

# ETERNAL TIMES



Camarilla Southwest Region



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# Intro

Hello again and welcome to the newest issue of the Eternal Times. First I would like to thank all of you who are reading this and those who have been keeping up with the Eternal Times every month. And for those of you who are just checking out the Official Newsletter of the Southwest Region I invite you to check out previous issues aswell.

This issue has an interesting take on the Mage Venue by Jeff Holland. This story is taking from the viewpoint of Mr. Holland's mage and is very much an essay on why vulgar magic is bad. Which is kind of funny since his character is not a Guardian. Jeff does a rather good job of going over the perils of using all the different types of magic that a Mage has at their disposal.

Second we have an article from Rick Munden who describes his experience at ICC. I know many of you were there and I am sure you all have different and similar experiences of ICC and this is a fun little piece that gives you a good look back at a great event. For me this was my first ICC but hopefully not my last and I really enjoyed reading about anothers experience there and I would invite anyone else who

wants to share their experience at ICC to do so.

Now comes the time in the intro for shameless self promotion and begging. This newsletter won't last without you so now is the time to dust off that keyboard or sketch pad and start to work on something for next months issue of the Eternal Times. If you can't think of anything to write about try these topics on for size. I am looking forward to reading some reviews of the Covenant Books. There is also the coming Order books, we have already seen an article for the Guardians of the Veil book and now would be a great time to start working on expectations of the future Order books. For those Forsaken players out there I know you all have things to say about that venue and so far we have only had one story from that venue and I would like to see more.

So thank you all for checking out this months issue of the Eternal Times and I would like to get your feedback on the whole thing. So please write me and let me know what you think, criticism is welcome and I look forward to reading it. Just write me at [BFallehy@gmail.com](mailto:BFallehy@gmail.com).

# THE ESSENCE OF DENIAL

Paradox, we all acknowledge it. We fear and respect it. It is the very nature of the lack of belief in anything and everything fantastic. Yet we know very little about it beyond that it resists us, it summons the foes we hate if it is large enough, and its very essence can send even the most resilient mage into bedlam and degeneration. Its very nature defies reality. And yet when something fantastic happens, it does more than just cancel an effect. It can warp it. Causing damage, perverting the intended item, or warping the magic's into something far more dangerous.

The Abyss fuels it, so why then do we use magic at all? Why not simply study it?

It is possible to use magical powers, even the most flagrant impossibilities without the chance of paradox.

I have watched and observed all levels of the various powers of paradox, the most flagrant, the most subtle; the effects are always ultimately the same. The only difference is the flavor. But all mage's suffer the same strain on their pattern from their powers flailing between the mage's will, and the will of reality. Below are my observations regarding pattern strain, and perhaps, these small details will help others find more means of resisting them.

Forces- Possibly THE most vulgar. Obviously the most physically powerful of the arcana, it warrants mention first. Force related

Paradox is the most often received in my observations out of the sheer defiance of the face of reality. When reality bites against the caster, it truly bites, their skin singes, and their clothes flicker black. Wounds fly across their bodies from superficial bruising as the very force they channel winds back upon the caster as if clawing at them. Not wanting to leave their arms. More powerful forms of the kinetic effects can result in lacerations, or even loss of limb as concussive, kinetic, or electric forces do severe damage to nerves and muscles. Despite our claims, our forms are still distinctly mortal, and the mortal body is a fragile thing when compared to the werewolves, vampires or other beasts. We can only take so much damage.

Life- An arcana of particular interest to me. It is very subtle, extremely useful, and widely used as the power of regeneration and healing. Yet, some of its uses, and when used too frequently can, and will result in long term problems. In my time in watching this arcana I've seen sickness. We all have billions of smaller organisms inside our bodies, when the life arcana goes amuck, it causes many problems, sometimes more than we can handle. I have observed tumors, boils, or blisters suddenly ravage a body. Rashes, and allergic reactions go to great heights as the body's natural order is reduced to chaos. Many do not notice the extent of cancers in their own system as they lay dormant in their forms, kept in check by the powerful magic they invest into their powers. Should they be removed, they would be bedridden in months, and dead in a matter of years. Other effects come in the forms of spiking fevers and autoimmune or neurological imbalance as the form overreacts from too much reinforcement, or worse, cuts out all together as the body becomes addicted to the healing effects of the magic.

Death- A bit of a mystery to me, and I'd prefer it that way, but it is worth mentioning. Death frightens everyone. It is the nature of the negative, free floating energies that exist on the other side of the physical plane. A plane constructed out of imprints from those that lived and died over the course of millennia. When the strain on the pattern occurs, it comes in the result of irradiating the body with the raw force of the power channeled. Many dismiss this as a fact of life as their bodies become infused by their deathly powers. Their bodies seem emaciated and sickly. Their faces gaunt and pale. Their bodies are quite literally dying. Their cells die, yet due to the nature of the magic, it keeps working. In theory, one could cease all effects and they would heal. The pattern strain results in the form of necromantic shock. Their cells spontaneously die and begin to age and rot. Their skin results in blue-black rashes and their skin sloughs off as the cells die en masse. Their hair turns brittle and white; their eyes go gray and empty. These effects reverse themselves of course as the body regenerates new skin. Under many Moros' shirts, I've seen pink skin as old layers fall off dead. Scars and other markings adorn their pale flesh, and they often do not notice their body's reaction to the death they channel.

Mind- As a mastigos, this Arcana holds particular familiarity, and I never appreciate its vulgar use. It is uniquely suited to the powers of subtlety. I may find some applications abhorrent, such as mind control, yet there are other powers that can be used to gain a desired effect without resulting to mental domination. And is simultaneously, the weakest and strongest of the arcana due to its innate resistance to vulgarity. That does not stop some more powerful effects from being vulgar however, and the strain on the mind is

a terrible thing. The brain is on FIRE as it literally overwhelms itself with use. The brain uses 10% of maximum capability. Because it was designed to. Working the brain too much requires a lot of oxygen and water. As the heat dries the limited water supply. Many mind practitioners are perpetually thirsty, and when the pattern is pushed, can result in brain bleeds. Which present themselves as headaches, migraines, bloody noses, twitching.

Space- Again, as a Mastigos, this arcana is of special relation. It is one of two arcana that see's incredible use as both a primary and supportive role in relation to the other powers. An Obrimos can hurl fire and lasers. But with space, he can blow up a building by wreathing it in flames. Yet, when Space strains the pattern, it can be painful in a way not many can understand. The literal placement in the physical existence becomes rattled. Skin, blood, tissue and fluids vanish or move about in unnatural ways. I have seen blood spontaneously appear outside the person's body, or their skin twist and pull as their body tries to pull itself in different directions.

Matter- An odd arcana, as it deals with the actual firmament in all its detail, the patterns and physical properties of mundane objects and matter can have a unique form of strain. The human body when imbued with magic is extremely resilient in comparison to normal humans. But matter skates around it due to the fact that all things are basically made of the same matter. While it is the venue of the Life arcana to deal with the majority of organic material, it is the Matter arcanum that deals with basic elements. Strains on the pattern to this end can be violently painful. The carbon and basic cells of the body begin to twist and warp. Becoming inorganic and causing pain as solid hunks of rock, wood, or other material

riddles their form, and twists, pokes and rips their flesh as they turn and move. Imagine the pain of having your skin turn into stone. The rock flakes and falls off the arm, revealing the muscle and sinew, still forced to word even embedded with fragments of wood, glass or other materials. Or vaporized and blown away with the wind or left behind if he is moving quickly. Alternatively, the unmaking of matter can be just as dangerous as the very physical cohesion of the cells becomes disassembled. The mage's body feels tiny particles of his form fly apart as their cells no longer are compelled to stay together,

Prime- The power of illusion, form and the very raw stuff of magic. Prime is an odd power as it is able to directly compel magic to resist the essence of paradox. And while extremely useful in conjunction to other arcana, Prime remains supremely useful in enchantments, and manipulation of magic of the very world around us. The strain on the patterns I have observed are perhaps the most tragic, as the best way I can describe it is spiritual poisoning. The very magic of the caster becomes sickly, warped or diminished. It lacks a physical representation, but the strain is very spiritually exhausting. Not unlike the effect of introducing pure oxygen to a normal human. The excess energy can result in strength and enhanced performance. But also like pure oxygen, the body can suffer seizures, wooziness and diminished power as the vessel wears itself out. Growing weaker, even as the magic's grow stronger.

Spirits- Like death, Spirit magic's is odd to me, mostly because it directly deals with other sovereign entities in a way I find abhorrent. I think it to be morally reprehensible to force any sentient and living being to be subjected to another's will, for these same

reasons, I even resist specific rites and powers of Mind. The problem is that many mage's think of spirits the way humans think of tools or vehicles or at the very most, pets. Straining the spiritual pattern of a mage can be interesting, and sometimes entertaining to observe. As he pushes his powers to create, manipulate or invoke the powers of the spiritual world, a piece of him flies into the ether. Unlike Prime, where too much power infects the soul, pieces of the spirit seem to fly away. The very effort of pushing or pulling a spirit into the forefront an effort of power that leaves one drained. Not necessarily of mana. But the residual effect of leaving shreds of spirit result in a physical spiritual deadness. As if the mage is crisscrossed with scars that manifest by turning small lines of skin and flesh pale. Or the eyes of the mage turning dead, or bloodshot as the force within them flickers and cracks.

Fate- Another odd power, much like space and fate that is both powerful in its own right, and useful in efforts to enhance other powers, by placing conditions onto preset effects. But the power of paradox leaves a distinct mark on those who strain their patterns with the forces of fate. As their body literally resists the flow of destiny to push into other more desirable outcomes, their patterns grind against the other destinies and pull shreds of less pleasant effects into reality. Random wounds, such as slaps from an angry lover, a broken leg from a trip, or a sword slash from an attacking foe, appear and quickly vanish, leaving a scar or bruise where previously, there was nothing. Their clothes and hair grow or tear or become disheveled as if they performed acts that never happened.

Time- Much like Fate, Time is a power of great cooperative use, but with a

special emphasis on the power of actual versus fake history. The result is quite painful for those to watch and experience. A perpetual effect of 'deja vu' overcomes the caster as he sees things in his mind's eye over and over again whether he wishes it or not. While he may be surprised still, he looks at things with a sense of 'oh, that' as opposed to 'what the fuck?' The strains on the pattern can result in similar ways to fate, as old, new or alternate timelines impose themselves on the mage's person. But unlike fate, these powers come from events that were, are, will or never be. Whether they are in hours, or years or never. Damage appears over their forms in all shapes and sizes. Slashes, burns, poison, bruises, breaking bones, frostbite. Several times mages have conveyed reliving old wounds or the memories of past events that leave their mind in pain as the natural dissonance and overlay causes physical pain.

These are my simple observations of phenomena that often go unchecked, dismissed and unnoticed. But as a scientist I feel compelled to record and notice these incidents in the hopes that they will offer clues, which can lead to greater puzzles that need solving so that we may one day follow our Atlantean predecessors, or however you think of magic, and we can solve the ultimate mystery that IS the power we possess.

Symbol,  
Mastigos of the Mysterium  
Student of the Five Moons Theosophical  
Society

Jeff Holland  
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# ICC Review

Milwaukee was cold when we arrived, with a thick blanket of clouds hanging low over the city, a stark contrast to the Southern Arizona climate we'd just departed. Myself and two others drove from Midway Airport in Chicago, arriving Wednesday afternoon and getting settled in our rooms. This was my second ICC, having not attended one since 2001. It was my wife's first, and we were both excited about it.

I can't attest too much that happened at ICC outside of the Requiem venue. My wife and I avoided the parties, so the only thing we know about those is that they occurred and, in some cases, were shut down. Nor are we, as players, much interested in the other venues save perhaps Mortals. Unfortunately, we did not bring our Mortals sheets as we had been told that the venue was cancelled at ICC. This turned out to be incorrect (or may have changed between the time we heard it and the time we arrived), but we shrugged it off and decided to bring all of our sheets next time just in case changes happened. I can tell you,

however, that the Requiem venue was the most fun I'd had at a Camarilla event in years.

It started off slowly, mind you. Soft role-play on Thursday night with little real plot driving it made things slightly dull. It was only after running across a few characters that I'd interacted with online, but not in person, that things picked up a bit. Even more so after meeting a character named Jack: a young Gangrel who could barely utter a sentence and appeared to have animalistically crippled legs. Our characters watched in horror as others present mocked him, and then we removed him from the room (much to the dismay of the player, who wanted nothing more than to remind us that it was soft RP and that we couldn't kill him!). What followed were some excellent interactions between our characters and his, and later involving other characters from his home domain. The night ended quietly after that, though not before Bat Reynolds (as portrayed by Scott McQuiston) insisted on dragging my character, Lawson, to the far end of the room to gaze in mute awe at the very firm bottom of a young lady who appeared to be wearing white spandex.

The second night was far more eventful: my character killed the first PC at ICC, and the first he'd killed since the start of the chronicle. While usually not something to boast about, the death came on the heels of over a year of role-play, but fulfilling and frustrating, and the player took it with a casual grace that I can only hope to emulate when my character finally dies. It also led to scenes later that night that were fraught with peril for my character and ended with him being "escorted" by members of the local Constable's staff in an effort to keep an eye on him. This, coupled with the Wake of Edward Savage, made for an extraordinarily memorable night.

The final night was, by and far, the bloodiest and the most fun I'd had yet. While a number of characters died, many of those deaths led to emotional scenes and a tighter banding of characters and even players. The Gangrel clan meeting descended into a hurried hunt for the child of one of their most Admired, Aspasia, and the later discovery of Parnellia Perkins' death stunned many of us. The appearance of the Unholy, the first I'd seen her in the chronicle, was unsettling and the tales of her myriad powers even more so.

The deaths of a handful of high-ranking Invictus had many of the First Estate on edge. I'm fortunate that my character is both Gangrel and Invictus, the clan and covenant that seem to be the most active and involved. I think I sat and rested for perhaps 20 minutes of the night, and my poor legs wanted to rebel against their master for the abuse.

While the role-play of the Requiem games was excellent, and meeting so many people that I'd known only from online exchanges was awesome, I did have some concerns about the communications between various event staff members. I also noticed problems with changes to programming and a subsequent failure to update the members on the changes. My wife and I sat outside the room for our first volunteer assignment for 45 minutes before someone showed up. This was a bit irritating.

My wife and I enjoyed ourselves immensely, despite the few problems we encountered. We certainly plan to attend next year, and I commend the staff, especially the Storytellers, on what was an amazing event.

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## Member Advocates

To Be Announced