is news to you read last week's column), the bannerets proved to be a perfect place to affect both race and class.

And that brings us to number three. Click [here](#).



## Choose a Creature Type

During *Lorwyn* design we had a rule that we couldn't include any card that made class matter. Because of this rule, this subset of cards had to be pushed off into *Morningtide*. This is another group of cards we used at common because it made sense for either race or class. One of my favorite things about these type of cards is that they make you really conscious of what creature types you have in play. I'm amazed how the card played in the same Limited deck can result having so many different creature types being chosen. My favorite were the few times where I had nothing but creatures with changeling in play allowing me to name any legal creature type in **Magic**. (Which, by the way, was much more fun in playtests before the big creature type overhaul happened; back then all *Un*-types were fair game.)

Followed by number four. Click [here](#).



## Changes to Champion

This change is pretty straight-forward. There are now cards that let you champion one of two creature types, you get to choose which one. What are the choices? As you would expect, always one race and one class. Okay, not a huge innovation, but it did the job we needed.

Next we have something that's provoked a little more response. Click [here](#).



## Supporting Other Classes

I don't have a card for this one as we haven't previewed anything previously. (I can hint that such a card might be previewed later this week.) So we've hit you over the head with the five classes *Morningtide* focuses on (Rogues, Shaman, Soldiers, Warriors and Wizards in case you haven't memorized the list yet). While these five classes get the vast majority of focus, the set actually has a few cards that care about other class types. (To learn which ones, you can solve [this puzzle](#) from Mark Gottlieb on the *Morningtide* minsite.) Why? Because there are other classes in *Lorwyn* (and **Magic** in general) and we thought it would be nice to throw them a bone. All right, only one bone per creature type, but still, we've made them the kind of cards you can build a deck around. Yes, this means they lean towards the rare side.

This leads to the question: why didn't we do this with races? The answer is because there aren't any other races to throw bones to. In fact, the only race other than the eight featured ones to show up in a number large enough to do anything with is shapeshifter and we did throw it a bone with *Shapesharer*. In addition, while **Magic** has had a lot of tribal cards in its existence, many of the classes have never (or almost never) had any tribal cards thrown their way. We felt like *Morningtide* was a great place to fix this slight.


Finally, we get to our preview card. Click [here](#).



**Prowl**

Two of the three new keywords/ability words in *Morningtide* are tribal in nature. Kinship (which I premiered last week) was the first, prowl is the second. Let me begin by explaining what exactly prowl is. While the preview card is a cool example it is far from the simplest. In a nutshell, here's how it works. Whenever you deal combat damage with a creature that shares a creature type with the card with prowl, you are able to play the card for the prowl cost. Most often, although not with Notorious Throng, the prowl cost is cheaper than the normal mana cost. Also most often, the card will have an additional effect if the card is played by paying the prowl cost. On Notorious Throng, that "extra" effect is a **Time Walk** (a.k.a. taking an extra turn).

The other important thing you need to know is that all the prowl cards have the creature type Rogue. Creatures with prowl also have a race to go along with the class, although the races vary from card to card (and yes, this means you don't necessarily have to deal combat damage with a Rogue to play a card for its prowl cost). Why is prowl only for Rogues? Because it was designed to be a Rogue mechanic. Let me back up a few steps. While looking at the five supported classes in the set, the *Morningtide* design team (Paul Sottosanti, Aaron Forsythe, Erik Lauer, Ken Nagle, and myself) felt that Rogue was the class with the most untapped potential. The other four classes have all had some tribal cards in the past, but not Rogue. As such, we felt strongly that we should give rogues some extra love. That led us to search for a mechanic for Rogues which led us to prowl. I'd give more detail but I know Ken's planning a pretty thorough rundown of how prowl was designed in his upcoming feature article on the design of *Morningtide*. Since I'm stealing all sorts of *Morningtide* design nuggets from him I decided it was only fair to leave him some stuff to talk about.

Finally, let me answer one last question. The way prowl is written out, does it require being only on Rogue cards? No, the mechanic as written could be used with any creature type. (Although let me stress again that it isn't—only Rogues have prowl in *Morningtide*.) We purposefully designed the mechanic to be open-ended to allow us to do other things with it when we bring it back. (Kind of like how *Urza's Saga* block spelled out cycling  even though every single card had the same cycling cost.)

And now the only class-related cards we let into *Lorwyn* come to *Morningtide*. Click [here](#).



## Change to Changeling

Being that changeling already was doing heavy class lifting, there wasn't much to change for *Morningtide*. Shapeshifters with changeling are back but we really didn't need to do anything to them other than just make more. Note that Taurean Mauler and Chameleon Colossus finish out the rare Shapeshifter cycle started in *Lorwyn* (with *Mirror Entity*, *Shapesharer* and *Cairn Wanderer*).

Now we start moving farther away from tribal. Click [here](#).



## Change to Clash

Let me start by saying that the addition of kinship does make clash a little more tribal than it was with *Lorwyn*. That said, it's not really a tribal mechanic. Clash is back with a few new executions. The biggest twist is a number of cards that work like Titan's Revenge where you get to keep the card (buyback style) if you win the clash. The twist was dubbed "clashback" in design. I also want to note that not only does clash help kinship, but kinship can also help clash. With kinship you get to look at the card before you have to draw it, allowing you the window to play a spell with clash with full knowledge of what is on top of your deck (provided, of course, that the spell in question is an instant or a creature with flash).

Champion's back. Changelings are back. Clash is back. Hmm, what could be next? Click [here](#).



## Change to Evoke

The evoke twist takes a moment to mentally process. The creatures with evoke in *Lorwyn* all had "comes into play" effects. The creatures with evoke in *Morningtide* all have "leaves play" effects. Like I said, it takes a moment to process. The end result is that *Morningtide* creatures with evoke play a little differently. Who do we get to thank for this twist? It is the brainchild than none other than my arch-nemesis / **Magic** Rules Manager / former "House of Cards" columnist / leader of cult / evil villain Mark Gottlieb. This is just the way Gottlieb's brain works.

Last but not least... Click [here](#).



## Reinforce

I'm ending today's column with the third new keyword / ability word in the set. How does this work? Very simply, any card with reinforce gives you two choices (you can think of it as a split card if you like): you may play the spell as normal or you can pay some mana and discard it from your hand to turn it into some number of +1/+1 counters. The number is always locked. Reinforce N means that you can make N +1/+1 counters.

Before *Lorwyn* I stressed that in Limited you really wanted to play with changeling cards in your colors. For *Morningtide* I will make the same claim about reinforce. I've been amazed how useful they've been whenever I play *Lorwyn* / *Morningtide* Limited games. Sometimes I use it to save my creature. Sometimes I use it to kill a pesky blocker. Sometimes I use it to speed up the clock. Sometimes I use it because having a +1/+1 counter on a creature can mean something (remember there's a "+1/+1 counters matter" sub-theme). Oh, and sometimes, I just play the card as is. The mechanic may seem simple on the surface but I've been pleasantly surprised how many different ways it can matter. See Noah Weil's [Prerelease Primer](#) for a card with reinforce and a rundown of reasons to play it.

As this is a design column and I haven't yet talked about how anything was designed, why don't I do that before I call it a day? Reinforce was my design so I understand exactly how it came to be. It was heavily influenced by an existing mechanic. Take a moment to guess. I'm sure some of you have guessed channel. After all, isn't this mechanic just a subset of channel? Yes, in the same way that buyback is a subset of kicker. But that's not how I think of it.

When we find that a mechanic has a huge amount of space we reserve the right to design within it without having to always use the larger mechanic by name. This is important for two reasons. One, we want to be able to give the subsets a new identity, which is hard when you keep reusing the same few words. And two, it allows us to write the ability in the cleanest template.

So what mechanic inspired reinforce if not channel? Cycling. Yes, I think of reinforce as a cycling variant. Instead of having an option of turning a card into another card you can turn it into +1/+1 counters. There was a small +1/+1 counter theme in *Morningtide* and as a huge fan of counters I wanted to stretch the theme. I liked reinforce because it was simple yet allowed for many interesting decisions. As I said above, try out the mechanic. It's hard to really grasp what it can do until you play with it.

That's all I got for today. I hope this column gave you a taste test of what to expect when you finally get your hands on *Morningtide* packs (hopefully this Saturday or Sunday at the [Prerelease](#)). As you play, you'll get a sense how intertwined this set's design is with *Lorwyn* while still exploring some new areas of tribal and beyond.

Join me next week when I wade in the tide that is morning.

Until then, may you savor the free samples.

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*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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