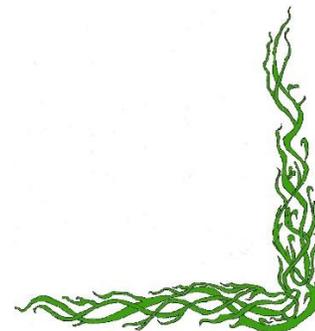
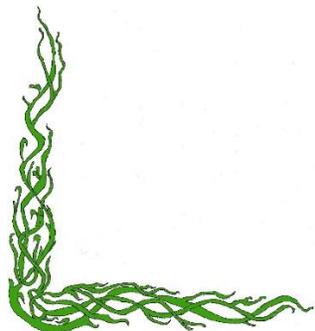


The World of Magic

*A Treatise on Magic
by Tavma the Ever-Young*



I, Tavma the faun, write this to document my observations of the world of magic through practice and contemplation. In these pages I have sought to provide as holistic an understanding of that world as I can, and future generations shall judge its veracity. I will watch it unfold with amusement when I am with the Forerunners.

If there is one thing I have learned about magic in all my days, though, it is that it has rules that are beyond mortal understanding. So if you come across something you do not understand: rejoice! You are, in fact, a mortal being, and that means you have a chance, as my old master at House Ochuro used to say, to gain the greatest gift someone can attain: wisdom.

So as you study, please make a point to reflect constantly on the beauty of the world around you. Without that, you will be hopelessly lost in a world full of beauty, and that is a great tragedy.

Tavma

Chapter I: Cosmology: Magic in the Order of the World

To rightly understand the magical realm, one must understand the world in which the magical realm is set. Metaphysicians will tell us that many things exist that we cannot see, and the magical realm is one such place. Yet even the existence of this realm is still tied to a physical location. So to understand the essence of the magical realm, we must first understand the world where it exists.

The Three Realms of Zurn

The World of Zurn is comprised, as far as I can tell, of three distinct realms that all work in harmony: the physical realm (or natural realm, as the scientists call it), the magical realm, and the metaphysical realm (or supernatural realm, as priests refer to it). All three work in harmony in Zurn.

Each is distinct from the other, and yet they all work together as one constant harmony. The **physical realm** governs that which we can see, and is the one that we are first aware of as children.

The **magical realm** interacts with the physical realm in ways that we can readily grasp at first, but only as a child grasps a concept: there is much below the surface that cannot be gleaned from the physical realm that we can see, touch, hear, and smell.

And the **supernatural realm** moves and lives all around the other two, holding the two together and guiding it with formative and destructive powers beyond our ability to measure. We learn the ways of this realm over time, and it is by far the hardest to fully comprehend and explain.

Which is part of why I am not writing a book on that realm. I will stick to writing about the magical realm, for I grasp its concepts

with greater acuity, and perhaps from understanding this realm I will better understand the supernatural. But I digress.

Interaction of the Three Realms

All three realms work together in unity, and thus it is not surprising that there are myriad ways to accomplish the same task in Zurn. A few examples will suffice:

Take, for example, the art of healing. The herbalist gathers herbs and shoots, prepares a broth, treats a wound, or sets a bone, and employs the physical realm to treat the illness. The shaman, on the other hand, turns to a spell from the Lore of Earth or the Lore of Light to magically heal the wound. And the town priest stands over the invalid and says a prayer, healing the wound in that way.

All three are valid, viable means of solving the same problem, for they employ a different realm of the world to fix a problem in our shared world. All three realms are present at all times, and a wise mage will learn to respect the powers and limitations of each. Another example will be helpful.

If, for example, I desired to travel from one place to another, I might traverse the physical realm with my own feet, or employ a mount or friend to carry me from one place to another.

A friend who is a Dark mage might employ his magic, using the aid of his spells to quickly move himself from one place to another, even to the point of defying natural laws through the art of levitation and apparition.

And a templar might invoke a prayer that causes him to seamlessly shift from where he is to another place to suffer a blow in place of another, calling upon the supernatural realm to quickly transport him to another place. All three have traveled, and none have done it in a way that is “better”: they have all accomplished the task, just in different ways.

As a final example, if I were attempting to see a hidden threat, I might employ the incredible gifts of sight, smell, hearing, and touch that the physical realm relies upon for discovery.

A mage might tap into the magical realm, using the *Fell Sight* of the Arcane Lore to make visible what was not readily apparent, or use the wind as its informant if the mage has access to the hidden Lore of Air.

Meanwhile a seer might call upon the art of prophecy, seeing a vision of a place or person that they cannot see with their eyes.

None of these are “right” or “wrong”: they are all part of the beautiful world that we call Zurn. And they all work together in a perfect unity, a holistic harmony.

Classification of the World: Solid, Liquid, Vapor

In the physical realm we understand things to take different forms. Water may freeze and turn to ice, or it may warm up and become steam. And this understanding of solid, liquid, and vapor, is critical to understanding the other realms as well.

Magic also possesses a solid, liquid, and vapor state. All around us is the vapor of magic – it sits latently around us and within us, waiting to “flow” as it is used by a spell, ward, or enchantment. When a spell, ward, or enchantment is cast, the magical energy shifts from a “vapor” state into a form that we can understand and quantify – a “solid” state, if you will, even though it is not always “solid” as we understand it in the physical realm (since it is, after all, part of the magical realm). Thus we should not be surprised if, in its “solid” state magic defies the rules of the physical realm.

Magic can also turn into a liquid form: this is the art of the potioneer, to distill the vapors of magical energy into a liquid form that may be tapped for a “solid” effect at a later time, usually by ingestion or another form of exposure.

And the three realms are similar to this understanding of solid, liquid, and vapor. The physical realm is the solid realm, with us mortal beings measuring everything by how things “move” into the solid state (i.e., affecting things that we can see, touch, hear, and smell). The supernatural is the vapor realm, always present but hard to see and difficult to quantify. And the magical realm is the liquid realm, constantly in motion, running where we cannot fathom to places we cannot see, impacting our lives when it slows.

So if it seems at times like my discourse is weaving here and there without direction, do not chide me: I am trying to quantify in solid terms the liquid realm of the world. So bear with me: this is harder than it looks.

Conclusion

When understanding magic’s place in the realm of Zurn this knowledge is key: *magic is not the answer to every problem*, though it often has an answer to any given problem in one of its lores.

The question for you will always be, “Should I use magic to solve this problem, or should I not?” And any mage who always resorts to magic will find, as I have, that spells are not always the best way to solve a problem. But more on that in a future chapter.

Chapter II: The Art of Casting

When most people think of casting magic, they think of spells tied to a particular lore (which will be the subject of the next few chapters). But the art of casting goes far beyond this.

Magic casting is the art of taking the “vapor” form of magic and turning it into a “physical” effect that we can see and quantify (somewhat: it often denies the measurements of the physical realm, and this is to be expected: we are simply creatures, and thus there are many things that escape our ability to measure). But the art of casting generally takes three forms: the spell, the ward, and the enchantment.

The Magic Spell

The magic spell is the most commonly seen application of the magic cast, and thus when someone styles themselves “a caster,” they usually mean that they are a spellcaster.¹ Spellcasters vary in form, but our aim here is to cover the art of casting a spell.

First, the basics.² To cast a spell, you need three things: **words** to formulate the spell, enough magical **energy** around you to harness the power that you are seeking to channel, and a **mind** that is strong enough to handle the strength of the spell. Any one of these could result in a miscast, which could be disastrous to the caster, so it is wise for us to lay out a cardinal rule of casting:

Cast what you can handle.

Now you will notice what I did not say. I did not say, “cast what you can control,” because for a mortal to think it is *controlling* the magical realm is ludicrous. I also did not say, “cast well within your range of comfort,” because then a caster would never grow in their ability to handle difficult spells.

No, the art of a good caster is to learn what they can *handle*: can I carry in my mind a power stronger than me just long enough to turn it into something beautiful and terrifying?

Put another way, the fine art of casting is an exercise in humble ferocity, wherein the caster gains in ability to cast as they grow in their reverence and respect for the sheer size and scope of the realm that they are confidently yet gently asking to access.

This also means that spells can be recited in any language. If a troll who speaks trollish recites the *Dark Dart* spell, it may sound different from a dark elf reciting the same spell in the Muina Elvish dialect. Think of the magical realm as an exceptional translator that speaks all languages, allowing access to those who respect its rules.

Some metaphysicians have even gone as far as to say that language itself is a form of magic, where the right words work an effect on the hearer. As someone who has only a cursory dabbling in metaphysics, I leave this to others to argue.

But it is worth noting on this point that there are some spells that do not require speech to recite. This makes sense, as the beseeching of a magical realm – a realm that is not physical in nature – does not require something to be audibly said.

Now I say all of this as if the magical realm was a person; from my experience and study, I do not believe that there is a mystical consciousness or sentience behind the magical realm. The realm of

¹ Note that just because one styles themselves a spellcaster, does not mean that they are a *good* spellcaster. A good caster is known by his deeds, not his words, so if you hear a mage bragging in the tavern, pay no attention to him. Find the man who is sitting quietly in the corner – he is more likely to be of value to you.

² My wife keeps telling me that the basics are the best place to start. I sometimes wonder about this, as it would be useful sometimes to flesh out the content so that your audience better understands why the basics matter. But as she is looking over my shoulder as I write, I am doing it her way, because I love her.

magic follows preset laws with great consistency, which is good for casters of all types: it means we know the difficulty of reciting a spell before we start the incantation.

It does mean, though, that the mind of the caster is the driving engine of the magic spell. If a caster does not choose a specific target for the spell, the spell will lack in purpose and vision, and thus will not respond. This is why battle mages so often work to hone their sight and awareness: if they cannot see the target, they cannot attack, hex, or augment it.

It also means that the caster may be called upon by the spell to think specifically about the target(s) in question. While not every spell requires this, some do: the *Mist of Darkness* spell requires the caster to assess who will be protected by the spell, as distinguished from those that will be hindered by the spell's hex effects.

As a general rule, if the spell requires such thought, not thinking of a person when preparing for the cast will deny them the benefits of the spell, though they will be affected by the hexes of the spell. So bear this in mind: before casting a spell, consider carefully who should benefit from it, and make sure to keep them in mind as you make the casting attempt.

Before moving on to the art of warding, one final word should be said about spellcasters, and that regards the magical miscast. A miscast, rightly understood, is the mishandling of magical energy while casting magic, resulting in punishment for breaking the rules of the magical realm. As noted earlier, the magical realm follows a set of rules, and while these rules are not extensive, they are held as sacred in that realm, not to be broken.³

When a person attempts to wield more power than they can handle, the result varies based on the level of the infraction. In some cases the punishment is simply the loss of casting strength,

³ As more time goes by, I do wish that this was more common in other realms other than magic. The one problem of being a scholar is being constantly frustrated by how consistent the magical realm is and how inconsistent

but sometimes the results can be severe, ranging from headaches to death (in a "Vortex of Justice," as my old master called it).

The lesson, of course, is simple: be wise in what you say.

The Magic Ward

Wards are like spells in that they are cast, usually by spoken words, harnessing magical energy in the nearby vicinity, and use the mind of the caster as the primary driving force for the ward. Unlike spells, though, wards are designed to last for extended periods of time – often hundreds of years – so that once applied they do not need to be constantly reapplied.

Wards, unlike spells, also require hours – sometimes days – to cast, which is what gives it greater staying power than a magic spell. Wards are commonly used to defend a person from danger, and thus the role of the wardsmith is primarily a role of defense.

Wards, unlike spells, are cast on a *place* instead of a *person*, as a person could not sustain that much vapor magical energy passing through them and being converted into a physical effect for such a long period of time. This sometimes makes wards shimmer in the sunlight, which is the primary means by which persons will detect a ward with the mortal eye, if they are trained to look for it.

Wards also require a good amount of concentration, as the ward is designed to last for decades (if not centuries), so a slip-up at any point could lead to problems. Miscasts are not common for wards, but every now and then when a wardsmith loses concentration and cannot handle the spell it will result in a miscast. Many innocent lives have been lost because a single ward cascaded down in torrential fire, so please be careful, wardsmiths.

magistrates in the physical realm are. But that's a discussion for a political or philosophy treatise, not a treatise on magic, so I will cease here. Suffice it to say, however, I love the consistency of the magical realm, and wish I could live there.

The Magic Enchantment

The enchantment is the smaller version of the ward. It is also designed more for longevity than for dynamic power, and thus its strength is often smaller than that of a single magic spell. And yet, its staying power is its true strength: it becomes a reliable bonus to the wielder of the enchanted item.

As a general rule enchantments are placed on items, not on a person or sentient creature. There are exceptions to this, though: the *Speech Spell* is the most common, where it is often used to give household pets a voice that otherwise had none.⁴ But as a general rule, enchantments are placed on items, not persons or creatures.

Enchantments, like spells and wards, can result in miscasts when crafting, which is one of the reasons that enchanters often take great precaution before attempting a difficult enchantment.

Dispelling Spells, Wards, and Enchantments

The art of dispelling is integral to the art of casting, for without dispelling, casting would be less of an art and more of a chore. You see, if there was never any fear of a spell being stopped – one’s request of the magical realm being impeded – then there would be no reason to consider it as art. It would simply be another task to be completed, like walking, breathing, or sleeping.

Dispelling is an art: it requires great focus on the part of the dispeller, seeing the spell, ward, or enchantment forming and shattering the caster’s connection with the magical realm before it can mature. Thus dispellers should be wary and alert, constantly watching so that they will be aware of spells cast in their vicinity.

Dispelling does not require a word so much as a force of will. Some have described the will of a dispeller to be intense, burning with greater passion to keep magical energy in its natural state than to see it transform into a physical manifestation. Whether this is true or not, I find it a helpful image of what is happening when a mage dispels: they are keeping the vapor elements of the magical realm in a vapor state, not allowing it to transfer to a physical state.

Dispelling is not easy: one must work at it, and while a strong mind will naturally help in this regard, nothing can replace the need for a clear connection with the magical realm, a prepared mind, and an unbending will.

Conclusion

Magic is something of a mystery. No matter how much you try to classify and quantify it, it will always find a way to surprise you. So don’t be shocked if you find something that breaks the norm for a spell, ward, or enchantment.

What should shock you is the person who loses their sense of wonder and wariness when casting. I have seen too many mortals forget about the dangers of magic, tackling a cast or ward that is too hard for them, and suddenly find themselves overwhelmed by its power. And it should: if it is natural for someone to be drowned by the sea, how much more natural would it be to be drowned by the “fluid” realm of the whole world?

So mind your casts. Mind your warding. Mind your enchanting. And in the end you’ll find that your care is rewarded with safety, and your wonder is rewarded with something that is more valuable than safety: wisdom.

⁴This should be done with care. That is all I am going to say on this sore subject.

Chapter III: The Lores of Magic

Many works have been written on the lores of magic, most of them from the perspective of an initiate in that lore. I confess: I do not know the lores as well as an initiate, for I have spent my days learning as much as I can from as many schools of magic as possible. So I will recommend that those who have a particular fascination with a lore seek out a loremaster of that lore, for they can teach you its secrets and nuances better than I.

My aim in this chapter is to remain as neutral and unbiased as possible: to present you with an introduction to the different lores of magic. If I accomplish this, I will consider my journey through the different magic lores a success, for I have seen each employed to great utility and great destruction, and I would that the reader would embrace the former and reject the latter as they learn about each of the lores of magic.

Introduction to the Lores of Magic

First, rightly understood, the different lores of magic constitute one realm of magic, so the reader must understand: the lores may seem similar in some respects, because at some point they interact with another lore.

To use an example from the physical realm, if a seamstress sews a cloak with different colors of fabric, the two pieces will come together at some point.⁵ So also the “fabric” of one lore is sewn to the “fabric” of another lore to form one realm of magic. This is why no one lore is stronger than another: they form one cohesive whole.

⁵ I should like to thank my wife, Zeltia, for her work in giving me the idea for this example: she is the most skilled seamstress I know, and the cloak she made

Now, at any given point in Zurn a certain lore may be stronger and better represented than another, and there are ways in the magical realm (through warding and the like) to make it easier to draw upon one of the “fabrics” of the magical realm, but when a mage casts a spell from one lore, and another mage casts another spell from another lore, they are both pulling on the same entity: just with different words, making it do different things.

Which brings us quite naturally to the taxonomy of magic: what lores exist in the world, and how they are “sewn” together.

Magic Lores: The Wheel of Magic

To rightly understand how the lores of magic interconnect, I present to you what has been called “The Wheel of Magic.” I like the idea of a wheel in that it unifies the whole, there is no “top” or “bottom” (whatever some may say about their respective lore), and shows that the magical realm is always in motion (the liquid realm).

The Wheel of Magic looks like this:



for me warms me even as I write. You are the eye of my heart, and as I weave these elements together, let the reader know that you are on my mind. *Splagchna.*

Now as you look upon the Wheel, a few things should stand out to you. First, some lores are set opposed to each other: these lores tend to pursue different virtues of the magical realm. Some of these are also reflected in the physical realm, and are readily apparent: Fire and Water, Light and Dark – these make sense.

Perhaps less commonly understood is that of Earth and Air, but when one considers that the Lore of Earth loves permanence and solidity, and the Lore of Air loves change and motion, it is clearer as to why they oppose each other.

And yet, because they are part of the same realm, it is possible for the best of friends to be battle mages from opposed lores, as the bond of friendship is then woven into the single fabric of the magical realm, adding its weight and strength to the power of the spells being wielded by the casters.

Some have even gone as far as to say that friendship itself is a type of magic: it is not itself tangible, though it manifests in tangible ways (much like a magic spell, and often through spoken words), and its power grows as more mental energy is channeled into it. I leave that discussion to the metaphysicians.

The Common Lores of Magic

As all good students of magic know, some lores of magic are easier to obtain access to than others. It is thus in our best interest to first learn the commonly known magic lores (as they are more likely to be present in your work), and we will then spend time going over the hidden magic lores once we have the others in place.

There are five commonly available lores of magic: Fire, Earth, Light, Dark, and Arcane. When teaching the lores it is customary among my people to begin with the elemental lores, and then proceed to the alignment lores, and end with the unaligned lores of Arcane and Time.

So while some (like the elves) like to discuss the Lore of Light before discussing the Lore of Fire, I will stick to the training of my kin. If you wish to read about the Lore of Light first, skip ahead and come back – we fauns have a lot of experience with people doing this in our works of literature on the subject. If you wish that the Lore of Light was discussed first...find a book on magic written by an elf, but this book is not it. But I digress.

The **Lore of Fire** is a damage-centric lore. Everything within the lore could prove dangerous if employed the right way, and in many ways you can feel the power of the roiling tides of the magical realm in this lore. It can also restore, preserve, and protect, though healing is not its forte, so do not imagine for a moment that the lore can only destroy. It requires tact to use, like all magic.

The **Lore of Earth** is more restorative, principally driven by a defensive and healing component of spells, complimented by a series of controlling hexes and augments that protect the mage and his allies through the world around them. Many say that the lore lacks strong damage capabilities, though I believe this is unfair to the lore. If you wish to know why, read Chapter VI of this book.

The **Lore of Light** strikes a balance between Fire and Earth, possessing defensive and healing spells, while also doing reliable damage to the undead. Light mages also have some of the longest reaching spells in Zurn, capable of striking from long range away, as opposed to medium range. This, combined with excellent shielding and healing spells, makes them safer than most casters in combat, which is no small advantage.

The **Dark Lore** is a damage lore that also focuses on stealth and mobility, making it ideal for both the mage that wants to hide and the mage that believes that a mobile target is harder to hit. While it may not deal as much damage as the Lore of Fire, it does

sport some healing elements of its own, albeit for the mage that casts the spells, not his allies.

And the **Arcane Lore** is the seam itself, if you will, between the fabrics. It works in the areas of the lore that are hardest to see, and among the spells that we know these are the oldest, some lost in time, yet these were preserved. Arcane magic is potent for many occasions, but its synergy comes from its diversity: it does many things, but rarely has more than one spell for any occasion. So be wary: many tools, but shallow depth.

For those who are just setting out on the road that we call magic, I recommend first mastering the principle spells of magic that form the basis for all of the lores we know, which are referred to at a magic school as the **Common Lore** of magic.

The Common Lore is like the Arcane Lore in that it contains a wide spread of spells which will teach you the basics of magic. Upon mastering that, pursue one or more magic lores and building on your knowledge of the magical realm through that experience.

The Hidden Lores of Magic

There are also hidden lores of magic, guarded by particular people groups, and their power seems more powerful because they are less common (though they are roughly equal in potency).

The **Lore of Air** is considered the second highest element (behind Fire), and sports targeted, powerful damage spells that are useful in dueling, for they tend to hit a small (but selected) number of persons. It also favors mobility and motion, and has wonderful powers for reconnaissance and foreknowledge.

The **Desert Lore** is guarded by its shamans, and sports a wide variety of hexes that can slow and disorient an opponent. While

not as damaging as many of the other lores, the practitioners of the lore, much like their Earth mage cousins, use magic to augment the powers of the caster and his allies, relying on forces other than the lore to bring down their opponents.

The **Lore of Water** is the picturesque healing lore. Some say that the magical realm is fundamentally based on healing, as it is the liquid realm, and water's fluidity most closely matches the nature of the realm itself.

I think this is reading too much into it, but there is no doubt that when it comes to small amounts of healing all the time, there is no lore that can compare with the Lore of Water. It is truly remarkable how much one is kissed by the magical realm with a healing touch when casting from that lore. It's almost unfair.

The **Lore of Ice** is another hex-centric lore, but with powerful piercing attacks to accompany it. If the Lore of Earth and the Lore of Water had a meeting point, it would be the Lore of Ice. It has the capacity to be a fierce and unforgiving lore, but it also has its softer, cooler elements, so do not fear: there is room for more than one emotion with this lore.

The **Lore of Time** is held close by the sprites of Zurn, and the lore is the epitome of control. The lore is purely comprised of augments and hexes (plus one summon), and has no innate damage capability. A fitting lore for a flighty, care-free race, those who have gained access to the Lore of Time have found it a great companion in giving them the time they need to act and react.

And the **Lore of Shadows** is an interesting case. More like "party magic" and showmanship than anything else, the Shadow Lore is all about manipulating what people see, feel, and sense. It is primarily an augment-based lore (mostly granting mobility, often with a smile on its face), but no healing spells.

The Advanced Lores of Magic

Many of the lores of magic have advanced lores: knowledge that is even deeper into their “fabric” of the magical realm, giving greater power and utility for those who can control it.

To gain access to such a lore, though, will usually require a great embrace of the lesser lore, as understanding the fundamental workings of the lesser lore will build the knowledge that they need for the advanced lore.

I myself have only dabbled in these, so most of my experience comes from anecdotes from practitioners and lorebooks, not from personal experience. But know this: where there is a lot of magical power, there is a great need for patience, wisdom, and wonder.

Conclusion

There are many magic lores (some say there are even lores beyond those represented on the Wheel of Magic), and all of them are united together into one seamless whole. And within each magic lore there is a host of variety among different schools of thought as to how the lore ought to be pursued.

So as you embark on your journey to study magic, remember: the magical realm is as wide, if not wider, than our world, so if you find someone doing it differently from you, it may be because they “grew up in a different part of the world from you.” So learn and grow from what you learn from them.

That is what I did, and it opened my eyes to the vibrancy of the world that exists around us. And that built both my wonder at the intricacy of the magical realm as well as my wisdom in how to interact with magic and its casters.

Chapter IV: Spell Types: Augments

Augment spells are the crux and core of magic in Zurn. And this is how it should be: magic, being a formative element of the earth, will be tied to the formative and supportive actions in our world. So know that while different lores are stronger in different areas, all of them will have a decent number of augments.

Augments can be most commonly found among the Tier 1 and Tier 2 spells of a lore; a lore that has Tier 3 augments will have access to great strength and fortitude. Since only one copy of any spell can be active on a person at a time, having a host of augment spells in a single lore allows the caster to stack bonuses from different spells together in ways that other lores cannot.

Types of Augments

Augment spells generally come in four forms. **Buffing spells** are commonplace, enhancing the power of the caster or the target to perform a certain task or range of tasks. In the Common Lore you have likely learned the *Speed Spell*, boosting the ability of the caster to run, fight, or defend themselves.

Similarly an augment spell may help with a whole range of abilities in one of the four primary skills of life: Strength, Finesse, Charm, and Lore. The *Star Gazer* spell from the Arcane Lore is an excellent example, boosting the Finesse or Lore of the target.

Some spells buff an item associated with the target. The *Blade of Death* spell from the Dark Lore and the *Flameblade* spell from the Lore of Fire are two excellent examples.

In all cases, a buffing spell is designed to enhance the abilities of the target, making them more powerful than the physical realm could make them, because the target is drawing its power from two

realms instead of one. This means that even a small warrior can become mighty, if enough spells are cast on the character.

Next there are **utility spells**. Utility spells give bonuses to the target that they might otherwise not have in the physical realm, and usually involve movement and visibility. Dark Lore and Arcane Lore are the most common practitioners of utility spells, with the *Fell Sight* spell from Arcane Lore being the most common, though the *Levitate*, *Apparate*, *Mist of Darkness*, and *Darkness Is My Ally* spells (the last being a Tier 3 augment) are all excellent choices as well.

The only mages that challenge this claim are Earth mages, who can make doors and walls at will, form stairs where there is only empty space, and bring roots when you need a handhold.

Most utility spells govern movement (and quick motions that allow for additional actions), and this is a great boon for magic users who may not be the most...agile...persons in the world.⁶

Healing spells are commonly used (though few lores have access to them), varying in strength (as there are Tier 1, 2, and 3 healing spells) and utility.

Perhaps nowhere is the varied interaction of magic lores more clearly seen than in healing spells. Healing spells from the Lore of Earth all heal deep wounds, but they require the caster to be near the patient. The *Healing Rain* spell can rain on a wide area, but the caster is still the center of the storm, centered among those they want to save. So proximity is bedrock for this lore's healing spells.

The Lore of Light is harder to wield, but can heal at range. It is not as potent, but having some distance between the patient and the caster makes it safer to use in combat (as the medic is more removed from the action). It is also more effective in crowded hospitals where close proximity to the patients may be hindered.

⁶ I once knew a faun who was quite corpulent, and thus used magic spells to move everywhere. This lifestyle, of course, I do not recommend to anyone.

The Lore of Water is an entirely different patch in the pattern, with a lot of spells that do small amounts of healing. Water Lore is unique in that healing is part and parcel of the cast, even when the intention is not to heal. Water mages, from what I gather, can heal while moving, hiding, and conjuring a massive downpour.

Finally, **defensive spells** are designed to protect the caster from danger, which takes many forms. In most lores defensive spells come in the form of shields and walls, with the *Firewall* spell from Lore of Fire, *Earthworks* from Lore of Earth, and the *Power Shield* spell from the Common Lore being excellent examples.

No lore is stronger in the realm of defensive spells, though, than the Lore of Light. The Lore of Light has multiple protections for the caster, ranging from shields like the *Shield of Adar* to the *Glorious Hue* spell and its companion spells that strike fear in those that would attack the caster, silencing would-be assailants with fear.

Conclusion

Augments are among the most useful spells in all of Zurn. They lack the flair of damage, hex, and summon spells, but I have found them to be very useful.⁷ A realm where everything is fancy and flamboyant will burn out its residents quickly. The physical realm has the mundane and the fantastic, and the magical realm is the same. And augments are the mundane.

What will perhaps surprise my audience is that I find that the mundane spells are being overlooked – if you are new to the realm of magic and looking for a way to make a difference in the world for good, consider becoming an abjurer or healer. Use augments to protect those you love. It will mean more to you in the long run.

⁷ I would like to thank Keravan, our trusty abjurer, for protecting my life on many occasions with augments. I would not be writing here today if not for him.

Chapter V: Spell Types: Hexes

Hex spells are not as common as augment and damage spells, and form a core component of the magical realm. As the fluid realm of the world, there must be a give and take associated with the realm, and we see this best played out in the hex spell.

Different lores will use hexes in different ways (and virtually every lore has at least one hex spell), and some are better at hexes than others, which is integral to a balanced realm of magic.

Types of Hex Spells

There are three kinds of hex spells. **Drain spells** sap the skill or ability of the person, whether that be the *Reaving Spell* from the Common Lore, the *Fire Within Me* spell from the Lore of Fire, or any number of spells from the Desert Lore. The aim of a drain spell is precisely what it sounds like: to reduce the innate ability of the caster in a given area (Strength, Finesse, Charm, or Lore).

Different lores do drain spells differently. The Lore of Fire is unique in that the consuming of ability in one area results in the creation of ability in another area, usually Strength and Charm, but in the upper regions of the Lore of Aether there is more variance in the affected stats. Desert Lore is unique in that it boasts a host of spells that can weaken an opponent, and thus can create many weaknesses in a target who is not prepared to weather the swarm of hexes at the command of a Desert mage.

A few lores have **control spells**. Control spells redirect the line of sight and movement of a person through erecting walls, creating a mist or other effect that reduces vision, or causes the ground to become unstable in a select place.

Control spells differ from drain spells in that a control spell is not so much the limitation of a stat so much as a limitation on the use of a specific faculty (movement, sight, hearing, etc.). This can range from the *Downpour* spell from the Lore of Water (which makes it harder to use ranged and magical attacks within the downpour due to reduced vision), the *Earthworks* spell from the Lore of Earth (by blocking what would have been a clean shot), the *Door in the Mountain* spell from the Lore of Earth (by removing cover and protection from the environment for a target), etc.

Control spells also differ from the next category of hexes in that while a control spell limits the use of a faculty, **hold spells** are designed specifically to restrict (if not remove) the ability to move from a given location. A control spell limits movement by making it harder to traverse a given place without jumping an obstacle, wading through sand or water, etc., while a hold spell roots the person in place, forcing them to break the spell in order to move.

Hold spells are common, and vary in strength and utility, often doubling as augment spells depending on whether it is to the advantage of the target to be held. Tier 1 spells like *Fire Whip* and *Tree Root* are commonly used, while higher tier hold spells like the *Dimensional Anchor* from Arcane Lore are quite powerful, and very difficult to stop once they have been used.

A Word of Caution

One of the greatest complaints against hex spells is that people treat them like damage spells. As we will see in the next chapter, a damage spell is different from a hex spell in both its essence and use, with the hex affecting the essence of the target, while a damage spell affects the substance of the target.

For our purposes here, though, know that hexes feel different in the hands of a mage, if he is trained to feel the difference. For decades now I have been a hexwarden, with hexes on command

to protect my friends from danger. And from years of experience I can tell you that hexes differ from any other spell.

This has everything to do with the nature of a hex. When a hex is cast, your aim is not *per se* to harm the person, object, or creature that you are targeting, so much as to keep that person, object, or creature from doing something (usually something that is harmful to someone or something that you care about).

This gives it great utility: it is not simply a desire to inflict pain or discomfort (as most people see it, though it certainly can), but a tool requiring great prudence.

A single hexwarden can not only reverse the work of an abjurer's augments, but can even make combat unnecessary. There was once a time where my party was beset by marauding dwarfs, and we knew we could not defeat them in combat. So after coaxing the trees, the rain, and the burning summer sun, we drove them back, their crossbows ineffective, arms held to the ground, and sweating within an inch of exhaustion. I did not desire their death; I simply desired the lives of my friends to be preserved.

And this is something that damage spells cannot do without the loss of blood. So lest anyone tell you otherwise, tell them that you heard it from me: *a hex is not an attack*, and one would be wise to not treat it as such. The very essence of a hex spell is different from that of a damage spell, and thus to be hit with a hex is a strong friend stopping you in your tracks; it is not getting punched in the face by an aggressor. It signals caution, not hostility.

Conclusion

A hex spells is a tool, like any other spell. It is part of the magical realm, and thus it has a place, and that place should be tailored to the purpose of the tool. This places great responsibility on the caster, and that comes with time and practice. So practice.

Chapter VI: Spell Types: Magic Missiles and Direct Damage Spells

Damage spells are among the most common spells in Zurn, mostly because persons (especially those with smaller frames and weaker constitutions) favor them as a means of bringing down the mighty in ways that a spear or javelin never could in their hands.

We could discuss many things as regards the nature of damage spells, but we will begin with the two primary classifications of damage spells, followed by a short discussion on the merits of each lore and the damage options at their disposal.

Damage Spells: Magic Missiles and Direct Damage

First, as everyone learns when they first study magic, there are two types of damage spells: **magic missiles** and **direct damage** spells. There is a simple distinction between the two: magic missiles target a single person, while a direct damage spell is anchored to a specific target, but will affect more than just the targeted person (with the range of the effects varying by the spell).

From a cosmological standpoint there is little distinction between the two: the spell is a request to send a powerful amount of magic against a target (or group of targets) that may result in damaging, incapacitating, or in some cases killing them. So from a magical perspective there is no great distinction between the two, though, as we noted in the previous chapter, this is very different from the casting of a hex.

We tend to favor the categorization purely because there are some who, if equipped correctly, can parry a magic missile attack, redirecting its effects harmlessly. A direct damage attack cannot be parried, as its effects are wider than just the intended target.

This is one of the reasons that dispellers make a good wage: if you can avoid taking a beating from a damage mage, you will pay good money for it. It also means, though, that dispellers must be careful to have sure defenses on all fronts (not just against magic), as they are usually the first to be targeted by an archer, assassin, or a damage mage who thinks himself the stronger caster.

The Magic Missile Spell

Magic missiles, rightly understood, are the principle damage spell of the lores of magic. Almost all of the low-tier damage spells are magic missiles, and thus people tend to confuse this to mean that it is the foundation for the direct damage spells in a given lore. This is not true: they are the mundane damage element of the realm of magic, not the underlying base. An example is helpful.

When my wife and I are eating a meal together, Zeltia will lay out the simple dishes for us to use – they are cheap, durable, and have been with us on many journeys. Whether we are out on a quest or comfortably reclining on the front porch, these are the dishes, knives, spoons, and cups that we use.

But when we have guests over, we put these away in favor of using our finer cutlery and dishware. They are remarkably similar, though they have less wear and tear, as they are saved for special occasions. We would not say that the normal dishware is the foundation for the others, nor would this degrade the place of the mundane dishware in our eyes, as they have been reliable friends of ours for years. They simply have a mundane function, so while they are mundane, they are just as loved, if not more so because of their faithful, reliable service over the years.⁸

So also with the magic missile. It is the mundane damage spell of the lore of magic: easily accessible, and relatively easy to cast compared to direct damage spells.

But just because magic missiles are mundane in the magical realm does not make them lesser in importance or utility. Magic missiles offer the advantage of precision, a useful trick if a caster must cast into a melee fight involving an ally, or wants to silence an opponent without drawing too much attention from others in the near vicinity.

Magic missiles are also sometimes accompanied by ancillary benefits for the caster (or hexes against the opponent), as the spell is focused on one target. The Lore of Light has a magic missile spell that can help the caster see in the dark, as well as enhance the prophetic abilities of the caster while the light is active.

The Dark Lore, on the other hand, has a magic missile that can instill fear in the opponent, making it less likely that they will attack the caster. And the Lore of Air, with its powerful *Lightning Strike* spell, can deal high-end damage to a single person using the power of lightning leaping from the mage.

The Direct Damage Spell

Direct damage spells, as was noted earlier, are like magic missiles in that they do magical damage to a target, but they also do damage to other targets in the near vicinity. Some lores cause all targets within range to be hit, others can nuance who is affected, but as a general rule the magic falls on the just and the unjust, and thus one should take care before launching a direct damage spell near one's allies (as they tend to hate it when casters do that).

The benefit of the Direct Damage spell is that the caster can remove threats quickly. They allow the mage to deal with threats

⁸ On a completely unrelated note, my wife makes an exceptional venison stew, so if you visit us, ask for it when you come. It is by far my favorite meal of hers.

that an archer or swordsman cannot, bringing down a large column of fire to envelop heavily armored opponents (as is the case with the *Flaming Cascade* spell), or using a *Terra Cotta Fusillade* to strike a Dark mage who is attempting to escape with an *Apparate* spell.

The direct damage spell will likely find use until the end of time, as there will always be a caster in the world who will use the magical realm to defeat a swath of persons in the physical realm. It is also far and away the most impressive and flashy form of magic in the world, and thus mages will use it for centuries to come.

My encouragement to you: learn and use these spells wisely. There have been wars fought between great kings because of a single careless spell thrown in the wrong direction, and the world could stand to have a few less of those actions if it is to survive.

Strengths of the Different Lores

Some lores are better at damage than others, as we previously noted. We will discuss the three tiers of damage lores, to give the reader an idea of which lores might be more to their liking if their primary goal as a mage is to be able to hit and wound an opponent in a magic duel or on the battlefield.

There are three principle damage lores in Zurn, respected as the most powerful damage lores in the world: Fire, Air, and Dark. **Fire** boasts the largest volume, sending powerful damage spells against a large number of persons at a time. It lacks the nuance of other lores, so one must be careful where one deploys a Fire spell, but if you are looking to defend a castle under siege or clear a cave of its inhabitants, it is hard to disagree with the Lore of Fire

The Lore of **Air** gives targeted precision damage, with high-impact hits against a small number of targets, designed to penetrate the strongest armor. With a mix of lightning-based attacks, harsh winds, and freezing snow, the Lore of Air has tricks for every occasion to crack the armor of an opponent.

Dark Lore is a unique lore, in that its strength is in race-based damage. Unlike the other lores Dark Lore gains power as it targets particular kinds of creatures, with Order and Neutral characters (especially humanesque and half-human creatures) suffering more from the effects of the spell than other races. This makes it very potent, especially when combined with the mobility that Dark Lore offers its practitioners. They are hard to kill, and strike hard.

The mid-range lores usually do damage within a niche, making them potent against the right kinds of targets. Most notable of these lores is Light, Arcane, Desert, and Ice.

The Lore of **Light** is primarily a defensive lore, but it is very strong against undead creatures. Its power is found in sending the dead to their final rest, and thus can be very powerful (including a sizable Tier 3 magic missile) against the right targets.

Similarly, the **Arcane** lore is strong against the weak-minded. The secrets of the past tell of spells that attack a target not against their physical constitution, but against their mental faculties. The result is a series of spells that target the Lore stat of the target, not the Strength stat, thus ignoring most armor. This means that if the caster targets a weak-minded brute he may find great success where even a Dark mage or Fire mage may have trouble, but against an opposing caster there is less chance of success.

The **Desert** Lore boasts only a few attack spells, but all of them are designed to hit the target with raw heat, not even magic *per se* (though they use the magical realm to bring the heat swiftly to their targets). The result is a host of ways to make the opponent pass out due to powerful bouts with the heat. This is effective against certain types of opponents, but a strong lad with mental fortitude will walk away unscathed.

And finally the **Ice** Lore boasts a series of relatively weak attacks that are all designed to tear through armor. So if the person wears a lot of armor and counts on that to protect them from danger, the Lore of Ice can be very dangerous, as it removes their

surety. But if the spell targets a person who relies on their natural defenses and bare flesh, then the lore will likely be ineffective.

And finally there are the low-damage lores, each with unique (and at times powerful) damage spells, but they require personal investment and nuance. These include Earth, Water, and Time.

The Lore of **Earth** is primarily defensive, but it boasts three damage spells, each of which is multi-purpose for the lore. The one magic missile in the lore also doubles in creating a wall to defend the mage. The direct damage spells are excellent against low-Strength characters, hitting targets multiple times with a single cast (excellent for catching Dark mages who use *Apparate* and *Levitate* to evade attacks), or using *Pit of Death* to swallow those who cannot jump to safety. None of them are effective against high-Strength opponents, but they have their utility against the right foe.

Water Lore offers a few low-end damage spells that are almost laughable in damage output, but it has two Tier 3 direct damage spells, one of which has the ability to sweep away opponents with a stampede of water, and the other can encase a target in a whirlpool, injuring them while keeping them from seeing what is going on beyond the whirlpool, nullifying the target in the fight.

And **Time** Lore lacks damage spells, so you must pair it with other lores. Which, if you are not an initiate in the Lore of Time, is perfectly fine, and we actually recommend it. But know that this is how you would use it for damage, and thus it is not widely respected for its damage capability.

Conclusion

Wisdom will always be the guide for damage spells – if not, you will likely be killed in short order, as there are few ways to draw more attention from hostile persons than with a damage spell. Be wise, act prudently, and when your friends need you, show them the might of your magical prowess.

Chapter VII: Spell Types: Summons

Summon spells are not as commonplace as the other lores, yet they fill a critical role in the realm of magic. Summons take a variety of forms, and in this chapter we will discuss the many uses of the spells we know as summons.

Purpose of Summon Spells

When a mage casts a summon spell, they are often used as an augment to the mage's defenses or as a hex against opponents. The majority of summon spells can also be used, though, as a form of damage spell, so summons are a spell type all their own.

A summon spell, rightly understood, is any spell (augment, hex, or proper summoning spell) that causes a visible manifestation to form (not absence – so a pit-based spell is not a summon spell under this definition) that did not exist before. Among **augments** this is most common among the Lore of Earth, where Earth mages have spells like *Earthworks* available to form barriers, *The Floating Stair* to create staircases of floating stairs, and *Instaboulder* to protect against damage. Other lores have augment summons, but among the lores the Lore of Earth has the most versatility in this regard.

Summon spells are less common as **hexes**, though the *Tree Root* spell from Lore of Earth and *Fire Whip* spell from the Lore of Fire come to mind. While they are not plentiful, I love that about these spells because they are unexpected: your opponent generally does not think if summon hexes when they engage you in combat.

The hexes also double as augments to the caster, allowing the mage to lower themselves from a high place, grasp something in a moment of crisis, and do far more than just hex an opponent.⁹

But the most common type of summon spell (and the one that most people think of when they think of a summon spell) is what some have called, “The Summon Proper,” a spell that forms one or more creatures that are controlled by the concentration of the caster. This will vary from the powerful stone trolls of the Lore of Stone to the weak undead summons of a necromancer.

Summon proper spells give the caster the numerical advantage: if a large number of terra cotta warriors are between a spearman and the mage, the spearman will have trouble reaching the mage in short order purely because of his need to crush a host of magical summons. And in the case of the *Sphinx* spell from the Desert Lore or any of the other large summons from other lores, even a single creature summon can take a while to defeat.

Some summons also double as a second caster, giving the mage options for casting power from different vantage points (if the summoned creature can successfully cast the intended spells). Being able to stretch one’s line of sight further than a typical mage is a strong asset in battle, and summons are one of the few ways to accomplish this.

In a word, summon spells offer versatility. If the mage is weak in personal defense (or could simply use a respite), summons can fill that need. If the mage is not gifted in dealing physical damage, a summon may fill that role if constructed correctly. If the caster needs a distraction, a summon can easily fulfill the request. While augments, hexes, and damage spells are useful, it is hard to find as many roles filled in a single spell as you will find in a summon spell.

⁹ The versatility of hexes astounds me. I know, “You’re a hexwarden,” they say, but that does not make my wonder invalid or my conclusions false. The versatility of hexes is underrated, and I hope that this changes. My wife says that

Caution of Summon Spells: Concentration

The primary drawback of summon spells is that they are often kept in motion by dedicated concentration from the caster. Not all of them require a section of the mage’s attention (hex summons generally don’t, just in case you were wondering), but this means that while the summon is in play the mage will generally be weaker at casting spells, remembering things, calculating a tactical move, etc. So be prepared for this.

And this is the other primary difference between a summon spell and the other four spell types: while some augments and hexes require concentration, this is most common of the summon spell. With greater versatility comes greater need for nuance in its use, and this means that the mage will need to concentrate on maintaining and commanding his summon spell.

Conclusion

If a caster does not desire to ever learn a summon spell, then may your feet be ever swift, and may you be safe from all danger. If a mage is eager to learn summon spells, then may you quickly learn the proper means of using these spells. Like all spells there is a great burden upon the caster to weigh the situation, and all of us who pursued the path of the summoner had to learn this balance. May it come more quickly to you than it came to me.

the reason that I love the versatility of hex summon spells is because my mind is much like a hex summon: sometimes it is to frustrate and redirect, other times to guide and assist. She is never wrong, and here her perception is luminous.

Chapter VIII: Allegiance: Initiates, Wanderers, and the Raging Debate

One of the topics most hotly debated by the few who really care is the question of allegiance within the realm of magic. There is a strong sect of casters who believe that one should devote one's learning to a single lore of magic (and its advanced lore, if so desired), while there is another sect that believes that there is great advantage (if not greater learning) by studying many lores.

As a hexwarden and one who set out to studying the magical realm in its entirety, you can imagine my stance on the issue. I am a wanderer, though I am not in either camp as regards the debate of our time. So before I launch into this oh so important topic, I should begin by explaining my perspective on the issue.¹⁰

Different persons desire to gain different things from magic. Some see it as a chance to gain power over others – I have found this group to include both initiates and wanderers. Some see it as a chance to discover new mysteries, fascinating the mind with the intricacy and beauty of a realm that we only partially understand; I have found both initiates and wanderers in this camp as well.

And some see magic as pure necessity: in order to survive on the streets, escape an enemy, or eat on a given day, they must use magic as a means of provision. This group has both initiates and wanderers.

So when I look at the two warring parties, I see not the merits of one group over another, so much as the worst of two types of casters. I think that how one uses magic is more important than what kind of magic one studies, so I disdain the entire argument.

That being said, understanding the difference between an initiate and a wanderer is very important, so we will dedicate a chapter of our very precious book to this topic, for your edification and (hopefully) delight.

Initiates: Devotees of the Lore

An initiate of a magic lore, rightly understood, is a person who has studied and trained exclusively in a single lore, relying on the power of the lore to protect, guide, and aid them in their journeys. Some claim that a person can be an initiate in a lore and practice spells from another lore; while I personally hold no issue with this *per se*, the traditionalists among the initiate ranks of any lore would likely hold that person as apostate to the purity of the lore.

Initiates, assuming proper training, take their devotion to the lore seriously: it is not enough to simply gain access to the wealth of knowledge kept in one lore, but it is something to be guarded, tenderly cared for – almost revered – by the initiate. Regardless of how old or new the initiate is to the lore, this is expected of all initiates: the magical realm is a realm, and thus there will always be a need for stewards.

It is thus quite common for initiates to be well-respected within their own ranks, but for that respect not to overflow beyond their lore (as an Earth initiate has no reason to be impressed or hold in high esteem a Fire initiate). They are also more likely to hold in derision practitioners from the opposed lores on the other side of the Wheel of Magic (see Chapter III).

This often leads to greater effectiveness when against that lore due to the greater strength of their magic against the other side of the Wheel. The nature of the “fabric” of the magical realm, to pull

¹⁰ The first clause of this sentence should be read with sarcasm, if that was not clear from my tone leading up to it.

upon the past example of the cloak, is that an initiate tends to be stronger against their opposed lores, making them more deadly in a fight. Casters ought to keep this in mind.

Initiates tend to be weaker in dispelling magic, mostly because their experience with magic is tied to only one portion of the magical realm. This can be easily compensated for with proper equipment choices, dodging attacks and hexes, or, of course, taking time to study the art of dispelling (as mentioned in Chapter II). But as a general rule wanderers tend to be stronger dispellers because of their wider range of knowledge of the magical realm.

Wanderers: Roaming Mages in the Realm of Magic

The wanderer has the advantage of wider access at the expense of more resources. It is substantially cheaper, both in time and resources, to become a powerful loremaster of a single lore than to tinker with and dabble in multiple lores. In exchange for the higher cost, though, the wanderer sports greater versatility and utility to his friends and allies.

Each lore, as was noted earlier, has its advantages and its weak points. This means that wanderers can supplement the weaknesses of one lore with the strengths of another – a “volcanic mage” can supplement the lack of healing in the Lore of Fire with the healing prowess of the Lore of Earth, for example, or more commonly a “blackened earth mage” can use the damage and mobility of Dark Lore to supplement the healing and defense of Earth magic.

Wanderers also see more connection between things in the realm of magic, allowing them to remember more spells than the average initiate. This also means that a wanderer who may not be as mentally strong as an initiate could potentially remember more spells than an initiate who has been studying his whole life.

Wanderers also tend to be well-respected amongst themselves (and to some extent the public at large because of their greater utility), but initiates (especially among the radical wings of a given

lore) tend to see them with some skepticism (if not derision) because they do not respect the beauty of their favorite lore.

Striking a Balance

As a hexwarden, I have learned to supplement spells from a host of lores. I started as a Blackened Earth Mage, using mists of darkness and tree roots to keep my pursuers from catching me and my friends, and then went on to learn more dangerous (sometimes deadly) hexes after practicing on the smaller scale.

The result is that I have seen both the great boon of having access to a host of lores, as well as the dangers of an initiate in all of the primary lores. Both are formidable adversaries, and thus in a world where we like to compare things to each other, you are wise to see both as dangerous: the question is simply a matter of which poison you prefer.

Wanderers are less predictable, as they have a wider array of tools at their disposal. Initiates are generally harder to dispel, with a smaller set of options but the chance at greater firepower.

Conclusion

So treat them all as equals in your mind: a caster is a dangerous opponent, offering unique challenges every time you face one. What a mage lacks in casting power or dispelling ability they may make up in cunning and positioning. What a caster lacks in variety they may cover with discipline and resiliency.

So be watchful and prepare yourself: the best and most sure defense against an initiate or a wanderer is a prepared mind. And that is something that anyone can attain, caster or otherwise.

Chapter IX: Wonder

All of my classmates at House Ochuro could have told you how I would end my discussion of magic in this book, as it has long been my seminal creed and exhortation.¹¹ I find as time goes by that this tendency has only grown, so I can only assume that I was meant to resonate with its call.

“The end of all of our exploring is to arrive where we started, and to know the place for the first time,” so the Poet writes.¹² This is a true saying, and it is a fitting that, like water, we should return to our starting point by discussing the holistic realm of magic in its relation with the world around us to end our study of magic. For as we see more of the magical realm and record its laws, we find ourselves constantly drawn back to what we have already recorded.

And this is natural for mortal beings: in our finite lives we can only learn so much, and thus when we come across something that moves us in our inner beings – something magical, whether part of the magical realm or another – it is worth taking time to celebrate that discovery for what it is, and to return to the subject over and over again so as to make sure that we do not lose what seems to have become rarer in our world: a sense of wonder.

I look at magic and I see almost infinite potential. But this is not the infinite potential of the merchant or the miner, who seek a product that they can sell forever. Instead, I see a mystery that is infinitely wider than my mind will ever grasp, truths so deep that it will take generations to scratch the surface of what I have spent

my life developing. I see before me a vast expanse waiting to be explored by those who do not rely on a map or compass to point them to their next destination, but instead rely upon a strong mind that is willing to wander. Because when a mind is free to wander, it is free to pause and ponder. And when a mind is free to ponder the beauty, intricacy, and utility of what is in front of it, coupled with a creative streak, this mind is free to wonder.

And that is what makes the magical realm so fascinating. To us in the physical realm it is so vast and beautiful. To those in the supernatural realm, who knows: perhaps there are glories beyond what we know that would even dwarf the beauty of the magical realm? Perhaps someday when I run with the Forerunners I will know. But as I sit here preparing to pen the last sentence of this work, I think back on what I have learned and I marvel.

The world is beautiful; take time to see it – to truly see it – and when you find something beautiful, don’t forget your wonder.

¹¹ This is a fact that I am eternally grateful for, as Zeltia tells me that it was what first caught her attention. But I am getting ahead of myself.

¹² I had the privilege of studying under Ms. Periwinkle Lilac during my time at House Ochuro, a sprite loremistress gifted in the Lore of Time. She was also an

avid collector of poetry, and once shared with us a poet that she discovered in another realm that she visited (don’t ask me how she left our shores of Zurn: I leave it to the magic of sprites to delve into such secrets). I was always fascinated by his poetry, and highly recommend him to you.

About the Author

Tavma the Ever-Young did not give himself such a foolish title. He was given this name by his good friend, Arthur, who is a human, and thus loves to come up with foolish nicknames for his friends. It has been said that Tavma looks far younger than his age should reflect, but Tavma reassures you that he is just as old (and worn out) as you might expect for a faun of four hundred years.

Tavma lives in the town of Tormakivah in the Faun Federation, though he has spent extensive time abroad in almost every major region of Zurn. In his travels he has catalogued the various lores of magic, and spent a short stint teaching at House Ochuro, the faun school he attended in his younger years.

Tavma is married to Zeltia, his sweetheart during his years at House Ochuro, and met her in dueling class (a story that he will not recount here, or in person if you ask him, or anywhere, really). They have six children and twenty-one grandchildren as of this writing; two of their children are casters (both wanderers), and three of their grandchildren so far have taken up casting as their profession (all initiates).

Tavma enjoys learning languages, visiting new civilizations, hiking, taking long walks in the evening with his wife, and teasing her along the way. He also enjoys quiet nights at home, undisturbed by his quasi-adoring fans. He has been known to hex people who come to the door after the sun sets - you have been warned.



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