

University 2055

Modern thaumaturgy—usually simply called “magic”—was the logical outgrowth of quantum field theory. The basic premise of thaumaturgy is that “reality” is merely an abstract mathematical construct. Therefore, it can be controlled by the manipulation of abstract symbols—provided that the correct symbols can be chosen.

In 2019 this theory was proven by Professor Ramsey Worthington when he spontaneously created a fire ball using sunlight as a power source and the correct symbols and chants. This was a low powered spell and would only singe the hair of a person. As you can imagine this caused quite a stir in academic as well as government circles. The Genie was out of the bottle and thaumaturgy became the new "Space race."

In 2021 Elementals were theorized to explain control over complex systems. The elemental is inherent to start with in any complex system. But until that system is acted on by symbol manipulation (i.e. magic) the elemental is constrained to obey statistical laws. The use of magic can remove these constraints, and thus unleash the elemental.

You can't really talk with an elemental. It has no true intelligence. At least not as we know it. You can communicate with it somewhat, using a symbolic meta-language. There are several things that elemental magic is practical for. For one thing, it's very useful for power control. An elemental has direct, fine control over huge amounts of power. The energy has to be already there; the elemental just gives you the control. Kind of like a light switch. Or a detonator.

In late 2021 Dr. Worthington began work on summoning a fire elemental. Dr. Worthington successfully launched a satellite using a fire elemental. (Key note: Dr. Worthington only partially woke the elemental and when done put it back to sleep) Unfortunately In January of 2022 a grad student attempted to wake the fire elemental but lost control and burned down Penn State and half the surrounding town. Since that time, all magic is strictly controlled by government. In the US this is done by the TATF (Thaumaturgy Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms.) This has of course created a black market for symbols and incantations. Dr. Worthington disappeared from the public eye at this point.

The Thaumaturgical Terrorist attacks in the 2030s caused the UN to create similar organizations to the TATF in other countries to fall under the Office of Planetary Security.

By 2055 we have achieved interplanetary space travel and have outposts on several planets and moons. Warding and climate control spells have made colonization possible. The technology level is just a bit ahead of ours since a large amount of resources were spent in the “Magic Race” For instance; transparent screens and heat based holograms are common. In fact almost every conference room uses the heat based 3d holograms for presentations and some have been installed in the classrooms. Cars still exist but use fuel cells; you might still find some gas powered ones but they are collector items. Space travel is where the big advances have come. It is expensive to maintain a space port and only 4 exist on earth that can do interplanetary travel. This is due to the fact that heavily warded antimatter is used as the power source and a Fire Elemental must be used to control that much power. And of course very few people can control that large of an elemental.

You will be connected in some way to the University of Chicago (Dr Worthington's old School)

- You can be an undergrad studying thaumaturgy.
- You might be studying something else.
- You might only be dabbling in the "approved" Magic Sanctioned by the TATF or be in the black Market.
- You could be a townie who works at or near the University trying to self learn or pick up magic.

- You could even be a professor (More on that later)

The system I'd use would be similar to what we have been using (Fudge). You would start with 150 pts. You can purchase the following:

Tuition: This is based on what level you are at. It is 25pts per year. Each year covers the following:

- Freshman: Basics in Air, Water, Fire and Earth Magic. Effects are very close range and are at low levels (you are just starting out). You will be more advanced than what is in the "approved" TATF literature for the masses (Thaumaturgy 2055).
- Sophomore: Advanced Air, Water, Fire and Earth Magic. The effects have a larger range (say room size) and are more powerful (if you can find good power sources)
- Junior: Further studies in Air, Water, Fire, and Earth Magic (this includes spells to dismiss low powered spells). Add Basic Warding. Some warding is in Thaumaturgy 2055: red alert – sets off a buzz when entered. Yours will be more advanced than that (silent alarm if broken, combined spell such as douse with water and freeze if broken)
- Senior: Mastery of Air, Water, Fire and Earth Magic (you will be able to counter stronger spells), Adv. Warding and realistic Illusions. Now there are minor illusions in the Thaumaturgy 2055 manual but these look more like holograms or spirits. Here you will be able to trick people easily.
- Graduate Level: Must take the Oath of Promachos as required by the TATF (Similar to the Hippocratic Oath: I will not summon an elemental without prior council consent) Further studies in all areas and introduction to elementals (knowledge of presence alone. You will not legally be able to summon one without permission and support from the TATF Thaumaturgy Council.)
- Full Professorship: You've arrived and have mastered it all. You could be quite dangerous you scary friend you...

Now if you choose not to go the Thaumaturgy College route, you will be able to get the approved manual for 15pts.

Black Market: Symbols and chants and spells can be had through the black market. First you'll have to make contact and hope and pray they don't rat you out to the TATF. If you want a reliable source that is 10pts. This only means that they will not finger you. They may be arrested if caught (I'll try to be kind though, I'd only have them picked up if you leave them out to dry – i.e. escape the feds but leave them holding the bag.) The items can be purchased based off of their known or perceived ability. For example say you want to make a good sized blast of the size needed to flip a car (requires symbols in fire and air or earth). The symbols needed would cost you 5 pts. If you want to do a major one, that's going to cost 10 pts. That's the Black Market expensive, but handy at times. Also information can be purchased. Not all symbols are taught in school. Apparently there is some ancient buried knowledge rumored to be out there. Just how do you find it? Those if found and held, are free but you'll have to work to get them. Also they can be stolen (what you thought the TATF didn't have black helicopters?)

Spells outside the Black Market: You will need to expend experience points for these. You'll be learning them so they will

Now since I'm a spreadsheet dude, here are the other things you need to know:

The traits still are used.

- Willpower is your amount of control. In general I'd suggest matching your level of control to your school/knowledge level but I'll leave it up to you.
- Body is your physical strength/resistance to damage.
- Perception will remain the same (wait, did I just see someone in a trench coat go around that corner?)

- Reaction as normal (Initiative)
- Luck (you might need this if you lose control of the spell)

Social will be used. How do you think you can get into the school in the first place? Are you a legacy? Man there is a long waiting list, got a rich uncle?

Knowledge or skills have two categories:

1. The school rank as mentioned above
2. All other abilities. Want to be athletic or a wimp? Want to know how to program a computer(hack into it) you will need a skill for it.

Gifts/Flaws: In this game there are no gifts. Magic can be learned by anyone. Control (willpower) you buy and roll (take your chances). I'll allow one and only one flaw per character (this is my first time so I don't think I can keep track of more than one) The flaw can be worth up to 25pts depending on how much of a flaw it is. If it is a minor flaw, 5pts. If it has a good consequence, 10pts. If it is something I can work into as a major plot point, 25pts.