

Unnamed - Apparatus Of Change

Available Power : 8

Authority : 7

Bind Insect (1, Command)

Fortify Space (2, Domain)

Distant Vision (2, Perceive)

Collect Plant (3, Shape)

See Commands (5, Perceive)

Bind Crop (4, Command)

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Nobility : 6

Congeal Glimmer (1, Command)

See Domain (1, Perceive)

Claim Construction (2, Domain)

Stone Pylon (2, Shape)

Drain Health (4, War)

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Empathy : 4

Shift Water (1, Shape)

Imbue Mending (3, Civic)

Bind Willing Avian (1, Command)

Move Water (4, Shape)

Spirituality : 5

Shift Wood (1, Shape)

Small Promise (2, Domain)

Make Low Blade (2, War)

Congeal Mantra (1, Command)

Form Party (3, Civic)

Ingenuity : 5

Know Material (1, Perceive)

Form Wall (2, Shape)

Link Spellwork (3, Arcane)

Sever Command (4, War)

Collect Material (1, Shape)

Tenacity : 5

Nudge Material (1, Shape)

Bolster Nourishment (2, Civic)

Drain Endurance (2, War)

Pressure Trigger (2, War)

Blinding Trap (5, War)

Animosity : -

Amalgamate Human (3, Command)

Trepidation : -

Follow Prey (2, Perceive)

The domain surrounding me evaporates with the death of the enemy apparatus, and I lose sight of *everything* as a pressure more than anything I've ever felt takes hold.

For as long as I have been in this life, the motes that my actions stir loose have been things I have had to work to feel. Here, though? Perhaps it is because I am watching with **See Domain**, but it takes no effort at all to watch the process. So little effort, in fact, that I cannot find a way to shut my eyes to the sandstorm of magic that erupts around me. Focusing through it all is impossible. I try to pull myself back, to look through the eyes of a bee or of Yuea or *something*, but I cannot see anything but the storm.

It is like standing in the middle of an ocean and trying to watch a single dram.

But it isn't all happening at once. Even as I am buffeted by the storm, the motes coming so fast and in such a flurry that I wonder if my physical body is being battered around, I watch as even more adds to it. I can see now; this space was a domain, but now it is nothing, and **Fortify Space** doesn't keep my eyes out anymore. Parts of it still cling to the world.

Not for long though. A few seconds pass as a chunk of the dead apparatus' domain wrenches free from the world, and shatters into thick white fog before joining the storm. Outside their built prison, a three length long strip of the magic crumbles like sand that has realized it has no support, sending another crashing plume into the air.

Inside the abattoir, there is nothing but a wall of rushing power. Death, victory, change, all of it piles upon me as the pressure mounts. First a trickle, then a flood, then an overwhelming maelstrom that tugs me down and down as I struggle to process everything being fed to me.

A **Small Promise** explodes, then another. I can see the words, unprotected by the magic now that the spellmaker is gone. *I am going to hurt you.* They scream poisoned language and brutal truths. *You will never be free from me while you are alive.* Vile oaths. Broken and breaking. With the apparatus dead, they are as fragile as glass and breaking in just the same way.

The other spell it layered on us all, to force us into the fight - **Small Battle**, perhaps? - doesn't simply *break*, but instead forces my winnings into me like an aggressive fa-I hall attendant. Something slides into me from it, something taken from the enemy as a whole object and presented to me as a gift and not a butcher's spoils.

More of the domain roils and collapses like a sea cliff sliding into the water. It pulls toward me. I realize I am screaming, or something like it, and cut my links to Yuea and the bees and anyone I might hurt. The rush of motes is a *sound* now; so many and so fast that it rattles and slithers against my facets. A waterfall cascading over rock, a roar building to nothing but more roaring.

I feel a point of power form. Then another. Then another. I don't know how fast it is happening, but it is happening all the same. If it is getting fast or slower, I can't say; it's all lost in the jumble of sensations. Most of those sensations hurt. I put every piece of concentration I have toward shoving back against the flood, but I was already mentally exhausted, and this situation is not helping me focus. I deny almost nothing, and then another village sized chunk of a domain erupts into raw magic and begins to assail me, and I am shoved further into sublimation.

Within the flurry of power rushing around me, shadows dance. More and more of them joining every time I collect myself enough to check. Silkspinnners, yes, but surprisingly not very many of them. A host of small birds, many of the shadows with spots in their chest for a magic I don't know and many more modified in other strange ways. And then hundreds of smaller echoes of spiders, all of them in various states of twisted growth, none of them viable as life. Likely the castoffs of the enemy's attempts to build its silkspinnners in the first place.

I take them all. I don't know if they are truly souls, or if they are simply a mold for magic to be poured into to cast a copy. I cannot give them more than a safe harbor, and even then safe is a relative term. But they do not fight or struggle as I absorb them alongside the rush of motes, and it does not hurt for them to enter into the long and looping orbit within my mind where such things are kept waiting.

Another wave of collapse pulses through the storm. Some of my glimmer shatter, some of the mantra crumble. I don't understand what is happening; I can't see anymore. It's all just the pull of the rush and the howl of the roar. Things are slipping away from me, or falling apart.

This is so much worse than the previous two kills. This one had so much *more*. If I thought I was an option, I would think that it wove a heartcurse into its own defeat.

I can't keep track of time. Everything is shifting so fast, and I am barely holding on to what focus I have, as whatever my new life is tries to force me to drink the ocean. And then, with a sickening crack that I can *feel* through the core of my body, what I have been waiting for arrives. A fragment of a rival soul; mine by right of survival, by right of victory. But not painlessly, or easily.

Animosity : - -
Amalgamate Human (3, Command)
Congea! Burn (2, Command)

I hold on for a while longer. Even as my mind begins to slip into the haze of a memory from another life. I fight to control the magic, to keep it from overwhelming me. It is beginning to feel like a pressure that I cannot contain, and I struggle to push the power that has already formed into places where it will not bloat and crack me from the inside.

Empathy, Tenacity, Spirituality, fourteen points if I can still calculate properly through the pain. Gone in an instant, the pressure relieved in a way, but only briefly. And it shifts something in me. Something I do not think was meant to be moved like that. But then the pressure begins to mount again, and I hardly have time to think about if I have erred. The cracks in my frame searing with pain as the last of the **Fortified Space** and **Small Promises** die and wither and release their contained treasured magic like spores.

As if from a great distance, I can hear Kalip shouting at me. Feel the pull from my own domain. I am not dead. I am still here. I am holding on. But it is getting harder. I can't even figure out how to reassure them that I am okay.

The crack. My magic is draining back into the world. Not the motes, but the processed liquid emptiness that each of my spells use. The refined spellstuff is slipping through the hole in my body, and I am struggling to keep any spells functional. The overtaxed ones go first; **See Domain, Fortify Space, Amalgamate Human, Make Low Blade**. They slip from my grip, petrified mental fingers faltering and dropping my control as their reserves empty. But they are only the first, and not the last. I am becoming tired, as every part of my magic oozes from me.

I will be okay. I *must* be okay. I have done this before. All I can do now is trust that I will awaken at the end of it. There is no chiurgion for this, the Turnip Witch is not real and coming to save me. All that I have left is hope that the pain will end, and the sleep will not be forever.

And then, still howling in my mind, I am dragged under into a life I never lived.

*The building is burning. It is not my fault. It is **not my fault!** I didn't do this. For once, for **once**, I am not the one who has started it. I put it all behind me, made the amends I could, I got **out** by the devils! Sixteen seasons of life in a threshold village, doing nothing but keeping my paws clean, earning my meals with good work, and being known as the grumpy old woman who you can still rely on when the monsters crawl in. And this is what I get? Waking up to my bed in smoke, my home burning around me? I am so tired of it all, and I don't think it's the smoke inhalation doing it. Maybe this is a Timeless sign to me, that I'm on the wrong path. I don't know. All I know is my fur is filled with embers, my canvas is all ash, everything I built is gone again, and that when I get out of here, I am going to **fucking kill someone**.*