

Slaymaker



Slaymaker
By Bethany Dickens Assaf

Dramaturgy Actor's Packet
Imagine Performing Arts Center
August, 2025

About the Playwright

Bethany Dickens Assaf is a freelance playwright, dramaturg, and theatre producer from Orlando, Florida. She is also the co-founder and Producing Director of Whiskey Theatre Factory, which produces and develops local voices in her community. As a writer, her work focuses on female and non-binary characters in traditionally masculine environments: exposing and exploring the pockets of toxic gender dynamics that continue to exist and thrive in our society, particularly in the rural Midwest and within “geek culture.” It also gives her the opportunity to celebrate female geekiness, including her own - her previous plays that have received productions, grants, awards, and workshops include a play about cosplay (*Sword Art Real Life*), anime (*POP and BT Chase the God Rare!*), zombie survivalist culture (*East Florida Zombies*), 1990s video game culture (*10:42-10:49*), and a Magic: The Gathering (*Slaymaker*).



She is also an emerging voice in the science fiction genre. Her AI-driven play, *The Consciousness*, has been performed at over 10 Fringe Festivals across the country, and won Best Play at the Tampa Bay Theatre Festival. *The Vast of Darkness* - a horror play set in space - received Critics' Choice for Best Play-Drama at the Orlando Fringe Festival and was invited to an encore performance at Orlando Winter Mini-Fest. A recent evening of her short plays - “What’s in the Basement, Honey?” - brought together zombies, Lovecraftian Monstrosities, feminism, and nerd culture for a uniquely ‘Bethany Dickens Assaf’ night of theatre.

In addition to these productions, over 100 of Dickens Assaf’s short plays have been produced across the country. Theaters who have produced/developed her short, one-act, and full-length work include: Theatre Resert (where she won Best Play in 2024), MadLab Theatre (where she served as the Literary Manager for two seasons), B3 Theatre, Centers for the Arts Bonita Springs (which also published two of her short plays), KDC Theatre in London, FUSION Theatre (where she won the Andaluz and Audience Awards for Best Play), ONSTAGE Festival, the Bite-Sized Breakfast Show at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, the Road Theatre, the Samuel French Short Play Festival, Theatre Odyssey, the Hippodrome Theatre, the Bechdel Group, and Magnetic Theatre.

History of *Slaymaker*

- *Slaymaker* in development since 2020 - 3 productions: Playwrights’ Round Table, MadLab, & at the Hippodrome
- This production is part of a United Arts Grant!

[Bethany’s Work on New Play Exchange](#)

Title of Show

"What's in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet."

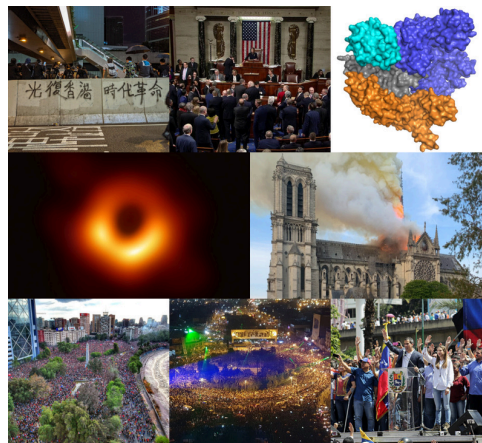
Romeo & Juliet, Act II Scene II

- What is the significance of the "Slaymaker"?
- Names are important, but why?
 - Identity & individuality
 - Social connection
 - Cultural significance
 - Self-expression
- Facts:
 - In the State of Ohio, you can keep your married name even after divorce. It is up to you whether or not you want to change it. It actually stays, it doesn't automatically go back to your maiden name.
 - In the gaming community, a player's name is primarily used for social interactions and identification like making friends, in competitions, etc. It isn't officially a part of gameplay, but is important for the social aspect.
- Slaymaker in the script:
 - MEGHAN: But like... 'Slaymaker...' What does that make you think of?
ORI: Jay.
MEGHAN: Or?
ORI: More Jay? Drugs? Couch surfing?
MEGHAN: No like... 'epic.' 'Victory.' 'Slaymaker.'
ORI: Ah-ha.
MEGHAN: I'm getting known by it. And it's a one thousand percent badass name.
ORI: But you're divorcing him.
MEGHAN: ...
I:II, Pg. 33-34
 - MEGHAN: I have a job, I play Magic.
JAY: Yeah. With my cards and my name. // So. Yeah.
MEGHAN: Oh really? I'm the one who's making the Slaymaker name super epic
I:II pg. 46
 - JAY: Let's do this: best out of three. If you win, you can keep the Slaymaker name. Take it to Mythic.
MEGHAN: Okay...and if you win?
JAY: You give me another chance.
I:II, pg. 49

- JAY: Anything I did to her was just trying to get her off me. If she says any differently - Screw that. People believe that shit because she's -
I got proof but...who cares what the guy says? Nobody gives a shit. It happens all the time to men but nobody talks about it. So yeah, sorry, I don't want her using my name.
You get that, right?
II:III, pg. 87
- CORY: Is this best out of three?
JAY: Why? Does she have that bad of a hand?
MEGHAN: No. Shut up, // Cory
JAY: Yeah best out of three.
MEGHAN: For 'Slaymaker.'
JAY: Exactly. And for you giving me another chance.
II:III, pg. 100
- JAY: So you give up Slaymaker. The most badassingest name ever -
And you never play again!
II:III, pg.121
- JAY: It's Magic. It's a game. And she's like 'fuck you'; well, whatever. *(to MEGHAN)*
This is why you can't use my name. Because you'll make an idiot out of me. Because you'll flip // out like this -
II:III, pg. 112
- MEGHAN: But I'm keeping the name. Because it means I was married to you. It happened. And I got through it. I survived.
II:III, pg. 122
- JAY: I changed my name.
CORY: ...what?
JAY:I had to, with everybody knowing...
Well, everybody seeing Meghan's...
Brittany helped me. I used her computer. Rocket Lawyer or something. *(pause)*
Especially since Meghan's writing all these blog posts about how toxic Magic is. Fucking weird. Not that she's wrong! You know. I get it. But it's like...I don't wanna be a Slaymaker anymore.
CORY: What'd you change it to?
JAY: Walker.
II:IV, pg. 135
- Sources:
 - [Ohio Legal Article](#)

What's the vibe?

- Where:
 - South suburban Akron, Ohio
 - Card shop, apartments, parking lot
- When:
 - February of 2019, then months later - April/May
 - Pre-pandemic midwest
- Current Popularity of MTG
 - In Dec 2018, Magic was reaching more than 35 million players around the world in 70 countries.
 - In 2019, Magic came out with its esports program - MTG Arena (10 million dollars split prize pool for online & tabletop winners)
 - 2 types: Magic Pro League (MPL) for top 32 players & Mythic Championships which allows all players the opportunity to compete against the pros
 - At this point, MTG is crossing the boundary of cult status into mainstream pop culture



- Events/Things of 2019
 - Top song: "Old Town Road" Lil Nas X featuring Billy Ray Cyrus
 - Top movie: Avengers Endgame
 - First case of Covid-19 documented
 - Jonas Brothers unite to make music again
 - Series finale of Game of Thrones airs
 - U.S. Women's soccer wins the World Cup
 - "Ok Boomer"
 - Disney+ & Apple TV +
 - Donald Trump is impeached

Resource

- [Article reflecting on Magic in the 2010s](#)

Sources:

- [Business Insider Article](#)
- [Vice Article](#)
- [Buzzfeed 2019 Article](#)

Magic the Gathering

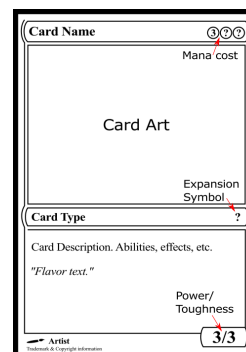
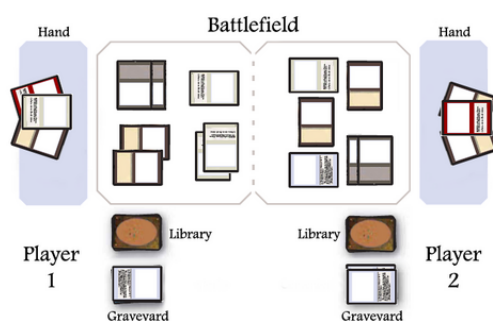
- History of MTG

- Creator: Richard Garfield
 - As a child, Richard traveled a lot with his dad on work trips, and couldn't speak the native language, so he would play marbles & cards with other children
 - When he got back to the U.S., he wanted to play Dungeons and Dragons, but none of his local stores or friends knew how to play, so he created Magic!
- Game was originally called *Five Magics*, based on the five magical elements drawn from geographically diverse areas
- Fun fact: he never meant to publish Magic
- Debuted: 1993
- First Magic Pro Tour: 1996
- Players assemble their own decks from packs of cards they bought similar to baseball cards
- Genre: collectible card games/trading card games
- Magic has released over 18 thousand different cards & hundreds of expansion decks in 11 different languages
- Parent Company: Hasbro & Wizards of the Coast
- MTG Arena: digital version of Magic for PC
- Friday Night Magic: 6,000 stores worldwide that the Wizards have licensed to put on weekly tournaments
- Other significant people:
 - Beverly Marshall Saling: head & only editor of MTG, first official female designer for Magic
 - Mark Rosewater: head designer of MTG for Wizards of the Coast since 2003; champion of diversity in the MTG community



- The Basics of Game Play

- [How to Play a Card - 7 min video](#)
- [How to Play Magic - 19 min video](#)



- **MTG Formats**

- Commander
 - 100 deck size
 - 3-5 players
 - 120 minute game duration
- Standard
 - 60+ deck size
 - 2 players
 - 20 minute game duration
- Booster Draft
 - 40+ deck size
 - 2-8 players
 - 120 minute game duration
- Modern
 - 60+ deck size
 - 2 players
 - 20 minute game time
- Legacy
 - 60+ deck size
 - 2 players
 - 20 minute game time

- **Different Ways to Play**

- Tabletop
 - In person
- MTG Arena
 - Mobile or desktop
- Spelltable
 - Desktop using webcam

- **Competitive Magic**

- 1994: First world championship tournament: Gen Con
- 1996: Pro Tour: professional, invite-only, called the Black Lotus Pro Tour
- 1997: Grand Prix: open to all players
- 1996- 2005: pro tours
- 2012: world championships were temporarily replaced by Magic: The Gathering Players Championship
- 2013: World Championship reintroduced
- **2019: Pro Tours are rebranded as Mythic Championships**
 - This rebrand was done to include MTG Arena into the competitive scene

- 2020: Pro Tours are rebranded as Players Tour events
 - *The Players Tour is now what culminates in the World Championship
 - *Grand Prix still happen & one in Vegas in 2015 had over 7,500 players
- Current cash prizes
 - Total of \$250,000, with the winner getting \$50,000
- **MTG in Pop Culture**
 - Magic generates over 1 billion in sales
 - Celebrity fans: Post Malone, Joseph Gordon-Levitt, Felicia Day, Seth Rogan, Keegan-Michael Key, Jordan Peele, Jason Alexander, and more
 - Magic has recently begun producing different decks that are in collaboration with different brands/IP
 - Example: Lord of the Rings
 - MagicCon
 - In-person events, panels, immersive experiences, & more
- **Psychology of MTG**
 - Control vs. aggro decks
 - “There are a lot of people who play MTG that don't see it simply as a game. They see it as a statement of who they are.” - MTG Player form MTG Salvation link
 - The game is not only a game to some, but a tool to measure & gain self-worth
 - One blogger suggested that there are 3 types of magic player archetypes & broke them down on his blog. I thought this was interesting!



- The Timmy's
 - The power gamer who wants to win big by crushing their opponents
 - Likes cards with big creatures & spells
 - Magnitude of win > number of wins

- The Johnny's
 - Likes to win with style
 - Likes creative & interesting combinations of cards
 - Experience of building a deck & thinking up potential combos may be as important as the game play
 - Also cares about quality of victory
 - Game is all about artistry, self-expression, & discovery
- The Spike's
 - The player who just likes to win
 - Thrill of the victory above all else
 - Deck design is all about efficiency
 - Drawn to tournament play
- Timmy, Johnny, Spike in relation to 5 Five Personality

The "Big Five" Personality Factors

Trait Dimension	Description
Emotional Stability	Calm versus anxious Secure versus insecure
Extraversion	Sociable versus reserved Fun-loving versus sober
Openness	Imaginative versus practical Preference for variety versus routine
Agreeableness	Trusting versus suspicious Helpful versus uncooperative
Conscientiousness	Organized versus disorganized Careful versus careless

-
- Players high in openness might be Johnny's
- Players high in conscientiousness might be Spikes

*Which archetype does your character fall into?

- Magic Deck Types & the Players' personalities
 - Aggro
 - Control
 - Combo
 - Midrange
 - Tempo
 - Ramp

- Sources:
 - [Washington Post Article](#)
 - [Celebs Article](#)
 - [Business Insider Article](#)
 - [The New Yorker Article](#)
 - [Magic Formats](#)
 - [Competitive Magic](#)
 - [New York Times Article](#)
 - [MTG Salvation Article](#)
 - [Board Game Geek Article](#)

Women in Magic the Gathering

MEGHAN: Magic is for everyone, lots of girls play now

ORI: I don't mean that game. I mean...this broader, bigger game.

Men built all of this. The game, the card shops, the culture. By engaging in it, you think you'll get their approval or something, but you'll never win. They'll never believe you.

*MEGHAN: That's why I can't write the article, I'm not a "woman in Magic" I'm -
I don't know, but I'm not that.*

- Women in Magic Interviews & Quotes

- “Why don’t more women compete? Really what you’re talking about is women that have the time and comfort level and resources to go on the grind. When you’re on the grind, you’re playing as much Magic as you can at every opportunity, in a heavily male dominated environment. That also involves travel. If you have a team, or a group of people you’re on the grind with you often have to drive. Are you comfortable with riding with four dudes for eight hours? You’re gonna have to get your own hotel room, because it’s highly likely that you, or your partner, or a person’s partner, aren’t going to be totally kosher with you being in the same hotel room...Moreover, you probably also have a job. Where do you get the time? And then if you’re, say, a woman who is anywhere from 25 to 40, you may have children. How does having children impact your ability to go on the grind and play Magic?” - Amie, chief & co-founder of bay Area Lady Planeswalkers Society
- “Just remember women are players just like everyone else. Encourage them like any other new player. Don’t do anything special. We don’t want special treatment because that highlights that we are different. I want to get to the point where we walk in and there are women and men and that's just what we expect at any kind of tournament.” - Kat Light, Magic Pro
- “Percentage-wise, women are performing not only better than ever at Grand Prix, but better than men by a clear margin. Seventy-five percent of all women to [make it to the] Top 8 [of] a Grand Prix in Magic’s 15-year history did so in the past four months.” - Patrick Chapin, Magic Player
- “When Magic first came out, I believed that by making something less objectifying to women, that women would flock to this new game experience. There was a lot of positive feedback from women, but it didn’t magically change the distribution of players.” - Garfield, game creator.

The “cultural inertia” was too much to overcome.

“Just because we came out with one welcoming game, people weren’t going to suddenly start playing if they hadn’t felt welcome for their entire life.” - Garfield, game creator

- **The Stats**

- It’s been estimated that women, transgender, and gender non-conforming players make up 1-5% of the competitive Magic players.
- Overall Magic player base, about 38% is female
- Fortunately, the Magic community is diverse along other axis lines—race, age, disability, and sexuality as creators are introducing more characters that better reflect the identities of its players.
- ChannelFireball (channels) and Star City Games (gaming store) are featuring more women and not-white commentators.
- However, still many female-identifying players face online sexism & sexual harassment

- **What Wizards has Tried to Do to Stop Harassment & Celebrate Diversity**

- Hiring more women in game development (which on the flip side, took big name women players out of the game)
- Diversify cards in gender, race, ethnicity, body shapes, etc.
- In 2013, game designers put their first nonbinary planeswalker on a card
- In 2015, they introduced their first explicitly transgender character, Alesha, Who Smiles at Death
- Wizards employees have been banning players for harassment and bullying, especially online

- **Organizations Fighting Gender Discrimination in Magic**



- Lady Planeswalkers Society

- Over 100 chapters around the world
- Founded in 2011 by Tifa Robles
- Hosts tournaments & also workshops to teach Magic



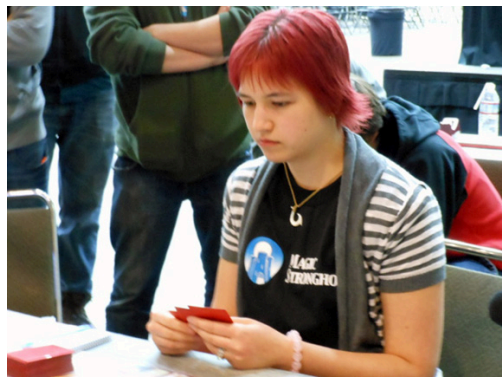
- Birds of Paradise
 - A revolving collective of players & creators highlighting the voices of marginalized identities in Magic the Gathering
- **Some Notable Women in Magic**



- Jessica Estephan: first woman to win a Magic Grand Prix Tournament



- Melissa DeTora: first woman to make Top 8 of a Pro Tour



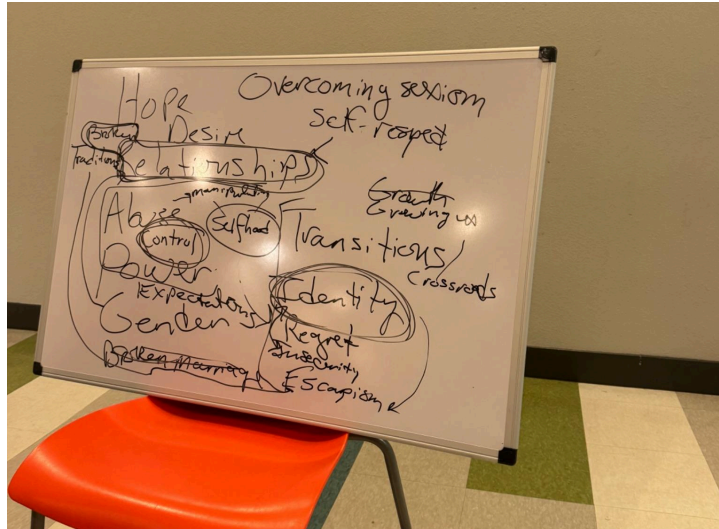
- Jackie Lee: Former Pro Tour player, previous Magic Employee



- Beverly Marshall Saling: head & only editor of MTG, first official female designer for Magic

Sources:

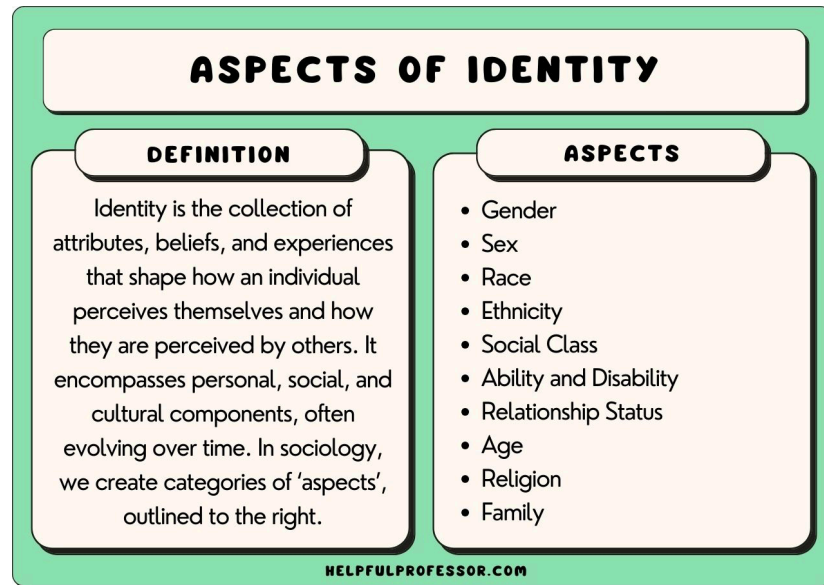
- [Washington Post Article](#)
- [Vice Article](#)
- [Horizon Article](#)
- [Lady Planeswalker Society](#)
- [Birds of Paradise](#)
- [Daily Dot Article](#)
- [New Yorker Article](#)
- [MTG Wiki](#)



Core Theme: Taking Back Control of One's Identity

- **Losing one's sense of identity can be caused by:**
 - Any sort of oppression or significant loss
 - Unworthiness
 - Life changes. I.E. moving, pregnancy, graduating
 - Losing touch with your values
 - Focusing too much on the past

- **How does one take back control of their identity?**
 - Self-Reflection
 - Spend time alone
 - Identify what your emotional responses are to outward stimuli
 - Consider your past
 - Exploration
 - Try new things
 - Seek out new perspectives
 - Embrace uniqueness
 - Accept your quirks & imperfections
 - Show yourself love
 - Seek feedback & support
 - Ask for feedback from trusted friends/family
 - Attend therapy



- **What is an identity?**
 - A sense of meaning.
 - A sense of I know my place in this world.



- [Identity Article](#)
- [Belongly Article](#)

Relationships & Abuse

- **The facts**

- Domestic violence affects 10 millions Americans each year
- 1 in 4 women & 1 in 9 men are victims of domestic violence
- It includes economic, physical, sexual, emotional, and psychological forms of abuse
- Domestic violence cases lead to worsened psychological and physical health, decreased quality of life, decreased productivity, and in some cases, mortality
- Domestic abuse is typically the victimization of an individual with whom the abuser has an intimate or romantic relationship
- According to Helping Survivors, examples of sexual violence include:
 - Nonconsensual sexual contact
 - Rape
 - Assault
 - Sexual Harassment
 - Stalking or cyberstalking
 - Peeping
 - Exposure
 - Sexual exploitation
 - Threats
 - Any behavior or action involving violence or coercion of the sexual nature can considered sexual violence

- **What are some of the physiological repercussions?**

- Increased risk of mental health conditions
- Depression
- Anxiety & fear
- PTSD
- Low self-esteem
- Difficulty trusting others
- Increased aggression or passivity
- Substance abuse
- Dissociation
- Difficulty with intimacy
- Somatic symptoms (can manifest in physical symptoms like chronic pain, headaches)
- Difficulty regulating emotions
- If you or someone you know has experienced sexual violence, help is available. National Sexual Assault Hotline: 800-656-4673
- [National Library of Medicine Article](#)

- [Helping Survivors Article](#)

Music/Spotify Playlist

- [Shoutout Bethany for this Slaymaker Spotify playlist](#)
- [Medieval Covers Playlist for funsies](#)
- Megan listens to Against All Authority, Our Last Night, Machine Gun Kelly
- In high school, Ori & Meghan listened to Halsey while getting ready for prom (pg. 53)

Glossary

* Magic the Gathering = MTG

- *Cardfight Vanguard* (I:I Prologue, pg. 1)
 - a Japanese multimedia franchise that includes a trading card game, anime series, manga, and anime/live-action film. The game is a one-on-one card battle where players summon units to attack their opponent's vanguard (group of people leading the way in new ideas). The goal is to inflict enough damage to their opponent's vanguard to win the game.
- Mana cost (I:I, pg. 2)
 - Resources system in MTG; each spell you cast has a cost associated with it
- Mono- white angel deck (I:I, pg. 2)
 - There's 5 different types of mana. A deck made up of cards that only need white mana that is predominately angels.
- Lavamancer (I:I, pg. 2)



- Oblivion Rings (I:I & I:II, pg. 2,80)



- Kamigawa (I:I, pg. 2)
 - Kamigawa is an expert-level MTG block inspired by Japanese myths and revolving around the battle between spirits (kami) and living beings. It consists of the expansion sets *Champions of Kamigawa*, *Betrayers of Kamigawa*, and *Saviors of Kamigawa*. Expansion set Kamigawa: Neon Dynasty.
- Firemind (I:II, pg. 5)
- Niv-Mizzet (I:II, pg. 5)



- Blind Obedience (I:II, pg. 5, pg.84)



- Luminarch (I:II, pg. 5, 85, 102)
 - Luminarch refers to Luminarch ascension & luminarch aspirant. Luminarch Ascension is an enchantment that gives you a powerful advantage if you can prevent life loss, while Luminarch Aspirant is a creature that can boost the power and toughness of other creatures on your turn.
- Burn deck (I:II, pg. 14)
 - A deck strategy that uses direct damage spells as its primary win-condition.
- Metroid - vania (I:II, pg. 18)
 - a game that feels like Super Metroid and Castlevania Symphony of the Night - which happen to be 2D platformers with heavy emphasis on exploration in an interconnected world, where you need to find certain upgrades to open up new parts.
- Jace Wielder of Mystery Deck (I:II, pg. 19)



- Planeswalker (I:II, pg. 19)

- Type of magic card. Planeswalkers are among the most powerful beings in the multiverse.
- Tezzert (I:II, pg. 20)



- Grixis Control Deck (I:II, pg. 26)



- Nicol Bolas (I:II, pg. 26)



- Ori (video game character) (reference throughout)



- Boras deck (I:II, pg. 34)



- Shizuki (I:II, pg. 38)



- Innistrad deck (I:II, Pg. 38)



- A command deck. Example:
- Jace, Mind Sculptor (I:II, pg. 39)



- Mythic (I:II, pg. 41)
 - A Mythic Championship was a part of the short-lived Mythic Championships, a series of major yearly invitation-only DCI-sanctioned Magic: The Gathering tournaments — both on MTG Arena and in paper Magic.
- Jaya: red planeswalker from Dominaria (I:II, pg. 41)



- Standard: (I:II, pg. 48):
 - A format of playing Magic where players create 60 card decks from most recently released cards
- Vegeta: (I:II,pg. 62)



- Themyscira (I:II,pg. 67)



- Gatecrash (I:II,pg. 73)
 - Magic the Gathering set that contains 249 different cards



- Sacred Foundry (I:II,pg. 74)



- Boros Reckoner (I:II,pg. 75,70,102)



- Aurelia (I:II,pg. 79)



- sideboard the Flare (I:II,pg. 80)
 - Sideboarding is the process of adjusting your cards in a best out of 3 match



- Gideon (II:III, pg. 84)



- red-black aggro deck (II:III, pg. 84)



- Liliana of the Veil (I:II, & II:III, pg. 29, 94)



- Sorin (II:III, pg. 95)



- Olivia (II:III, pg. 96)



- Mulligan (II:III, pg. 99)
 - an optional process by which any player may attempt to draw a better opening hand before starting the game.
- Super-serious, Morty (II:III, pg. 101)
 - A phrase associated with Evil Morty, a character from the animated series Rick and Morty.
- Red land & white land (II:III, pg. 101)
 - All Magic lands that produce red & white mana
- Silence (II:III, pg. 101)



- full arts (II:III, pg. 102)
 - A special type of card where the artwork extends to the full size of the card, rather than just the image box
- Instants (I:II, II:III, pg. 32, 102, 105)

- the only card type in Magic to have no timing restrictions
- Legion Loyalist (II:III, pg. 104)



- Haste (II:III, pg. 104)
 - a keyword ability that allows a creature to attack, block, or use activated abilities
- Pillar of Flame (II:III, pg. 105)



- Sorcery (II:III, pg. 106)
 - Type of card that represents one-shot or short-term magic spells
- Angelsong (II:III, pg. 107)



- Ash Zealot (II:III pg. 107,109)



- Searing Spear (II:III, pg. 108)



- Safe Passage (II:III, pg. 108)



- Compulsory Rest



- Silverblade Paladin (II:III, pg. 110)

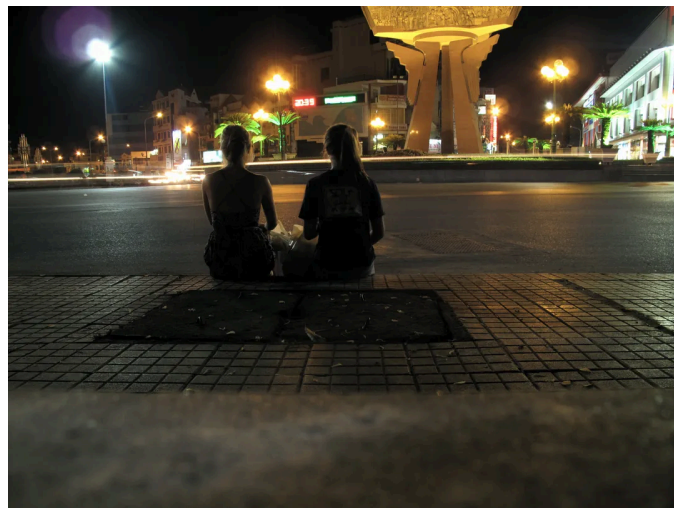


- 4/4 angel (II:III, pg. 113)
 - 4/4 Angel" refers to a white Angel creature with power and toughness of 4, and the ability to fly
- high-cost card (II:III, pg. 114)
 - to a card with a high converted mana cost (CMC)
- Road House (II:IV, pg. 129)
 - A set of playing cards designed to evoke the aesthetic of 1950s America and the concept of road trips
- Firemage (II:IV, pg. 131)
 - A character or card that usually uses fire-based magic
- Edgelords (II:IV, pg. 139)
 - A player, character, or deck that is overly dark or dramatic

Images

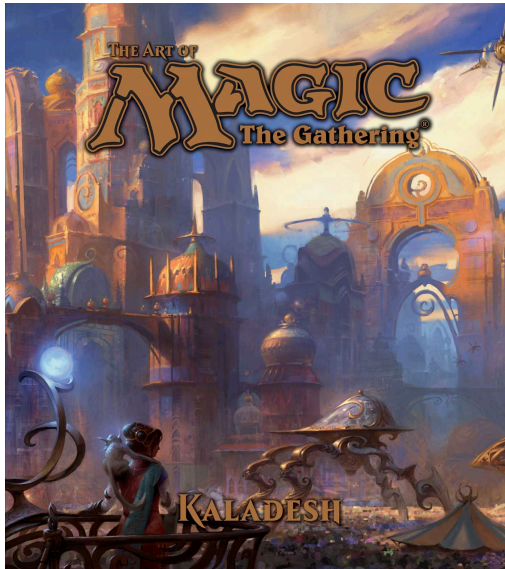








- **Magic the Gathering Cards, Book, & Fan Art:**
 - Question: How does that vastness & high fantasy of these images contrast to the actual location of the card shop?
- **Links:**
 - [Some really beautiful Magic Art](#)
 - [Women of MTG Art/Characters](#)





Other Resources

- [Official Magic the Gathering Website](#)
- [Good Luck High Five Podcast](#) - wherever you listen to podcasts, originally created by two female comedians turned Magic players -Maria Bartholdi & Meghan Wolff
- [The Command Zone](#) - wherever you listen to podcasts hosted by Jimmy Wong & Josh Lee Kwai, weekly podcast for all things Commander
- [25 MTG Podcasts](#)