

Conflux/May 18th, 2013

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## Elemental Enslavement

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You have plenty of psionic data feeds from observing the elemental enslavement process first-hand, but for some reason the elemental biochemistry seems to have shifted now that they are so close to the Conduit. You will need to gather some more up-to-date experimental data. Find your trusty *tricorder*, a *photodiode*, and a *coffee mug*. With these in your hands (remember two of these items are 1-hand bulky), you need to watch two different factions of elementals attempt to enslave a human. In each case, the victim must be successfully enslaved, and cannot be yourself.

Once you have data on two humans being enslaved by elementals from different factions, turn to **2**.

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Your blasted *control rod* is having thermal problems again. You should never have tested it on a fire elemental; it melts the circuitry. Find a large body of water and dunk the rod in it for two minutes.

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Finally...the rod is ready for another test. Unfortunately, the rod is very weak — even if you can find a willing elemental participant, it will have no effect on an elemental unless its psionic capabilities are below the rod's power threshold. Your tricorder can examine the  $\beta$  stat for elementals. The rod can only work on elementals with a  $\beta$  value less than or equal to 1.

Once you find an appropriate victim (willing or not), have the elemental strapped into one of the chairs in your laboratory and activate the rod as an "Enslave 5" ability (follow the mechanics delineated on "The Elemental Enslavement Mechanic" greensheet).

When you complete this step, you may turn to **4**.

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*You may now use the rod to enslave elementals with "Enslave 5", but the rod takes a while to recharge and may only be activated every 20 minutes.*

The rod is working well, but despite your best efforts it has never been able to work beyond the weakest elementals. Fortunately you have the special tape you designed to train Azi, although you will need to update it in light of the elemental's mutating biology in the presence of the Conduit. Towards this end, use your tricorder while you observe two different elementals attempt to enslave an Azi (the attempts do not have to succeed).

When you complete this step, you may turn to **5**.

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There is something eerily incomplete about the data you've been gathering. It appears as if there is already some control mechanism built into all elementals — someone has carefully designed a mechanism that allows them to establish an overriding connection straight to their psionic core. You have never seen this control pathway used on Earth, so you can only assume it comes from the elemental planes, but studying it is not going to be easy.

First, you will need *elemental essence*, a core component of all elementals. You might be able to find it naturally, but you also know how to extract it directly from an elemental. Seat an elemental in one of the chairs in your lab, then spend one minute poking the elemental with whatever you have at hand. At the end of this period, the elemental must give you one elemental essence, if it has any left. When you have an elemental essence, you may turn to **6**.

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Now comes the tricky part. To study this mysterious “master race” that constructed the elemental's control pathway, you will need to participate in a *momentary opening* of the Conduit. You must put your *elemental essence* on the cart, then study the Conduit and the essence throughout the momentary opening. This experiment will destroy the essence.

When the opening is completed, you may turn to **7**.

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Excellent...you are severely impressed by the subtlety and thoroughness by which the elementals are effectively enslaved on a global scale. The elementals on Earth are very fortunate that none of these mysterious slave-masters are about, as they are apparently quite common on the elemental planes.

You now know exactly how to modify your tape to exploit this new pathway – and with these modifications, you think there is a chance you will be able to control even the most powerful of elementals, with enough Azi. Spend three minutes in your lab to complete your *Azi education tape*. Now it is again ready to re-train Azi to enslave elementals.

Once you have working tape, you need to actually find Azi to retape. Ideally, you would like to convince the political leadership (probably with the help of Jason) to support this retaping as clearly necessary for human survival, but you will do it without any support if need be. To retape an Azi, they must first sit in one of the chairs in your lab, and do not have to be willing, as long as they are restrained. Then expose them to the tape for three minutes (you can train multiple at once). After this period, tell them to open their “Z packet”. You are now their supervisor and for the most part, they should obey your orders.

When you have successfully retrained an Azi, you may turn to **8**.

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*You may continue to retape Azi.*

Now you just need to test out your newly-empowered Azi on real elementals. Use your Azi minions as you see fit. You are confident that possibly with two, definitely with three, Azi working together, they could control even Caldera or Mistral. All other elementals should be controllable with only a single Azi.

It's about time someone took charge of this chaotic situation.

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**The Mysterious Powder**

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This white powder you've found is very interesting; you need to do considerably more analysis. This would be so much easier if you were at a real lab instead of this hodge-podge of a "mobile lab," but you'll make do. Your portable spectrometer is okay, but you remember that Katherine has brought a high-resolution mass spectrometer. Ask her if you can borrow it, and spend one minute getting her to help you use it on your sample.

When you complete this step, you may turn to **2**.

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Hmm...you still don't know what this substance does, but it definitely contains particles involved in some very complicated parts of the elemental biological cycles. Use a tricorder to examine elementals from two different factions, spending at least one minute examining each.

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This powder is definitely integral to elemental biochemistry, but there are so many elementals here that it's hard to get a clear signal. To get a good baseline, ask Katherine if you can borrow her Chair of Science, then spend 30 seconds using a tricorder to examine two random humans.

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You've learned all you can from just examining the sample; time for some active testing. Convince an elemental to taste the powder while you examine them with your tricorder (this will destroy the item). Once they do so, hand them your "W packet" and tell them to open it.

When you complete this step, you may turn to **5**.

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Amazing! The elemental's energy levels jumped dramatically upon consuming the powder, although there is so little of the substance that it is rapidly decaying back to its original level. You don't have a concrete hypothesis yet, but you believe this substance to be a necessary part of the elemental "diet" that is likely present on the elemental planes, but missing here on Earth. For ease of reference and because you are enamored with the name, you've started to refer to the substance as "Elementium".

To continue your experiments you will need to find a more stable sample of Elementium. Based on your research thus far, you believe you could make a device that would let you extract **elemental essence** from an elemental. To do so, you will need to find an aluminum rod and a Van de Graaff generator, then use these items on an elemental seated in the Chair of Science. At the end of this time, they must transfer an elemental essence to you, if they have any. (If you acquire elemental essence by some other means, you are welcome to use that instead).

Once you have elemental essence (from any faction of elementals) you can spend one minute using your transmogrifier to turn it into Elementium. *Destroy the essence and take one Elementium item from the "A" packet on the "A Matter Transmuter".*

When you have some Elementium, you may turn to **6**.

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*From now on, you may continue to use the Chair of Science to extract essence from elementals and then transmogrify elemental essence into Elementium.*

Excellent – you now realize that your original sample of the substance had been decaying for many years, but this new sample of Elementium is both fresh and much larger. Unfortunately, for some reason it seems to be inert. Find another scientist and collaborate for three minutes while you discuss your experiences with Elementium to see if he or she has any insights into the problem.

When you have finished collaborating, you may turn to **7**.

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Ouch! Distracted by the discussion, as you were dividing the substance up you accidentally cut yourself on the scalpel. A few drops of your blood touched the sample. Initially, you were upset about the obvious contamination this caused, but you were soon shocked to see that the Elementium is no longer inert and is in fact now emitting dangerous amounts of energy. Time to gather more data!

Convince elementals from two different factions to try eating the now-activated Elementium while you scan them with a tricorder.

*Eating Elementium consumes the item, so you will need to get another sample from somewhere. An elemental cannot eat Elementium you have transmogrified from its own essence.*

When you have examined elementals from two different factions eating Elementium, you may turn to **8**.

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You are very close to understanding the mysterious chemistry of Elementium, but you first need to conduct one more experiment: you need to expose the substance directly to the elemental plane. To accomplish this, you will need to work together with others to participate in a **momentary opening** of the Conduit, no easy feat.

During an opening of the Conduit, you may put a sample of Elementium on the cart. The Elementium must be on the cart for the entire duration of the opening, while you periodically scan it and the surrounding area with your tricorder. Once the Conduit opening is completed, take the Elementium sample back to Katherine's mass spectrometer for analysis, then turn to **9**.

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Based on your analysis, you have come up with a very self-consistent theory regarding Elementium. It is a compound created by a fifth type of elemental which presumably live on the elemental plane. Without it, the elementals will die once their internal supply is depleted – your back of the envelope calculation suggests the elementals on Earth have about 50 years before they will all die out, unless they find a source of Elementium. It also seems that elementals who consume this substance will eventually become dependent on whoever is supplying it to them: on the elemental plane, that must be this unknown fifth faction of elementals, but in your experiments today, that would be you.

You have not yet worked through all the political consequences, but Elementium is extremely abundant on the elemental plane. You think it might be possible to extract a *huge* quantity of Elementium through the Conduit. However, you believe this Elementium will be inert, and are not sure there is any way to “activate” the substance without human blood. Your preliminary analysis shows the effects are similar to drug addiction in humans, and the effect will likely become more pronounced with time.

Inform Benedetta at once and discuss the ethical and political ramifications of this discovery. You also feel the need to discuss this with a few of the elementals you have been interacting with to see where they stand. If you want to try transporting large quantities of the substance through the Conduit, turn to **10**.

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*Find a GM to gain the “Conduit Modifier: Channel Elementium” ability.*

All that remains is to calibrate the Conduit equipment so that the opening allows for the transportation of Elementium in addition to normal matter. To initiate the transfer, you will need to participate in a **terminal opening** of the Conduit. Place your “Channel Elementium” ability on the cart at the start of the opening. You must remain nearby to modulate the transfer until the opening is completed. You are not certain what form the substance will take once it comes through, but you expect it to be extremely dense.

If things go as planned, you should be able to transfer enough Elementium to sustain the elementals for several hundred years or more, although you are still not certain what the long-term consequences will be.

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### The Elemental Barrier Belt

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Before you headed out on this mission, you received an experimental and fairly bulky belt from a scientist named Galina Schwartz. Galina is the supervisor for Percy Bentz, one of the Azi scientists attending the meeting with you. You briefly experimented with the belt and it seems very effective at deflecting certain types of energy. Unfortunately, Galina warned you that it is not yet ready for field use and is very likely to break down. However, she thought you might find it useful anyways; in return, she hopes to gather experimental data and has asked that you look after Percy.

Unfortunately, upon arriving at the Conduit site, as Galina warned you, the belt does not seem to be functioning correctly. However, she did provide you with detailed notes on how to repair it. Once the game starts, you may turn to **2**.

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The instructions say you need a *Heisenberg compensator* 999, and **both** a *crystal geode* 999 and a *lava ember* 999 to serve as a power source. You don't have these items, but you're sure someone here (one of the scientists, perhaps) knows where to obtain them.

Once you have located these items, turn to **3**.

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You are trying your best to follow these instructions, but it's just technobabble to you. Luckily, there are a bunch of people here who speak the same language. You need to take these items to a scientist, then briefly describe the belt and show them this page. If they spend two minutes incorporating these items into the belt, destroy all three items and turn to **4**.

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Now you need to calibrate the belt by having an elemental attack you while wearing it. The belt will not be active, so it is definitely advisable to find an elemental willing to reduce the strength of its blow. You are free to resist the blow (if your CR is sufficient).

Once an elemental has attacked you while you are wearing the belt, turn to **5**.

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The belt is now beeping with a bunch of green lights happily blinking, but the instructions say it requires one more step before it is fully functioning. Find a scientist to direct you to one of his or her experimental chairs, then have him or her point a *holographic laser* 999 at you for 30 seconds while you are seated in the chair to activate the device.

Once you have done this, open the "A Non-Functional Elemental Protection Belt (999)". It is now operational and grants +3CR to defense against elementals who attack you. The item can be used by any human, although it provides *no defense* against elemental enslavement.

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The Electromagnet

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Blast these coils, always coming loose. And none of your tools are where they should be! Find a spool of tungsten wire, a wire tightener, and a wire stripper, then spend four minutes in your lab repairing the electromagnet's coils (spend two minutes if you can get someone else to help you).

When you complete this step, you may turn to **2**.

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This sorry excuse for a convection reflow oven was broken by the earth elementals and can barely go up to 200 degrees Celsius! You'll have to improvise. Find a silicone oven mitt and a fire elemental. Hold the electromagnet out and clearly visible within 2 ZOC of the fire elemental for at least ten seconds.

When you complete this step, you may turn to **3**.

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Well that was a bit toasty, but the damage that the magnet suffered in transit seem to be mostly repaired. You were confident that it would be ready now, but unfortunately it still isn't working because the proximity to the Conduit has altered the elemental's biochemistry in ways you weren't expecting. You don't have time to do all the research to account for this yourself (that would take days), so you will just have to track down one of the other scientists here instead and convince one of them to help you. Find another scientist and discuss elemental biology for two minutes while showing them your electromagnet.

When you complete this step, hand them your "C packet" and tell them to open it. You may then turn to **4**.

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Of course! Fixing the electromagnet was just a simple matter of modulating the phase transducers so they could be properly coupled to the mesionic sensor grid. In hindsight that should have been obvious.

*The physrep for the phase transducer is a bell: you must ring the phase transducer several times whenever you use the electromagnet.*

Now for the dangerous part – you need to gather real experimental data by testing your electromagnet on elementals. Convince elementals from two different factions to sit in your Chair of Science (presumably not at the same time!). Spend one minute strapping them in, then turn on your electromagnet by loudly ringing your phase transducer. You are not certain exactly what the effects will be, but they might get a bit lightheaded, so you should try to find elementals who are quite friendly, if you can. Once an elemental sits in your chair, hand it one of your "E packets" and tell them to open it.

You may turn to **5** once you have gathered data on elementals from two different factions.

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That worked better than expected! You have excellent experimental results and are now ready to test the final component – the connection to the Conduit itself. You don't have a good power source yet, so this should not have any significant impact on elementals, unless they stand too close to the electromagnet.

Of course, opening the Conduit, even for a moment, is no easy feat. You need to participate in a *momentary opening* of the Conduit. Once you and your allies are ready, put the electromagnet on the cart and place your "Conduit Modifier: Electromagnet" ability on the sheet. Periodically ring the phase transducer.

While the Conduit is being opened, the electromagnet is on and attracting elementals. Warn any elementals working with you that they will need to stay at least 1ZOC away from you or the electromagnet or risk being sucked in. Whenever an elemental comes within 2 ZOC of either you or your electromagnet, you must inform them that they feel like they are being pulled toward the electromagnet. If an elemental attacks you or touches the cart or the electromagnet, and a GM is not present, call a *game halt* and summon a GM.

You may turn to **6** once you have participated in a *momentary opening* of the Conduit.

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Amazing! The power-response curve is impossibly favorable...you were expecting something linear or ideally quadratic, but it looks to be exponential or even hyper-exponential! With this kind of response, you might just be able to create a field that covers a sizable fraction of the planet. And for all the trouble it's caused, the Conduit is still a wondrous thing; while it was opening, you could feel the alien strangeness of elemental planes as if you were standing there.

The remaining hurdle before you can hook your electromagnet up to a *terminal opening* of the Conduit is obtaining a large enough power source. While the magnet draws power from the elemental planes, it needs a sizable initial power surge to make the connection – the more powerful the better. Elementals are partially made up of an extremely dense form of energy called *elemental essence*. If you put an elemental in the Chair of Science and spend one minute using your electromagnet and the phase transducer, you can extract a part of their essence. After one minute, tell them that they must transfer one elemental essence to you, if they have any left. This process is somewhat painful, but should cause no long-term damage unless repeated too many times.

You may turn to **7** once you have any elemental essence, although the electromagnet will be stronger the more essence you acquire.

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You are finally ready. Your electromagnet is completed, calibrated, and tested. You have elemental essence you can use as a power source.

Attach your electromagnet on a *terminal opening* of the Conduit by putting the electromagnet, the essence, and your "Conduit Modifier: Electromagnet" ability on the cart. As with the *momentary opening*, elementals that come within 2 ZOC should be warned that they feel a very strong force pulling them toward the electromagnet, and if they attack you or touch the electromagnet you must find a GM or call a *game halt*.

Remember to periodically ring the phase transducer. If this thing works, it should create a *large* field effect that will pull in elementals and send them back to the elemental plane – but you aren't yet certain just how large the radius will be.

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Learn about Humans

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You have observed humans for a long time, but have only recently begun talking to a few of the scientists and politicians. You think it would be useful to use this meeting as an opportunity to learn more about humans. At game start, you may turn to **2**.

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You know that Ember also frequently interacts with humans. You wonder if she has discovered anything about them you haven't. Spend five minutes talking to her about what she has observed about human behaviour and society. When you have done this, turn to **3**.

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That is interesting. You have heard Benedetta mention the terms "Azi" and "Cit" before, but you are not entirely sure what they mean- you think there might be different kinds of humans? Spend at least five minutes talking to Benedetta about this distinction, and have her help you create a list of all humans present and whether they are Azis or Cits. After you have done this, turn to **4**.

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That was enlightening, but as Benedetta is an Azi, you suspect asking a Cit about the two types of humans might reveal a very different attitude. Hmm... according to your list, Katherine Strauss is a Cit, and Percy Bentz is an Azi. This might be a good opportunity to introduce yourself and your research. Spend two minutes each talking to three more humans, one Azi and two Cit, about human society. When you have finished these conversations, turn to **5**

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That certainly did give you some interesting insights into human society and behaviors, but you still wonder about their physiology. Elementals are about to sustain their power and energy for very long periods of time, but humans seem to need to ingest items in order to renew their energy. You aren't entirely sure what humans eat, though. You know they power their science equipment with various items found in the lab. Go to one of the laboratories and select two items at random, and offer each item to a different human and see if they will eat it. turn to **6**.

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Well, that didn't work. It seems that there are only certain kinds of items that humans can ingest as food. Perhaps you can find some food items in the kitchen? Locate the kitchen and find three food items, and convince three different humans to eat them. Ask the humans if eating the food has helped them gain energy. Once you have successfully energized three humans, turn to **7**.

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You would like to be able to further study human physiology in the future. Obtain a syringe and a vial, and draw a blood sample from one willing human. Ask Katherine if you can use the mass spectrometer in her lab to analyze it. Once you have used the mass spectrometer, turn to **8**.

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Human blood seems to serve a similar purpose as your own elemental essence. This is useful (Yay you win and the humans are feeling more energetic! Get a cool social ability that might be good for peacekeeping! Add to ability of learning about human history, and gain one where you can influence elementals not to harm humans.)

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