

CZ0526: PRAETOR COMMANDERS FROM MOM

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- 1) INTRO JLK & Jordan

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This episode is dedicated to the BAD GUYS. The VILLAINS. The ANTAGONISTS. That's right, we're talking about the Phyrexian Praetor commanders from March of the Machine. BUT FIRST:

****CARD KINGDOM** **ULTRAPRO #1****

****FREELANCE VIDEO EDITORS (Link in the Show Notes)****

****PATREON: CRICKET FLOYD****

2) MAIN TOPIC: PRAETOR COMMANDERS - MARCH OF THE MACHINE

There are 12 legendary creatures in March of the Machine that have the creature type: Phyrexian. That means these are the villains. Not the ones trying to save the multiverse, but those trying to destroy it. If you like playing the bad guy, this episode is for you.

We're going to start with the five Praetors.

ELESH NORN//THE ARGENT ETCHINGS

All of the Praetors in this cycle have an activated ability that exiles them and flips them over to the Saga side. (Note: This is always restricted to sorcery speed).

WHAT IS INCUBATE?

Create an incubate token with [in this case [2] +1/+1 counters on it and "2: Transform this artifact." It transforms into a 0/0 artifact creature.

- *So Elesh Norn flips over and, in essence, creates five 2/2s.*

BLOCKING = BAD

It's bad for your opponents if you block their stuff. But it's also bad for them to block you.

- *Go wide seems to be the order of the day because it synergizes with all abilities (except maybe the board wipe on Chapter 3). It even gives you creatures to sacrifice to flip her.*
 - *Go Wide: White Sun's Twilight Skrelv's Hive; Oketra's Monument*
 - *Token Synergy: Anointed Procession; Mondrak, Glory Dominus; Felidar Retreat; etc*

SAGA SYNERGY

Removing counters from the saga side allows you to reuse the first two chapters:

- *Power Conduit; Nesting Grounds; (we'll be mentioning these a lot) Scholar of New Horizons*
 - *Note: Chapter 3 causes the card to flip back over upon resolution, so it will do this even if you remove a counter before the effect resolves. Meaning, it is difficult to have Chapter 3 go off over and over. It's like that for all the praetors in this cycle.*

- Contagion Engine seems very good though. Be able to wrath and flip at instant speed.

PILLOWFORT

Elesh's first ability stacks with a lot of other pillowfort effects:

- Norn's Annex; Ghostly Prison
 - *The good news is that the board wipe on her saga side will kill most of this stuff*
 - *(Liquimetal Torque is looking REAL good in this deck)*

COOL STUFF

- Nemesis Mask (wish white had access to more Lure effects)
- Flicker of Fate

Opinion: Feels like this deck is gonna be a real slog to play against.

JIN-GITAXIAS//THE GREAT SYNTHESIS

NOTE: The last chapter is a single instance of Omniscience. You put all the spells you want to cast for free on the stack. Jin flips back over and then the spells resolve in the order you choose. He does NOT get to draw off of those spells because they've already been cast.

INSTANT SPEED DRAW

You need SEVEN cards in hand to flip so you're gonna need a lot of draw spells...and it's much better to draw at instant speed and surprise your opponents so they don't see the flip coming.

- Archmage's Charm, Thirst for Discovery, Gush
 - *You want these to be as low mana value as possible to increase the efficiency*
- Pull From Tomorrow; Blue Sun's Zenith; Stroke of Genius;

UNTAP YO' LANDS

Once you flip, you're gonna have a million cards. Feels like it won't be super hard to go infinite with this:

- Palinchron; Gilded Drake; Great Whale (Chapter 2 bounces these back to hand)
- Archaeomancer + Turnabout, Dramatic Reversal; Mnemonic Wall; High Tide; Frantic Search;
 - (Clones for the Archaeomancer/Mnemonic Wall/Palinchron/Etc)

PROLIFER-GREAT

- Inexorable Tide; Flux Channeler; Ichormoon Gauntlet; Viral Drake; Gitaxian Anatomist, Contentious Plan; Tezzeret's Gambit,;
- Clockspinning (if you wanna take off counters for some reason!...Chapter 2?)

DRAW DRAW DRAW

After that you probably win with:

- Thassa's Oracle; Laboratory Maniac; Jace Wielder of Mysteries, etc.
 - more like **BLAH BLAH BLAH**
- You can cast Omniscience off of the saga's omniscience!
- Extra Turns Spells: Karn's Temporal Sundering, Temporal Mastery, etc.
- Sea Gate Restoration (never actually seen it cast before, maybe that'll change now!)

Why does this card have Ward 2? At least allow me to kill it easily!

This deck is a lot of fun to talk about but won't necessarily be fun to play over and over.

COMING UP

MORE POWERFUL PRAETORS!

MIDROLL BREAK

SHEOLDRED//THE TRUE SCRIPTURES

Edict effect into targeted removal into mass discard. This is gonna slow other decks DOWN.

RECUR REUSE

If you don't want your opponent's to have any creatures just:

- Ashnod's Altar + Demonic Gifts; Return to Action; Malakir Rebirth;
- *Get the cool stuff your opponent's sacrifice and/or discard.*
 - Animate Dead; Reanimate; Command the Dreadhorde

MILL MILL MILL

Seems like the big goal of the deck is gonna be to get to that 3rd chapter:

- Altar of Dementia (did we mention you want sac outlets?); Mesmeric Orb; Syr Konrad, the Grim
- Remove counters to reuse chapter 3 (brutal)
 - Power Conduit; Nesting Grounds, Thrull Parasite

ARMY OF THE DRED

This deck is probably counting on getting to Chapter 3 as its wincon. You gotta make sure you get there:

- Drown in Ichor; Yawgmoth, Thran Physician; Contagion Engine/Clasp; Karn's Bastion
- You want instant speed and from hand (for the surprise and pseudo-haste). There are only two:
 - Grim Affliction; Whisper of the Dross

HASTE IS HARD

If you're gonna bank so much on chapter 3, you really want haste. Black is not good at haste:

- Akroma's Memorial (you'll want Ashnod's/Phyrexian Altar so you can sac all your creatures with Chpt3 on the stack)
- Crashing Drawbridge + Swiftfoot Boots/Lightning Greaves

OLDIES BUT GOODIES:

- Bloodchief Ascension + Mindcrank; Painter's Servant + Grindstone

The deck is probably made up mostly of board wipes, removal and edicts. Maybe with some mass discard as well. People aren't gonna like playing against it. But hey - that's why this episode is about VILLAINS.

URABRASK//THE GREAT WORK

Storm dot deck. Birgi is already broken and this is Birgi with massive upside. This deck is gonna look like a mono-red version of the Tor-Wauki deck JLK played on Game Knights.

CHEAP CANTRIPS

You want one mana spells that replace themselves. Because you break even on mana but increase your "storm" count. There are lots of these:

- Expedite; Renegade Tactics; Crash Through; Warlord's Fury; Crimson Wisps; Needle Drop;

- Faithless Looting; Thrill of Possibility; Light Up The Stage; Jeska's Will;
- Bonus Round seems very cool

STORM TRIGGERS

Then you want to stack more stuff that triggers as you cast spells:

- Birgi, God of Storytelling; Storm-Kiln Artist; Runaway Steam-Kin;
- Guttersnipe; Kessig Flamebreather; Firebrand Archer; (there are a lot of these)

NO-LIFERATE

The saga side of Urabrask is definitely gonna make it easier to go-off (or keep going off) but unfortunately, Red doesn't have much proliferate.

- Volt Charge; Cacophony Scamp;
- Colorless Options: Karn's Bastion; Staff of Completion; Contagion Engine/Clasp

AVOID THE TRAPS

For the most part, damage doublers and the like are gonna be traps. You might want one or two but don't put a bunch of these in your deck:

- Torbran, Then of Red Fell; Solphim, Mayhem Dominus; Fiery Emancipation; City on Fire; Mechanized Warfare; Embermaw Hellion

This deck is gonna look a lot like a Birgi deck - almost identical. Yes, it has a saga side that she doesn't have, but that won't matter very often because the front side is better than the back, so you won't usually want to flip it. It WILL be a very strong deck though. We know that because Birgi is very strong.

VORINCLEX//THE GRAND EVOLUTION

Can find ANY forest. Activated ability is EIGHT mana! (At least it helps you get extra lands). Is it worth it to pay 13 mana to draw two lands, mill 10 and MAYBE cheat 2x creatures into play?

TELL ME THE ODDS

Jordan did some math:

30 creatures= ~87% chance to hit 2 creatures when you mill 10

35 creatures = ~92%

TOP DECK MANIPULATION

If you're just hoping to get lucky, 13 mana is NOT worth it. You gotta know for sure what's on top:

- Scroll Rack, Sylvan Library, Sensei's Divining Top
- Green actually has quite a lot of "look at the top card of your library" effects:
 - Courser of Kruphix, Vizier of the Menagerie, Cream of the Crop

BIG CREATURES

Luckily, Green is really good at this part:

- Nyxbloom Ancient; Old Gnawbone; Vigor (very good w/ Chapter 3)
- It does say ANY creature so doesn't have to be green→Blightsteel Colossus;
- Eldrazi Titans→Kozilek, the Great Distortion; Ulamog, the Ceaseless Hunger; Emrakul, the Promised End (particularly good because you are filling your graveyard).

GRAVEYARD SYNERGY

Speaking of the graveyard - Green has some good tools to take advantage of that:

- Eternal Witness, Regrowth, Bala Ged Recovery (Noxious Revival - in response to Chapter 1?)

- Shuffle graveyard back into library→Blessed Respite; Endurance; OG Titans

SAGA SYNERGY

Re-use Chapter 1 (or 2):

- Power Conduit; Nesting Grounds
 - *(We couldn't find a mono-green card that could remove a lore counter from a saga)*
- Weaver of Harmony; Strionic Resonator

CHAPTER TWO?

We've mostly ignored the last two chapters so far. Are we missing something?

- Maybe you lean more into a +1/+1 counter theme→Kalonian Tusker; Defiler of Vigor; Branching Evolution
- Proliferate→Evolution Sage; Bloated Contaminator...

CHAPTER THREE?

We mentioned Vigor already.

- Foe-Razer Regent; Enrage creatures→Polyraptor; Ripjaw Raptor; Cacophodon
- Add in Unnatural Growth; Zopandrel, Hunger Dominus...maybe it starts to get interesting?

Question: Is this the weakest praetor in the cycle?

WHICH IS THE MOST POWERFUL PRAETOR FROM MOM?

3) **TO THE LISTENERS**

What do you think of the new Praetors from March of the Machine? Are you planning on building any of them? Are there any synergies or combos that we missed?

****CARD KINGDOM #2** **ULTRA PRO #2** **GK LIVE MINNEAPOLIS****

4) CLEAN-UP STEP

Big thanks to our amazing team here at The Command Zone! **Damen Lenz; Arthur Meadowcroft; Ladee Danger; Manson Leung; Craig Blanchette; Josh Murphy; Jake Boss; Jordan Pridgen; Sam Waldow; Gaurav Gulati; Jamie Block; Mitch Trafford; Evan Limberger; Gabriel Pozos; Megan Yip; and Eric Lem.**