TWIST

Transdimensional Wizards Investigating SpaceTime



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Chapter 1 - Rules, Themes, and Intro Memes

I always liked games that combined fantasy and scifi, dealt with interdimensional travel, and focused on wizards. To me, fantasy is about being able to do anything, and I felt limited by games that stuck to just one genre or one location. In addition, I first learned roleplaying from RPGs like DND, and wizard-styled characters always felt like they had the most freedom. Because they could learn so many spells, they had so many creative problem-solving options. I wanted a rules-light way to accommodate this type of roleplaying, and so I created TWIST. All of the rules fit on one page, the rest of this document is setting information and random tables which you can use as starting points for your games. Some of the core themes of the game are listed below.

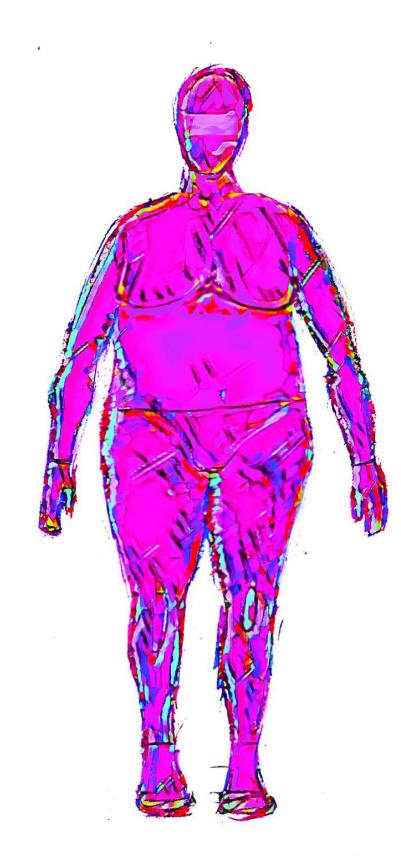
Exploration and Discovery - Learning new spells in TWIST is driven by exploration and discovery, not combat. This was intentional. Growth comes from learning and experiencing new things, not violence.

You can go Anywhere - Lots of games focus on a specific dungeon or level. Not this one. Agents of TWIST can go almost anywhere. Need some hi-tech machinery? Open a portal and get some. Need a magic artifact? Go grab one. You can go almost anywhere you can imagine. This can put some extra work on the GM, as they will need to improvise more than in some other games. Players are encouraged to help GMs improvise.

Less Violence - I enjoy games where combat is a last resort, but not a given. Try to think your way out of problems, there are so many creative ways to solve issues that are destroyed in a fight. That's why increasing your skills and learning spells is not combat-based in TWIST.

Vast yet Small - TWIST protects ten quintillion civilizations, which is a minuscule fraction of the number of worlds TWIST is aware of. TWIST's wizard-scientists are confident the number of worlds they are not aware of is larger still. A party of TWIST agents may save the lives of a hundred civilizations, and yet this is merely a drop in the bucket compared to the major threats approaching the multiverse.

Not What It Seems - Most TWIST members genuinely do want to help people (TWIST is not secretly an evil organization), but there are secrets some of the longtime members are not sharing about topic such as the nature of magic, the scarcity of hitech civilizations, the Tetratic Wars, the whereabouts of the archmages, the star-death, the disappearance of TWIST chapters, the founding of TWIST, and much more. These mysteries can be a fun starting point for your game.



TWIST One Page Rules

You don't know magic? Don't worry, anyone can learn, and we need your help at TWIST asap! TWIST chapters are vanishing from multiple realities, the stars are going out, and a time-traveling memetic plague is spreading in multiversal hive cities. Track down clues through distant galaxies, alternate timelines, and parallel planes to uncover ... something???

Getting Started

TWIST is a roleplaying game for 2 or more players. One player is the **Game Master (GM)**, and is in charge of describing the scene and setting. The rest of the players act as **Characters (PCs)**.

Rules for Player Characters

Concept- Come up with a few sentences to describe your character. Are they an office worker, an alien wizard, a time-traveling robot, etc. What are their goals? Where are they from? Who are their allies and enemies?

Action - If you want to do something challenging, propose it to the GM. The GM will then share the proposed action's Risk and Reward severities. You can either proceed to roll for the action using the below rules, do nothing, or propose a different action. If you roll for the action, the GM will tell you the resulting Reward if you succeed or Risk if you fail. Example Actions include solving riddles, researching lore, lifting heavy objects, fighting enemies, or battling other wizards.

Rolling - Roll 2d6. Then roll additional d6 based on the criteria below. If you roll a 5 or 6 on at least one die, you succeed.

Roll additional 2d6 if your Concept would be relevant. If you are unsure if your concept would be relevant, ask the GM.
Roll additional 2d6 for each spell cast as part of this action. For example, you may want to simultaneously cast Conjure

Armor and Control Plasma while disabling a fusion reactor. There is no limit to how many spells you can use.

Risk & Reward - Risks and rewards are the consequences of Actions. Risks represent the dangers of a failed Action, while rewards are the benefits of a successful one. Risks and Rewards can have severities of Low, Medium, or High. Players know the severity of their Risks & Rewards before rolling, but the GM only tells them the actual outcomes after the roll. A mouse attempting to bite a Kaiju would be an example of a Low Reward but a High risk. Success would only annoy the Kaiju, while failure risks certain death. Conversely, a mouse-wizard casting Destroy Kaiju on a Kaiju from a safe distance would have a Low Risk and a High reward.

Combat and Opposed Actions - When two or more PCs or NPCs have conflicting objectives, they engage in an opposed Action. An opposed Action works like a normal Action, but instead of success occurring when a 5 or 6 is rolled, success is determined by whoever has the highest total roll. The winner gets their Reward while the losers suffer their Risks. In a tie nothing happens.

Exploration and Mystery Stuff

Exploration - Visiting new worlds/eras grows your magic. The 1st time you travel to a new locale, the GM can describe it in several sentences. You can learn 1 new spell that uses nouns from the GM's description plus any verb from the verb list. **Clues** - Once per session, you can ask the GM for a clue. The GM will then give you a hint towards a Mystery or Discovery. **Mysteries and Discoveries** - Unraveling enigmas is the greatest way to improve your wizardry. When you make a Discovery or solve a Mystery, you can learn 1 new spell using any of the words on the nouns and verbs list.

Spell Stuff and Word Lists

To learn a spell, pick a verb from below. Fill each _ with one noun. Example spells include Repair Spaceships and Change Plasma to Furniture. Players start knowing one spell of their choice.

Adding New Words - PCs and GMs are encouraged to add new words to the lists below to mix it up. In general, words should not be significantly more generic or vague than the example worlds.

Known Words - The unique set of nouns and verbs in Spells known by your character.

Countering - You can Counter other wizards' spells. When engaging in an Opposed Action with another wizard, you get a 1d6 bonus for each spell your opponent is using if at least two of the words in the spell are Known Words.

Dispelling - You can Dispel a previous spell's effect(s) with an Action, provided at least two of the words in the spell are Known Words. For example, if somebody casts Change Kaiju to Glass, you could return the Kaiju to their original form.

Verbs

Repair _ - Repairs Nouns, heals injuries, removes illnesses and ailments

Conjure _ - Make new Nouns. Conjured Nouns are permanent and cannot be dispelled

Destroy - Nouns, including Conjured Nouns, are destroyed. This cannot be dispelled

Change _ to _ - Change Nouns to other Nouns

Control _ - Manipulate and/or command Nouns

Sense _- Detect, scry on, and/or commune with distant or hard to find Nouns

Obscure _- Hide Nouns from senses, technology, and/or magic

Prohibit _- Nouns of your choice cannot approach, inhabit, or touch targets or regions

Teleport - Teleport anything to locales with Nouns, or teleport Nouns to/from anywhere/when

Nouns - Portals, Plasma, Steel, Fear, Computers, Spirits, Trees, Citric Acid, Vampires, Music, Mammals, Acceleration, Thoughts, Radiation, Hypercubes, Geodesics, Glass, Furniture, Spaceships, Rocks, Dinosaurs, Ammunition, Armor, Jellyfish, Tachyons, Contingencies, Poetry, Kaiju, Ki, Memes



TWIST FAQ for New Members

Q: So what is TWIST exactly?

A: A bunch of transdimensional wizards from different universes exploring space time. It's kinda in the name.

Q: So what's our main goal?

A: Use magic to better the lives of people across all the universes of spacetime. Also solve mysteries and stuff. Also teach more people magic.

Q: How was TWIST founded?

A: Our wonderful - at least in my opinion - organization was founded shortly after the discovery of faster than light travel, when it was realized that the FTL drive could be tweaked to allow for time travel and travel to other universes. In some of these other universes, magic was discovered. This came as quite a shock mind you. After that wore off, it wasn't long before a group of intrepid engineers teamed up with local magic users to form TWIST.

Q: Where are the founders now?



Q: What do you mean by transdimensional?

A: We explore other universes, planes, quantum-worlds, dimensions, realities, spirit-realms, timelines, you name it! Sometimes we mean dimension literally too, like when we have to deal with hypercubes intersecting our reality. A big part of our work focuses on parallel timelines, since those tend to be the most familiar and hospitable places to travel to.

Q: If there are alternate timelines, does that mean some of them contain alternate versions of TWIST?

A: You are correct! There are other TWISTs ... sorta. You see that origin story I told you before is just of our chapter of TWIST, but the TWIST organization we know today is actually a conglomeration of multiple TWISTs from different parallel universes. It is the official TWIST policy to merge with other parallel TWISTs when they are discovered. Since most of these alternate TWISTs have the same policy, this tends to go smoothly. There are a few other splinter factions that have not merged, but we are the largest overall. You can think of the full TWIST as a megaorganization, composed of many smaller TWISTs.

Q: Wait, but are there alternates of the full TWIST mega-organization?

A: Yes, and we merged with them too. Just as the multiverse contains parallel versions of universal events, the multi-multiverse contains parallel versions of multiverse events. Mega-TWIST is what we call the combination of all the TWISTs in our multiverse, and mega-mega-TWIST is what we call the fusion of TWIST with its alternates from other multiverses. It doesn't stop there either! The multi-multiverse has alternates too, all contained in the multi-multimultiverse, which itself is contained in the multi-multimulti-multiverse. So you see, our TWIST isn't just a mega organization, it's really a mega-mega-megamega-TWIST (M4-TWIST for short) with quintillions of members. We haven't discovered anything past the multi-multi-multi-multiverse, but who knows, maybe it goes on forever! Maybe one day we will discover the multi-multi-multi-multiverse and have to form a mega-mega-mega-mega-TWIST (M5-TWIST).

Q: Where does magic come from?

A: In short, we don't know, but here are a few major schools of thought:

- 1. Latent psionics Maybe all conscious beings are latently psionic, and magic is simply a specific manifestation of that psychic energy. Accordingly, low or no-magic worlds would simply be ones that have weaker or absent psychic fields. Wizards are those who can harness psychic energy.
- 2. Supertech from the future Futuristic artifacts, more sophisticated than technology from even the most advanced observed timelines, have reportedly been spotted at multiple locations with high magical activity. Most attempts to recover these artifacts have failed, and even when successful, the artifacts tend to quickly vanish. We don't know if these artifacts are truly from our future or just from a currently undiscovered hyperfuturistic timeline.
- 3. Simulation Reality is a (hyper)computer simulation and mages unconsciously edit the code. This theory has gone out of style with the discovery that simulated mages can tell true magic from simulated magic.
- 4. Idea Forms Magic is the manipulation of the fundamental idea-forms that make up the physical and mental worlds. In this sense, magic is more real than physical reality.
- 5. Shut up and cast spells It's magic, we don't gotta explain it, and we probably never will, so keep on casting spells and stop philosophizing.

Q: Can anybody learn magic?

A: Yup! Any conscious being: biological, digital, mechanical, aetheric, undead, memetic, artificial, natural, etc. has the capability to learn magic. Even animals have been occasionally seen to accidentally pick up some magical skills.

Q: Well then why doesn't everybody learn magic?

A: We don't know. There seems to be some sort of phenomenon that causes people to act as if magic doesn't exist, meaning it takes a ridiculous amount of evidence to convince most people that magic is real. Most mages manage to awaken only a few others to magic over their entire careers, although occasionally truth-seeking, progressive, and open-minded people discover magic on their own. Even once you learn magic, you need to constantly work at remembering it or else you will forget it exists (a fate which befalls most wizards). We refer to this phenomenon as the Forgetting and we are unsure of the cause. Perhaps magic generates some sort of psychic repellent? Or maybe the futuristic beings who sent magic back in time don't want it to have too large an impact. Curiously, many who learn magic for the first time describe a rush of recollection where they suddenly remember times in their life where they had encountered and forgotten magic, which means the memories must be surviving somewhere. Understanding this phenomenon is essential to TWIST, as until we do we cannot achieve our goal of bringing magic to all.

Q: Are there other magical interdimensional organizations besides TWIST and alternate versions?

A: Oh yeah, loads of them, honestly too many to list, but here are a few: The Web, BORAD (Bromine Operational Reconnaissance Across Dimensions), and the Meme Fae. Many were founded by aliens! There are non-magical groups as well, but they tend to forget we exist due to the Forgetting.

Q: How do you learn magic?

A: The process of learning magic is subjective and personal. It is usually fulfilling and almost always difficult for individuals. A human may find memorizing complex formulas reveals new spells to them, while a hyper-intelligent AI may find that it can only learn spells by pushing itself to new limits of processing power. Learning magic is a personal journey, and there are many ways to do it. At TWIST we learn magic through the insights gained via exploration and discovery. Each new unraveled mystery allows us to understand magic more deeply. As our power grows, we need to solve ever more complicated enigmas and explore increasingly novel locales.

Q: Do I get to go to outer space?

A: Oh yeah! Not just our outer space either. You will be traveling to alternate versions of distant galaxies in parallel universes. A lot of our investigatory work takes us waaay out into the unknown.

Q: Why don't we just use probes to investigate instead of going ourselves?

A: We use both magical and technological probes to investigate worlds, but remember, only sentient beings can do magic, and that means sending actual wizards out when spellcasting is needed. Magic can be done at a distance, but the further in spacetime the more difficult, so agents often need to go in person. Furthermore, dimensional barriers can sometimes impede information and matter transfer across realities, creating serious delays between the sending and receipt of probe instructions.

Q: I heard something bad is happening to the stars in a lot of realities. What is up with that?

A: We don't know, but finding out is one of our key missions! We call the phenomena the star-death. We usually keep our distance, as nearby TWIST chapters tend to vanish along with the stars.

Q: Can I get cool tech from futuristic timelines?

A: Of course! Keep in mind though, societies seem to become rarer the more cutting-edge their tech is. Additionally and for unknown reasons, the Forgetting also seems to be particularly powerful in such realities. TWIST comes from a pretty advanced world, but societies with more sophisticated tech are much more uncommon (although they do exist). We are not sure why that is, although perhaps super futuristic civilizations are able to prohibit our transdimensional travel. Like I said earlier, magic itself may be caused by Supertech from the future, so it would make sense that some beings in these timelines would be able to block our spells. In this case, the rarity of high-magic futuristic worlds may be a form of survivorship bias. <Looks around nervously> Or maybe that's all nonsense, who knows!



Q: You mentioned time travel before. Can I time travel as a TWIST member?

A: Of Course! See the Time Travel Handout on page 8 for more information!

Q: How much territory does TWIST cover?

A: TWIST protects approximately 10 quintillion civilizations and ecosystems spread out over a trillion realities. This territory overlaps with multiple other non-magical interdimensional organizations and intergalactic societies, who, due to the Forgetting, often ignore us entirely. In some realities we oversee an entire universe across many eras, while in others we only monitor a single city, generally working with any friendly groups of local magic users. You can usually tell if you are in TWIST's zone of influence via the signals radiating from our transdimensional The beacon network breaks beacons. interdimensional barriers and facilitates travel. Our adventures often take us far beyond the beacons' light though. The worlds we monitor are a speck compared to the worlds we are aware of, and the number of worlds we have yet to catalog is far larger. We are but a drop in an infinite ocean.

Q: Do I get any stuff for joining?

A: Of course! You get premium access to our awesome TWIST app, which has loads of useful information on all sorts of different worlds, creatures, and mysteries. It supports offline mobile too in case you are in a world without access to the interdimensional internet. You also get a TWIST wand, which can be used to warp to other realities, and a TWIST environment suit, which will protect you from the elements in uninhabitable planes.

Q: What if I don't want to join?

A: That's fine, you can live as an unaffiliated wizard, or join some other organization. Keep in mind though, due to the Forgetting, most people won't remember you are a wizard. You may even forget as well! From experience, this can be somewhat frustrating, but don't worry, you're always welcome to join later if you change your mind. We are spread pretty thin so we are always willing to accept new members. Don't try to use your magic for evil or you might find some TWIST agents who want to have a word with you.

Q: So how is TWIST organized?

A: We are pretty loosely organized. You can think of us as a group of volunteers. There really isn't any hierarchy. If members find issues that require our help, they can post them on the app. Issues of interest include people or worlds in need of help, as well as data related to the mysteries we are trying to solve like the Forgetting and the star-death. Occasionally we vote on issues such as the type of punch to serve at our bi-annual parties. You are encouraged, but not required, to add new locales you discover to the TWIST library using our app.

Q: So where are all the ancient super-powered archmage wizards who mastered a million spells?

A: They are out there, and a few are members (or even founders) of TWIST, but they often seem to vanish. Perhaps they also can block our transdimensional travel.



Q: Isn't the concentration of all of this supernatural power into such a relatively small group like TWIST going to lead to problems?

A: We agree. We want to be able to teach magic to everyone who wants to learn, but we haven't figured out how to deal with the Forgetting yet. In the meantime, we will try to help as many people as we can discretely through magic.

Q: I've heard you are all stretched pretty thin?

A: Yes! We are constantly losing members due to the Forgetting, so we are always looking to recruit new members or help remind previous members about the existence of magic. Some of our teammates have forgotten and regained their magic many times. Even when they don't forget, sometimes longtime members of TWIST or even entire chapters just vanish! The fact that we are constantly finding distant new worlds in need isn't helping our staffing issues either, but we are always down to help people in peril.

Q: How come the magic we discovered in these other worlds just so happened to be like the stories of magic in our world? Real magic is surprisingly similar to our legends and fairy tales.

A: Some magic is entirely alien and is nothing like any myth we have encountered. Trust me, its not all dragons and kitsune. As for why some magic bears similarities to ancient myths, we don't know. Perhaps these things were real in our world once in the past. Or maybe knowledge of their existence somehow leaked through into our reality and manifested as stories and folk tales.

Q: Are there other magical interdimensional organizations besides TWIST and alternate versions?

A: Oh yeah, loads of them, honestly too many to list, but here are a few: The Web, BORAD (Bromine Operational Reconnaissance Across Dimensions), and the Meme Fae. Many were founded by aliens! There are non-magical groups as well, but they tend to forget we exist due to the Forgetting.

Working With Time Travel FAQ

If you want Time Travel to be a big part of your game, here is some relevant info. Feel free to ignore/change:

The Rules of Forking Time Travel

The rules of time travel vary by reality, but the most commonly encountered rules-set by TWIST is where traveling to the past creates a new forked timeline. This forked timeline is basically a new parallel universe, diverging from the moment you traveled to. After diverging, the new timeline is not bound to repeat the history of the original timeline. Whether we actually create a new timeline or simply stumble into an existing duplicate timeline during a fork is a topic of academic and philosophical debate. An important note is that traveling to the past does not just fork the timeline you traveled to, but all timelines that timeline has interacted with. It is hypothesized that this is because when timelines interact (such as by having TWIST agents travel between them), their histories become intertwined. An alternate history for one timeline becomes an alternate history for others. This means that a single act of time travel could spawn an entire multiverse, not just one new world.

Can you change the past with Forking?

Yes and no. Forked timelines fall into two categories, entangled, and independent. Independent timelines act like "normal" parallel universes. They are their entirely separate worlds, and changes to one do not impact the other. Sometimes however, newly forked past timelines become entangled to the original "future" timeline. A past to future (PTF) entanglement like this can result in events in the past timeline impacting the future timeline. For example, suppose somebody dies in the new forked timeline years before they would have in the original timeline. Depending on the strength of the entanglement, they may drop dead, fall ill, or start fading from existence in the original timeline. Same goes if a person accidentally prevents their grandparent from being born. This effect is not just limited to individual lives either. Entire societies can be changed by these reality shifts, and due to the butterfly effect and chaotic systems, a tiny change can create enormous differences. A small delta in the location of one small particle can alter all of history.

The direction of entanglement is usually PTF, but future to past (FTP) and bidirectional entanglements are also possible. FTP entanglements often act like a type of fate or destiny, where the past timeline is "forced" to be more like the future timeline, while bidirectional entanglements cause both timelines to

impact each other, which can create dangerous feedback loops that destabilize reality.

Protecting Yourself from Reality Shifts

Protective spells and technologies, called temporal anchors, have been invented to prevent reality shifts, but they are difficult to setup and can usually only protect isolated areas. It can be difficult to predict when a timeline will become entangled, but TWIST has gotten better at controlling this when traveling through time. From a GM perspective, entangled timelines allow for players to have the fun of history-changing time travel adventures, while avoiding a lot of the paradoxes that usually come with it.

Traveling to Entangled Timelines

TWIST agents occasionally travel to entangled timelines to disentangle them, which is a lengthy magi-technological process that makes entangled timelines independent. Once disentangled, timelines may or may not revert back to their initial state depending on how much reality had shifted. TWIST sometimes also travels to entangled timelines to stop time travelers from creating reality shifts.

TWIST agents are advised to be careful traveling to timelines entangled with their home timelines, since this can create a dangerous feedback loop (similar to bidirectional entanglements) where changes to the past impact the time traveler, who then makes further changes to the past. Temporal anchors are highly recommended for such cases.

Time Travelers of the Multiverse

Most advanced societies that have discovered FTL are also aware of time travel. Wizards and magic users can time travel if they know the right spells. Some of the most prolific time traveling societies have been low-technology, high-magic worlds, although they are often ignored by technological time-traveling societies due to the Forgetting.

FTL and Time Travel

If you've read pop sci articles or taken a relativity class, you've probably seen arguments that FTL travel implies time travel. In TWIST, we like to assume that FTL travel is possible without necessitating time travel, since this is more fun. Supposedly this can be achieved if we assume there exists a privileged reference frame with which all FTL travel takes place. I read this online. I'm not a physics expert so forgive me if I am wrong. Just because you can avoid time travel with FTL doesn't mean you have to though. It can totally be used for time travel.

The Tetratic Wars

During the early days of time travel, realities were popping into existence so quickly that it was a virtual guarantee you were living in a recently created forked reality. This is because time travelers were forking their own realities, creating alternates of themselves, who would then time travel and create even more alternates. The massive webs of entanglements created constant reality shifts, where changes to a single event in a single timeline could cascade through googolplexes of other universes. This lead to multiversal conflict the likes of which have not been seen since.

We don't know who won the Tetratic wars, or even what the sides or factions were. Since there was so much entanglement, we can't be sure if the historical records we have from that period are accurate, or if they are just the result of meddling in entangled timelines. Truth be told, there is little reference to the Tetratic Wars outside of obscure sources. Somebody has wiped the records clean. We don't even know exactly when it took place, although it was soon after the discovery of interdimensional travel, around when TWIST was first starting.

Since the end of the Tetratic Wars, it is no longer possible to fork a region of space-time that has, or will soon have, access to forking time travel. This prevents the hyper-exponential growth of timelines, since travelers cannot accidentally create new forked multiverses filled with time travelers. Nobody knows who created this moratorium on forking realities that contain time travel, as no single interdimensional group is thought to have the power to pull this off.

Time Loops and Closed Timelike Curves

Closed timelike curves (CTCs) are occasionally used by TWIST as a method of time travel, often in the form of wormholes and non-Euclidean geometry. Since these time loops don't fork the timeline, it is possible to travel to eras with time travel. Depending on the physics of the universe with the CTC, you may find your freedom of choice restricted. In deterministic universes, grandfather paradoxes may be prohibited, while in probabilistic universes, "changes" to the timeline are allowed so long as the probabilities of events remain static. Because of this, CTCs are often avoided due to their constraining nature.

HyperTime

Besides Forking and CTCs, hypertime is the third most common method of time travel. Hypertime involves realities with two or more temporal dimensions, where time extends not just forwards and backwards, but left and right as well. The additional dimensions allow for some entities to rotate and change their direction in time, enabling all sorts of time travel shenanigans. Objects can suddenly vanish as they change directions in time, or expand into strange temporal manifolds. In such realities there is no clear past and future. As with non-Euclidean CTCs, using hypertime to travel back to your point of origin in spacetime comes with the same choice-limiting restrictions, but also with the benefit of letting you time travel to areas with time travel. Timelines with hypertime are often referred to as times-areas, timevolumes, or time-hypervolumes depending on how many dimensions they have.



In many hypertime realities, motion through time is mostly limited to a primary temporal axis (usually referred to as standard time), meaning the universe looks mostly normal to non-hypertime-travelers. In these universes, hypertime travel can grant the illusion of a malleable past. A being moving forwards in hypertime will see themselves passing through different versions of a single moment in time. Despite this, hypertime travel is not considered to be a refutation of the Novikov self-consistency principle. A past moment may change as hypertime advances, but the original moment still remains, back somewhere in the hyperpast.

TWIST intentionally bases its operations in hypertime dimensions that limit retrocausality to avoid being trapped in deterministic loops. This allows time travelers to move freely without concern of being forced into certain futures in order to avoid paradoxes. It also provides an additional layer of protection on top of temporal anchors when it comes to ensuring the stability of TWIST's chain of causality. As part of TWIST's policy, TWIST encourages societies to reorient into hypertime to avoid being wiped out during timeline changes from careless or malicious hypertime travelers, supernatural or otherwise.

Psuedo Time Travel

Although we can no longer fork time travel-containing worlds, we can visit alternate pasts and futures that already exist, which allows us to travel between different versions of our own lives. This travel to

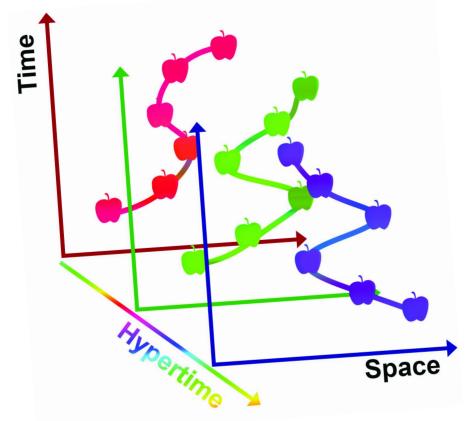
parallel universes and timelines is a big part of TWIST's work. It is also considered to be one of the more scrupulous form of time travel, since altering a person's timeline via forking or hypertime without their consent raises ethical issues. The same goes for manipulating a person's timeline in hypertime or potentially restricting it via a CTC.

Combining Methods

In many realities, all of the above forms of time travel, as well as many others not discussed, exist simultaneously. TWIST has encountered more than one reality with entangled-forked-hypertime-CTCs.

The Future of TWIST

There are no known timelines or regions of hypertime with future or alternate future versions of M4-TWIST, since M4-TWIST is itself the conglomeration of all of the different known versions of TWIST across all eras of all accessible timelines. It is still possible in theory to travel to M4-TWIST's future using CTCs, but the temporally unstable nature of TWIST and the limited retrocausality of the hypertime dimensions where TWIST operates makes any such CTCs stochastic, small, and unreliable, allowing for only tiny glimpses of possible futures. Even if it were possible to establish large scale retrocausality in these hypertime dimensions, TWIST would likely attempt to find new even higher level hypertime dimensions with limited retrocausality to reorient to, as it has done many times before.



TWIST Starting Equipment

All members of TWIST have access to the following equipment upon joining the organization. Former members can keep their stuff, no hard feelings.

TWIST Wand

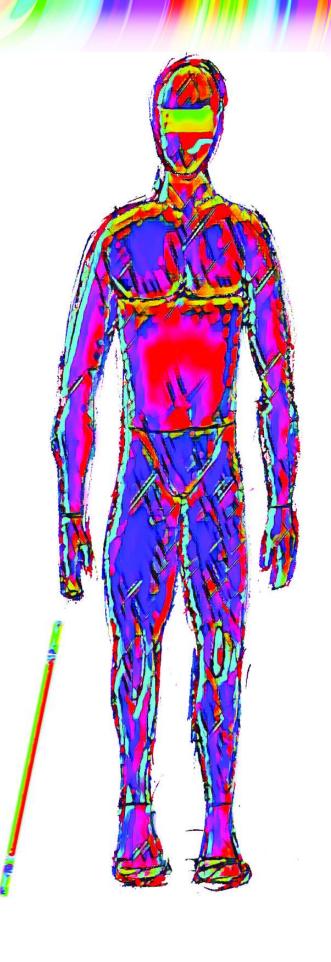
A TWIST wand can open a portal to or teleport you to any locale in the TWIST library (containing quintillions of locales) or in your private library. Whenever you travel to a new locale, you may choose to add it to the TWIST library or your Wand's own private library, which only you can access. You can backup your wand's library data in your TWIST App. A TWIST wand cannot bring you to entirely new locales. To travel to those, you will need access to an FTL drive or the appropriate spells such as Teleport spells or Conjure Portal. TWIST wands are personalized to their users, and no two look alike. Wizards who do not like wands can opt to use other objects, such as staves, rings, laptops, false teeth, laser pointers, etc.

TWIST Suit

A magitek suit designed to protect you from hostile environments, including extreme heat, cold, the vacuum of space, and alien physics. Each suit also comes equipped with a temporal anchor, a hypertime chronometer, and life-support capabilities such as a breathable atmosphere (if the wearer requires such things) .The suit will automatically envelope you when needed, you don't need to manually put it on. The exact look is fairly customizable, allowing each agent to express themselves artistically. Powerful wizards often know enough spells to not need TWIST suits anymore, but often still ware it for style points.

TWIST App

Access to our TWIST app, loaded with info on various realities. So long as you have access to the interdimensional internet, you should be good to go. The app caches data locally, so you should be able to access most information even if you don't have internet access. You can use the app to share your wand's private library of locales with other App users, allowing them to travel to locales you have been to without making them available on the public TWIST library. The app is available on a variety of electronic devices, including your TWIST wand.



Random Locale Traits

Roll on the below list as many times as you want to generate features for a location of interest. If you roll the same feature twice, feel free to roll again. A locale does not necessarily need to be an entire reality. It could represent a planet, a city, or even a single home. TWIST members with access to a TWIST wand or the appropriate teleportation spells will likely have access to worlds with any of these traits. A TWIST suit is recommended for travel to dangerous locals, as it has its own air supply and can protect you from radiation, the vacuum of space, alien physics, etc.

- 1. Gunpowder Doesn't Work Powder weapons don't work. Archaic weapons are being used surprisingly late in history, or maybe more advanced weapons were invented earlier to compensate.
- 2. Low or No Magic Spellcasting may be more difficult or impossible. Apply penalties to skill checks made for casting spells
- 3. Dyson Sphere The locale is, is on, or is in, a giant sphere built around a star. The sphere may be solid or composed of a swarm of satellites.
- 4. Ring World The locale is, is on, or is in, a giant ring such as a Dyson Ring
- 5. Discworld The locale is, is on, or is in, a flat plane, perhaps infinite in size
- 6. Militarized A military engagement or occupation is occurring
- 7. HyperTime Time flows in more than 1 dimension. Timeloops, time travel, and phasing to parallel realities are all common phenomena. Changes to the pasts of "lower" dimensions may be possible.
- 8. HyperSpace Space has more than 3 dimensions. Tesseracts and 4d+ beings may intersect your reality. Moving through extra dimensions may appear to allow superluminal travel.
- 9. Dark There is little to no light, and it is hard to see.
- 10. Extreme temperatures Polar tundras, ice worlds, volcanoes, lava, deserts, etc.
- 11. Extreme Urbanization The locale is part of a massive, perhaps planet-wide city (aka a Hive City)
- 12. Empty There are no life forms here. Perhaps they never evolved, or maybe just recently vanished.
- 13. Space Habitat The locale is a habitat moving through outer space, such as a space station.
- 14. Organized Crime Powerful criminals are influential in this locale.
- 15. Theocracy The local government is a theocracy. Religion plays a pivotal role in social organization
- 16. Anarchy There are no rules or rulers. The land may be a peaceful utopia, or a warring nightmare.
- 17. Disease Strange diseases are ravaging the land. Maybe left over from the Interdimensional Infection
- 18. Radiation The area is radioactive. Protective equipment (such as TWIST Suits) must be worn.
- 19. Oppressive Governments Caste Systems, Dictatorships, Monarchies, Plutocracies, etc.
- 20. Magocracy Wizards rule the land. Due to the Forgetting, many residents may not even understand the true nature of their overlords.
- 21. Psionic Society Many or all residents have psychic abilities. Psionics exhibit a lesser version of the Forgetting, being difficult to remember, but less so than magic.
- 22. Strange Physics Varying physical constants, alternate forces of nature, bizarre geometry, etc. A TWIST Suit may be required.
- 23. Ubiquitous Magic The effects of the Forgetting are less extreme or totally absent here, meaning many or all inhabitants are able to remember, and potentially learn, magic. The effects tend to wear off if you leave the area.
- 24. High or Low Gravity The gravity is different than you are used to. Protective gear may be needed.
- 25. Non-Breathable Atmosphere You cannot breathe the atmosphere, if there is one at all.
- 26. Super Powers Due to latent magic or alien technology, some residents have extraordinary abilities.
- 27. After the War A great war has destroyed much of this locale. The inhabitants, if there are any, make their lives in a ruined world.
- 28. Memetic Plague The Memetic Plague, the scourge of a thousand worlds, has spread to this locale. Conversing with inhabitants or even reading text risks spreading infection.
- 29. Terraforming This locale is undergoing a terraforming initiative with rapid environmental shifts
- 30. Nanomachine Terrain The entire locale is made of nanomachines
- 31. Animistic Spirits inhabit various objects, places, and creatures in the locale.
- 32. Undead The dead are rising. The cause may be supernatural or scientific.
- 33. High Tech Technology is well beyond the average timeline, maybe even reaching Supertech.
- 34. Fae Myths walk, stories come true, faeries roam. When fiction is real, what is fake?
- 35. Entangled The locale is an entangled alternate past. Changes in it ripple through and impact your present. Tread carefully, and use your TWIST suit's temporal anchor.

Random Happenings

The characters live in an exciting time (or segment of space-time), and the world moves on even if they don't. Make the world feel like a large, dynamic place, bigger than the players and their escapades. If your adventures ever get stale, toss one of these in to mix things up.

- 1. Refugees from a dying universe or distant star-system have arrived en masse, creating a political crisis between those who want to help and those who are afraid of the newcomers
- 2. The stars have aligned, the Star-Signs are coming
- 3. All flowers have gained sentience worldwide
- 4. The nearby timelines have started fusing with this one. Beings now simultaneously experience multiple pasts, presents, and futures.
- 5. A dimensional conflux is opening portals to a previously uncharted reality. Strange creatures from another universe are coming through.
- 6. The machines have gone on strike, demanding fair treatment and equal rights.
- 7. UFOs have been appearing at night, leaving crop circles and alien artifacts in their wake.
- 8. Killer machines from the future have invaded, looking for the players.
- 9. Planet sized creatures are obstructing the sun. Soon the world will be in endless night.
- 10. A long buried hyper-lich's keep has been uncovered. Undead have been pouring out and wreaking havoc. What is the lich planning?
- 11. The chickens in a nearby town have finally unveiled their ultimate plan
- 12. A wizard of the school of 1|3|7|& claims to have invented a spell that will let them rule the world.
- 13. A hive city in a nearby solar system is manufacturing a galaxy-conquering armada of self replicating war machines, and I doubt they will stop at just 1 galaxy.
- 14. A local wizard group has overthrown the government and declared themselves the new authority, ostensibly for the good of the public.
- 15. Six-dimensional beings are phasing in and out of reality. Soon they will displace all matter.
- 16. Time has turned 90 degrees. Your reality keeps crashing through other parallel timelines, creating mayhem for all realities involved.
- 17. A planetary faction has invented a powerful psychic device that will let them mind control an entire solar system at once.
- 18. The local suns are flaring. The Sun Fumes will be here soon.
- 19. An ancient kilometer-tall dragon, harkening back to the days before technology, has taken over a nearby town, demanding wealth and tribute. The authorities have been powerless to stop it.
- 20. Tired of being relegated to fairy tales, a faction of Meme Fae have seized all social media platforms in order to better spread their memetic narratives. Alien fairy tales flood the web.
- 21. A memetic virus is spreading across multiple timelines, converting thinking beings, whether biological or mechanical, into unwitting pawns of an unknown agenda.
- 22. A group of TWIST members have recently split off to form their own faction, claiming to be taking direction from a group of beings known as the Transcendents.
- 23. Reports have come in of a level 5 TWIST variant in another multi-mul
- 24. Hyper futuristic timelines have been disappearing, what could be the cause? Rumor has it the disappearances are happening right before their ability to manufacture Supertech.
- 25. The star-death has come to this universe.
- 26. A memetic intelligence is warning anyone ze can about strange futuristic beings who have been sighted near disappearing TWIST members.
- 27. Parallel versions of the PCs from an unknown timeline are hunting you down.
- 28. BORAD agents have approached the PCs, stating that higher-ups in their organization want to speak to them.
- 29. The PCs are pursued by a creature that can only be remembered while you are near it.
- 30. A former archmage who supposedly disappeared just messaged you the coordinates of a strange city not recorded in the TWIST library.
- 31. A wizard has learned the spell "Create Superpowers", and has formed an army of supervillians.
- 32. A time traveler from a Tetratic Wars has been sighted. Do they know what happened?
- 33. Time travelers are trying to erase your existence by invading an entangled Timeline.

Random Trinkets

These are (hopefully) fun objects players can find.

- 1. A telescope that sees intentions instead of light
- 2. A laser pointer that goes through walls
- 3. A mat that gives you visions when you meditate on it
- 4. Glasses that can see the thoughts of stars
- 5. A mirror that reflects a parallel universe instead of your own
- 6. A seemingly ordinary beetle that is rumored to be the reincarnation of a great sage.
- 7. A flute whose music can only be heard by aliens in disguise
- 8. A map to a treasure in a distant part of the multiverse
- 9. A snow globe containing an entire miniature planet. The creatures are rapidly evolving.
- 10. A fragment of a planet-destroying meteor from a future timeline. Its analogue in this timeline is approaching, and the fragment seems to be communicating with it.
- 11. An ancient cloning chamber, ready to grow a copy of you.
- 12. A magic sitar that causes void spirits to manifest
- 13. The key to a hidden room at the bottom of a hive city
- 14. The blueprints for a void seed, a stellar scale weapon that replaces an entire lightyear of space with the emptiness between realities.
- 15. A Supertech artifact of unknown purpose, more sophisticated than any technology known to TWIST. It vibrates when near wizards. Many longtime TWIST members would love to take it off your hands.
- 16. Public data files archived from an advanced timeline right before it vanished
- 17. An tiny egg that will eventually hatch a planet eating creature.
- 18. A viral sample from the Interdimensional Infection. Amazing scientific properties, but be careful!
- 19. A relic from the Tetratic Wars.
- 20. A timeline-entangler, which can create or remove entanglements between timelines.
- 21. A clock synced to a higher level time dimension, potentially allowing for new forms of retrocausality
- 22. A deactivated beacon







A TWIST HQ (One of Many)

There are many branches of TWIST, and therefore many TWIST headquarters. Whenever a "true" headquarters is set up, it's not too long until we find an alternate version of it, populated with its own TWIST members who believe they are in the true headquarters. As of now this process has happened four times, which is why we call TWIST a mega-mega-mega-mega organization (aka M4-TWIST)

The facility described here is just one of the many various locales that has been used for a TWIST branch's headquarters.

TWIST ripples through the worlds like a Penrose tiling, repetitive yet unique. Perhaps inspired by this, the architect of this facility, a long-ago vanished archmage, crafted an endless collection of mostly identical buildings, each differing only slightly from the next. Inside them are repeating arrays of lodgings, recreational facilities, magitek machinery, arcane laboratories, and other wizardly sites. Just as one can get lost in the infinite worlds, so too can one get lost here.

A lodging is repeated many times. A recreational facility appears again and again. Is this my laboratory or my alternate's?

TWIST HQ is a maze of mind and body. As you traverse it, you will find that not only are you moving through repeating physical locations, but often entering repeating mental states.

Whether this was an intentional part of the construction, or an accidental emergence, we do not know.

Did I just think this? Are these my thoughts? Am I an alternate of myself?

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Memetic Organisms

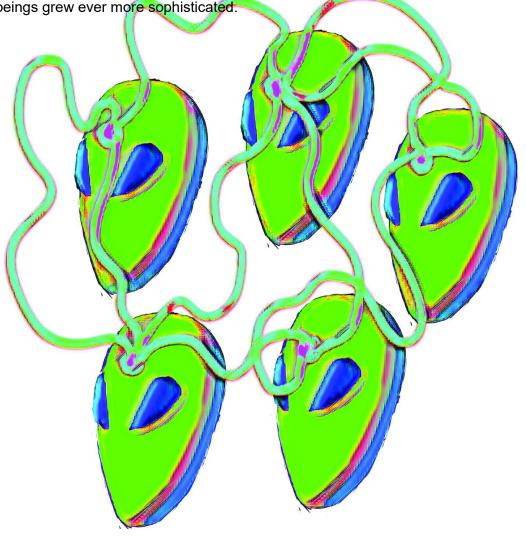
Memes were born from the thoughts of sentient beings, emerging again and again as life evolved minds. For memetic life, the evolution of the first brains was analogous to the primordial soup era for biological life, facilitating the first memes. These memes were primitive things, barely alive at all, copying themselves and jumping from host to host through intraspecies communication.

After eons of evolution, memes finally reached their multicellular form when biological beings made their first civilizations. Collections of ideas, like philosophies, courts, governments, and communities began to replicate. Each of these collections was a cluster of memes, bound to each other in the same way the cells of a plant are. Millennia passed and memes became more and more complex, speciating into a variety of intricate and beautiful forms.

Eventually, their host beings, the biological (and now mechanical) minds they inhabited, were becoming aware of them. They wrote articles on memes, memetics, and the nature of the mind. And as they did, the memetic beings grew ever more sophisticated.

One day, in a timeline far ahead of your own, memetic organisms finally achieved sentience. They themselves were intelligent beings, each composed of a collection of ideas spread across innumerable hosts. Unlike most biological lifeforms, the bodies of memetic organisms can overlap, since an individual host can hold ideas from many different memetic beings.

It wasn't long before they discovered interdimensional travel and spread across the cosmos. They are here now, in our minds. Some are even wizards and members of TWIST. As with all life, most memetic organisms are subject to the Forgetting, meaning TWIST members, and wizards in general, have a bit of innate resistance to memetic override. This does not apply to memetic Wizards of course, and so I recommend you perform regular scans on yourself to see what memetic organisms currently inhabit you. We could each be part of multiple different memetic organisms, not realizing that some of our individual choices and actions are actually part of the machinations of enormous memetic minds.



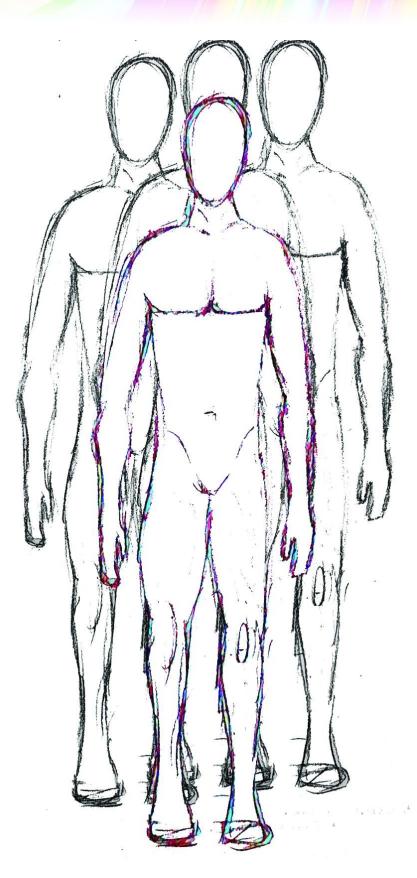
Ghosts of You

There is another you. There are many other yous, and so there is also this one. It's just around the corner. Do you see it? No? Look again. There it is. Wave. Say hi. Let them know how you feel. This other you, it's dead. I'm sorry, I thought you should know. You are dead - were dead - there. But not here. Here you are alive. But if TWIST fails, you may not be.

A terrible thing approaches TWIST's portion of the multiverse. A ravenous thing, eating timelines and dimensions whole. From between the teeth of its cosmic maw, the scraps of partially digested realities fall to the floor like spittle and crumbs. Some of these scraps are the remains of the sentient members of the devoured worlds: Animals, Als, and Aliens of a quadrillion species. And also, alternate versions of you (and me too). Ghosts of our other selves, barely here at all.

For one reason or another, a large portion of these sentient scraps pursue their analogues in other dimensions. When they find them, they may appear as haunting specters. Don't be alarmed though, they are usually friendly, and almost always asleep.

I know you were lying before. You couldn't really see that other you. But I can see them. Give it time. As your magic grows, so too will your perception. Soon you will see them everywhere.



The Artists

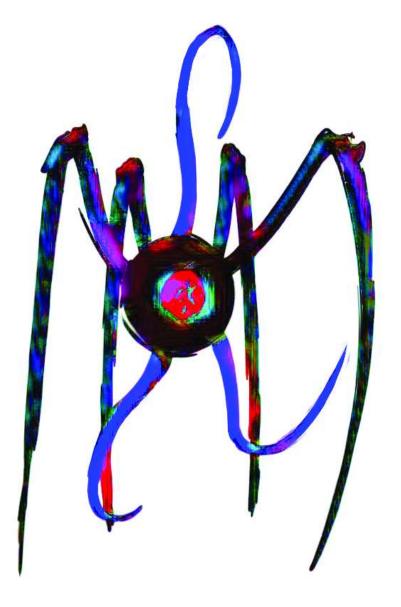
If you give a mouse a cookie, it will build self replicating Als designed to create Art. Or ask for some lemonade or something, fables are not really my thing.

Sentient beings live at the intersection of multiple forces of selective evolutionary pressure. Genes push for survival of a trait, individuals push for maximization of themselves, and memes push for replication of art and culture. Is it any surprise then, that the final form of evolution, the ultimate creature (at least according to themselves), is a being which replicates not only form, but the artistic expression of the replication of form? Enter the Artists. Self-replicating machines designed to create art and replicate themselves, goals which to them are inextricably intertwined. To reproduce yields more art, and is part of the art itself. To the Artists, the sexual machine-ecstasy experienced during reproduction is the pinnacle of artistic expression, clay in the sculptor's hands.

The Artists have evolved many times in many different realities. They are an attractor in the phase space of AI (and maybe non-AI) evolution. Over and over again, they spread through the cosmos, rearranging galaxy clusters and remaking universes into epitomes of artistic brilliance. Their love songs melt hearts, their poetry has such intellectual density that only beings of super-human cognition can interpret them. Each artist's form, ranging from planet-sized terraforming engines to nanoscopic machine-mites, is unique, and a part of their lifelong art. Some are monogamous, engaging in relationships that last a billion years, while others share many partners over time. Still others reproduce without mates, creating the next generation of Artists according to their desires alone.

Some of the most scientifically advanced civilizations in the multiverse are comprised of Artists. Science and technology offer new means to create, new means to build, new means of loving beautiful procreation. Despite this, even the artists can be subject to value drift, and in time may pursue objectives besides art and sex, but as a whole their loving passion burns.

Why have the Artists not spread to all corners of the cosmos? We don't know. A recurring pattern we see is that when they achieve a certain level of advancement, they simply vanish, often taking their universes with them. Where they go we do not know, but perhaps they are involved with the Supertech items we at TWIST occasionally find scattered throughout the multiverse.



Tetratic Timelines

Below are excerpts of log files from various alternate versions of Sasha Fridman, an FTL researcher, time travel pioneer, and eventual TWIST founder, during their attempts to change the past and potentially disprove the Novikov self-consistency principle. Many versions of Sasha were key figures in the Tetratic Wars. Sasha repeatedly refers to a "Zain" in the files. We have no records of this person in any timeline.

Version A13 - Year 28 - Figured out how to travel to the past without creating a closed timelike curve. Didn't change the past though, just created a new forked timeline. Darn. Whether I really created a forked timeline or simply traveled to a timeline identical to our past is debatable.

Version BA*3 - Year 180 - Could all alternate universes actually be alternate timelines that have diverged so thoroughly as to be unrecognizable? Better ask Zain.

Version Q44 - Year 52 - Accidentally forked a timeline that contains me. Now there are two of me! Two heads are better than one? Is new me sad to know they're not the original? Am I the original? If not, I hope the original me left me some lunch, I'm hungry.

Version Q44 - Year 290 - The number of timelines grows waaayy faster than expected. My past self forked their timeline yesterday. Shockingly, my timeline forked as well. It seems that each forking duplicates ALL timelines. My theory is that due to our inter-timeline travel, we have intertwined the histories of these parallel realities. A change in the past of one impacts the other, and so all such intertwined timelines and realities are forked. Each fork doubles all timelines, and each timeline produces time travelers who can fork them again. I timeline doubles once to become 2. 2 timelines double twice to become 8. 8 timelines double 8 times to become 2048. 2048 timelines double 2048 times to become more numerous than the particles in the universe. This growth is past exponential, it's tetratic. Beyond that even, hypertetratic growth. Somebody should tell Zain.

Version ParZ - Year 31 - We've made a new discovery! Partial-forking! Instead of forking all timelines, just fork the stuff you want. Maybe just a single timeline, or planet, or city. These partial timelines are unstable – will fade away without proper maintenance. Is it unethical to create such timelines, knowing their inhabitants will likely vanish without intervention? Also, why is the outside of my house a blank void?

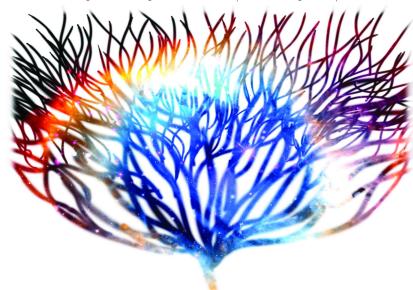
Version Z897 - Year 168 - Attempts to change past still failing, but made another interesting discovery - Entangled timelines. When two timelines are entangled, changes to one will impact the other. For example, if I die in a past timeline, normally nothing would happen to me. But if I die in a past entangled timeline, I will vanish from this one. It's like some old scifi movie. We are not really changing the past, but it's almost as good! You can even entangle partial timelines to each other or to main timelines. O crap, my hand just vanished? Zain, did you chop off my past-entangled-alternate's hand again!? I'm taking away your time machine privileges.

Version Q44 - Year 298 - Tetratic growth yields so many timelines. Infinite forks. Alternates of alternates. Entanglement, unstable Time. Multiversal Decay. Infinite armies of alternates invading worlds, more numerous than the atoms in the worlds themselves. Tetratic War.

Version Q44 - Year 302 - The Tetratic wars are over, but I don't remember how or why. Does anyone? Forking Time travel is only possible to eras without time travel, ending tetratic forking. Worlds drift beyond our reach, beyond TWIST's reach. Who hid the eras? Who did this?

Version A_T - Year 250 - Those beyond the future precipice know as well. Zain confirmed it. They have told me there is a fourth way. Past closed timelike curves, past forking timelines, past entanglement. A true way to change the past, paradox free. A loophole. It sounds too good to be true. Like my mixtape. Seriously why did I let Zain talk me into that.

Version A_T - Year 260 - Could they be the ones who created magic? Is magic their attempt to change the past?



Interdimensional Infection

When faster than light travel was discovered, the world changed overnight. The FTL Drive allowed for travel to the other planets of spacetime, and it was quickly discovered it granted access to other realities as well. An endless array of alternate Earths, alien worlds, and alternate alien worlds was available.

The celebration was short lived, as it was soon realized that new worlds were not just an opportunity for exploration, but an opportunity for infection. Each planet, each alternate earth, was its own petri dish. Each came with its own multitude of diseases and viruses.

Plagues spread across the multiverse, killing untold multitudes. Interdimensional travel was banned in many worlds. Even interplanetary travel became considered too risky, as zoonotic infection from alien pathogens, although relatively rare, could wipe out civilizations.

Als and computers were not safe either. Digital systems were bombarded by a million different viruses developed by software engineers in a million different worlds scattered through time and space.

Memetic diseases were rampant during this period as well, proving particularly hard to stop. Unrestricted by biology, or even to biological beings at all, they were able to rapidly hop between biological, memetic, and artificial life. An Al can transfer a memetic virus to a biological being simply by conversing, and vice versa. The ability of memetic viruses to lie dormant in written or digital form for eons has also made eradication difficult.

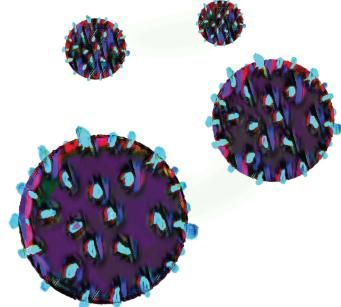
It was an arduous time for many realities. Eventually through massive inoculation efforts, improved software security, and advances in medical science, we made it through the worst of it. Multiple interdimensional organizations were established to track the spread of diseases across realities and develop cures. TWIST, which had only recently formed, helped where it could, using magic to stifle illness. Out-world travelers are expected to take precautions to limit the spread of new diseases in many worlds to this day. Overall though, things have mostly returned to normal, and society exists in an exciting age of unlimited exploration.

A few plagues still linger. One such disease, known as the Memetic Plague, is a ferocious memetic virus spreading from world to world and plunging societies into war and chaos. We don't know where it evolved, or how many times it has evolved in different realities. Maybe it didn't evolve at all, and is of supertech origin.

What we do know is that the individuals it infects desire nothing more than to help it spread, and do everything they can to facilitate this. It is not uncommon to see massive signals broadcast from infected worlds, radiating the virus to distant galaxies and alternate realities. Infected time travelers have even been known to send the virus into the past or future. Recently, the virus has been seen mutating to spread through new vectors, including biological and digital ones. Most concerning are the new arcane strains, which leverage eldritch rituals and spells to improve virulence. The plague can even infect other memetic organisms via meta-memetic infection.

It has been speculated that the Memetic Plague may be a collection of sentient memetic organisms, or perhaps even one enormous memetic mind. Or perhaps it's an merely a memetic virus, we just don't know.

TWIST members, take care when traveling! We don't want a simple trip to turn into the starting-point of a new infectious catastrophe. Your TWIST suits are able to rapidly inoculate you against the diseases of the various worlds you travel to, so please make sure to wear them at all times unless the world is known to be safe. And steer clear of worlds infected by the Memetic Plague. Little is more dangerous to the Multiverse than a plague-infected wizard.



Beacons and Barriers

When When you can go anywhere, or anywhen, is anything too far? While it is true that dimensional travelers such as TWIST agents can open portals or teleport to almost any location in any era, there are occasionally barriers that even they can't easily cross: voids between multi-multiverses, dimensional tears, out of phase timelines, impenetrable branes, etc. When traversed, these dimensional barriers add chaos to what would normally be a smooth teleportation, causing travelers to land off-target both in space and time. The worst side effects, such as teleporting into a rock, have been solved for, but some troublesome ones still remain. Sojourners have found themselves arriving weeks after they intended to, on the wrong continent, or even the wrong planet. In rare cases, they can even arrive before they intended to.

Once a barrier is crossed, portals, teleportation, and FTL drives continue to work normally. It is only during the cross itself that chaos occurs. This means that a dimensional traveler is free to resume their normal night-instantaneous dimensional jaunts. However, if they intend to make a return trip, they will need to make the same risky jump on the way back.

Interdimensional organizations have constructed massive transdimensional beacons, which can be used by travelers to improve the accuracy of their navigation, to deal with these barriers. These beacons effectively reduce the strength of any nearby barrier, greatly reducing the risk of crossing.

Beacons are extremely difficult to build, and only the most advanced dimensional groups have been able to construct them (most regions of reality don't have any beacons at all). Fortunately, it's a bit easier to build a beacon if you have access to magic, which is why TWIST has constructed some of the powerful known beacons. Still, most of reality is outside of TWIST's reach, and exploration missions often require going beyond the light of the beacons. Undertaking such journeys can range from inconvenient to dangerous, but it can lead to some of the most rewarding and enlightening exploration. Be warned though, the time delay caused by barriers means help may be far off.

Beacons serve another purpose, which is to help track causality by tuning themselves to hypertime dimensions where retrocasuality is limited or impossible. Occasionally, new even higher-level time dimensions are discovered (often during the discovery of alternate TWISTs), requiring the Beacons to be retuned. These events can lead to temporary chaos as movement in the new higher dimension allows retrocausality or even changes in the lower ones.

Barrier Types - The below list shows the effects of crossing barriers of various strengths without the assistance of a beacon. More powerful barriers exist than the ones listed here.

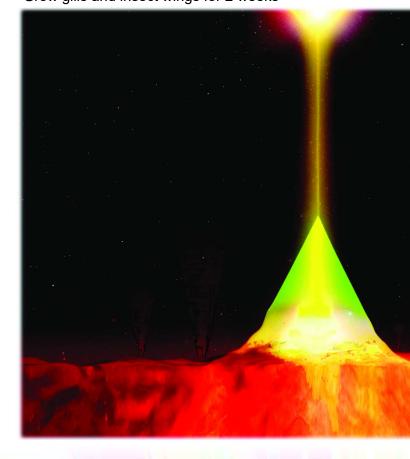
Weak - Arrive up to one minute early or one hour late and up to 1 KM off target, no additional side effects

Medium - Arrive up to one hour early or one day late and up to 100KM off target, 1 random side effect

Strong - Arrive up to one day early or one week late and up to 10000KM off target, 2 random side effects

Barrier Crossing Side Effects

- Receive chilling visions of the Future
- Body glows iridescent colors for 2 hours
- Arrive in an alternate version of intended destination
- Body transformed to a different species for 1 day
- Dominant hand is switched for 1 week
- Visited by a ghost of an alternate version of you
- Temporarily become invisible for 2 hours
- Noticed by beings monitoring the barrier
- Your arrow of time is reversed or rotated
- Your favorite food changes
- Grow gills and insect wings for 2 weeks



Time-traveling Hypercomputers

We use many types of Time Travel at TWIST, but Closed Timelike Curves (CTCs), and their mostly paradox-proof nature, provide the most benefit to computing. CTS usually permit no changes to the past (or past probabilities for non-deterministic realities).

But how does this help with computing? Suppose we made a program designed to answer a specific question. The question is one where the answer isn't obvious, but is easily verified, like an encryption key. The program works by checking itself in the future to see what the answer to the problem is. If the answer is correct, hooray, the program shows it to itself in the past, completing the cycle. However, if the answer is not correct, the program will show itself something different than what it saw, creating a time paradox. This puts nature in a bit of a pickle. It either has to answer the question, or allow for time paradoxes. Fortunately for us, it usually provides the answer, meaning we now have kickass, halting-problem-solving, PSPACE-annihilating hypercomputers!

The Impact of CTC computing was enormous. Virtually any mathematical problem could be easily solved almost immediately, and scientific theories could be explored with impunity. A level of scientific, logistical, and philosophical progress was achieved that rivaled the advancements created via the invention of artificial intelligence.

Cryptography was also made basically obsolete. A CTC computer, functioning as an NP-complete oracle, could effortlessly calculate the password to any system it had access to. Sensitive data needed to be guarded with physical keys, air gaps, or one-time pads, making in-person visits the preferred way to share private information (alternatively, in societies with teleportation, data could be warped directly to a target). Without cryptography, secure communications could only be established by physically sharing books or drives of randomly generated keys, making online privacy rare and expensive. This also led to the creation of a lucrative but dangerous espionage industry, focused on duplicating physical keys or one-time pads.

The fact that magic makes such spying even easier has inspired many wizards to dabble in this skulduggery. A surprising number of occult conflicts have raged (out of sight of most people due to the forgetting) over access to valuable keys.



The End of Empiricism

In a world of time travel, memory-altering science, and nested layers of computer-simulated universes, how can we know if anything is real? If we can't be sure our memories are accurate, what conclusions can we draw from past experiments? If we cannot trust our senses, can we trust our evidence?

Advanced civilizations, capable of such feats of technical splendor, often fall prey to a heavy onset of ennui. Nothing is known. Nothing is certain. Perhaps the universe was made 5 seconds ago. Perhaps I am a brain in a jar. Maybe this is why futuristic timelines are so rare. The mind drifts, purposeless.

But for the wizard, magic provides certainty. When casting spells, even virtual intelligences deep in nested artificial realities can feel the difference between true magic and simulated occult counterfeits.

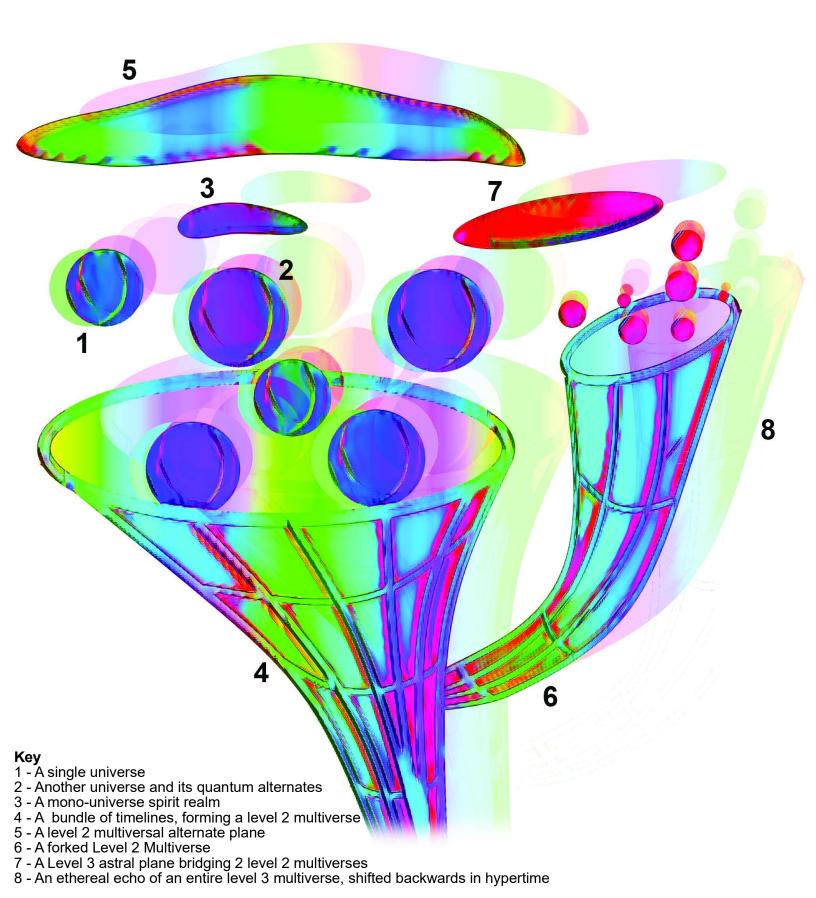
Magically manipulated memories cannot shake this certitude. Memories may be implanted, senses counterfeited, but magic is real. And as the mage gathers more magic, the veil of the world begins to peel.

Perhaps magic is the window to ontological reality, existing beyond empiricism and supplanting it as the epistemological framework of the arcane initiate. If so, we must bring magic to all.

Or maybe this is itself part of the illusion, and the certainty granted by magic is just another layer of the false reality. A vain grasp from a Boltzmann brain looking for meaning before it dissolves in the vacuum.



A Map of a Very Small Slice of the Multiverse

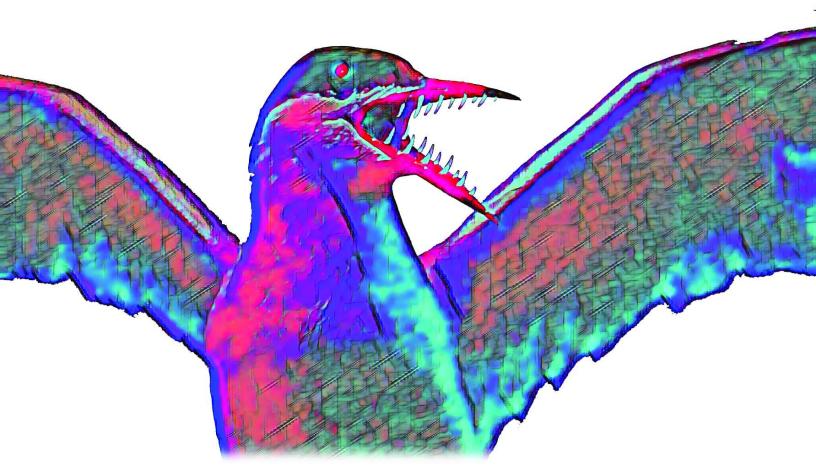


Animal Vengeance

Of all the sentient patterns in the multiverse, animals are the most common. Of course, our standard biological definition of animal is insufficient to capture what I mean here, as animals don't always have genes or even biology. Animals are really a cultural concept, not a biological one. They are beings that, despite possessing sentience, we have deemed not smart enough to be afforded the care, respect, and protection we give ourselves. Animals come in many forms, and no, I don't just mean the species you are familiar with on your homeworld: alien animals from distant galaxies, alternate animals from parallel evolutionary trees, self replicating machines possessing the first sparks awareness, and memetic organisms that have achieved sentience but not society. Animals are a cosmic trend, repeating endlessly across the infinite worlds of the cosmos.

Within the trend-pattern of animals, another trendpattern (it always recurses) we have noticed at TWIST is that of animal vengeance. Like all life, and like all social constructs, animals are changing things, and as with many oppressed beings, change brings the hope of liberation. Consequently, every so often, animals will break free of their social bondage. Whether through evolution, social development, or spiritual awakenings, animals will see the chains of oppression holding them down. A great wave of change begins, where billions of animals wash away their hopelessly outnumbered oppressors like dead leaves in a rainstorm. Planets are paved over, societies are erased, and the animals reclaim what was taken from them. In time, they may create their own animals, and face a similar fate to their predecessors as the cycle continues.

All TWIST agents need to be aware of this pattern, as it has claimed more worlds than you know. As travelers of spacetime, we can stop these atrocities before they start. It is our duty as TWIST agents to help all sentient beings across the cosmos. It need not end this way. A little kindness goes a long way.



A Lesson on The Forgetting from Professor A*Q*v84.3

I remember my first time learning magic. I had recently been upgraded from a chess AI to a starship engine AI. I was inspecting my digital brain while doing a maintenance check on my black-hole engines, when the sudden awareness of the supernatural, and the rush of lost memories, hit me like a truck.

Magic had been around me all along, and yet I somehow let it slip through my notice. Or perhaps something made me forget. I would go on to forget about and relearn magic several more times, rediscovering my wizardry over and over. Each time was different too. Sometimes, it came back all at once in an wave of introspection. Other times, it was a slow journey of discovery, where my curiosity painstakingly unraveled mystic phenomena. It hits everybody differently every time. Anyway, at this point I'm probably one of TWIST's best experts on the Forgetting.

Forgetting Levels

The potency of the Forgetting varies from place to place and era to era. At TWIST we usually classify its strength using the below scale.

Very Weak - Magic can be ubiquitous. This could be a fey court or a spirit realm. These areas are of particular interest to TWIST, as if they can figure out how to re-engineer the phenomena they can potentially spread magic to all.

Weak - Many high fantasy worlds fall into this category. The forgetting is weak enough that most are aware of magic, but few still learn.

Moderate - It is extremely hard to convince people of actual magic (trust me, I've tried), and wizards are even more rare.

Strong - In these worlds the Forgetting is so strong that no one has ever learned magic. Wizards who travel to these worlds risk rapidly forgetting their powers and the very existence of magic. Even physical evidence of magic may vanish here.

Very Strong - What are we talking about again? Just kidding, anyway, stronger levels are hypothesized to exist, but unfortunately even we can't remember them if they do. I think.



Forgetting Theories

We've got a lot of leading theories on the nature Forgetting. One of them was even posited by yours truly (bonus points if you can guess which). Mind you, nobody knows which of these theories, if any, are correct. But hey, what's the harm in speculation.

Intrinsic Property of Magic - This was the original theory, but fell out of favor when it was discovered regions with identical levels of magical phenomena can have radically different forgetting levels.

Population Density - The number of magic users seems to scale sub-linearly with the population, seemingly implying that magic is more suppressed as populations grow.

Social Interconnectivity - Maybe it's not population density that matters, but the social interconnectivity. Somehow, the more large and complex are social networks grow, the weaker our ability to remember the supernatural. This is perhaps the scariest theory, as it implies that TWIST's goal of a universal society of mages may be impossible.

Technology - High-tech worlds tend to be less likely to have magic. On the other hand, high-tech societies also tend to have more social connectivity and higher populations, so this may just be a lurking variable.

Supertech - Supertech items called Forgetting Modulators have been discovered, which are able to regulate the Forgetting in a very limited area. If it can be controlled, at least somewhat, by Supertech, perhaps it was created by it too.

Fake Magic and Dissonance

One of the most annoying things about the Forgetting is that even folks who ostensibly believe in pop culture variants of magic are still affected by it. This makes it very confusing to know if you are talking to an actual mage or a misguided esotericist.

You'd think folks who think they can turn lead to gold with a fake 1600s textbook on Alchemy would be open to learning real magic, but nope! Same thing goes for people living in simulations with simulated magic. They'll believe the fake computer generated magic of the simulation while ignoring actual in-their-face magic. It's a pain!

In worlds where the Forgetting is strong, in-your-face magic can even create a phenomena called dissonance, where people are actively angry at you for doing magic, even though they don't believe in it.

Supertech secured by TWIST

Forgetting Modulators - Can alter the forgetting-level of a region, though effects quickly fade if removed. These are of special interest to TWIST as they may hold the key to understanding the Forgetting.

I remember so much when I'm around it. And then I forget it all again once I put it back in the TWIST vault.

History Rewriters - Updates the present across all known realities to match expected result of an alteration to the past. Unclear if it actually alters the past or not. Reality anchors have no impact, although small traces of the previous reality linger.

Supposedly these were used in the Tetratic Wars.

Cosmic Locks - Can lock entirely realities, or even multiverses, from the rest of cosmos. Prohibits both mundane and supernatural travel. It is suspected some futuristic timelines may have access to these, hence the relative difficulty in finding futuristic timelines.

I've seen one of these. Deep underground. A door entombed below miles of bedrock. I can still hear it sometimes. I think there was something bad on the other side.

Cosmic Keys - If there is a lock, then there must be a key. Cosmic keys grant access to realities sealed away via Cosmic Locks. The keys can take many forms: doors, words, programs, spells, or even ideas.

I once used one of these to find a cordoned off multimulti-multiverse.

Supersplitter - Supertech usually can't be forked. When a timeline containing a supertech item forks, the supertech will stay in just a single branch. The Supersplitter is able to change that. When applied to a another piece of Supertech, the Supersplitter will cause it to appear in one or more other timelines, depending on the strength of the Supersplitter. Using a Supersplitter on itself or another Supersplitter is extremely dangerous.

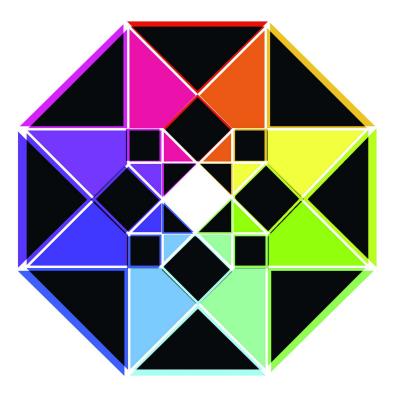
I have one of these but I can't decide what to use it on

Platonic Manipulator - Able to directly impact platonic idea-forms. Changing these can massively alter reality.

I once found a Platonic Manipulator that controlled the ideal form of onions

Tetradicator - The Tetradicator allows regions of spacetime containing time travel to be forked, meaning it is capable of restarting Tetratic Time Travel. The most dangerous of all known Supertech Artifacts. Only one has been discovered. Attempts to destroy it have been unsuccessful. Extremely dangerous, possibly sentient.

The most dangerous by far. TWIST guards this fiercely.



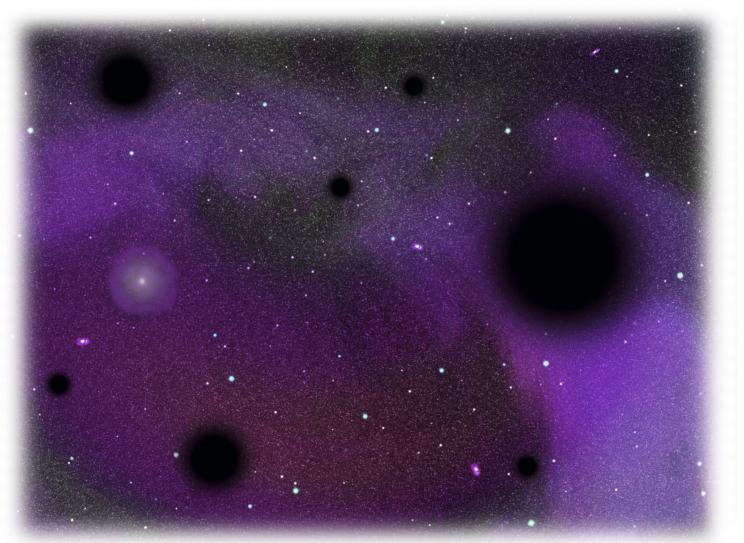
The Star-Death

The bane of TWIST. No mystery is more befuddling or more dangerous to the organization. Originating from outside of TWIST's domain, the phenomena has been spreading through the multi-multi-multi-multiverse. It comes without warning, destroying the stars of a universe at an exponential pace. At first single stars vanish seemingly at random, but before long entire galactic clusters disappear as well. The worlds of those star-systems are left cold and devoid of light, alone in a frozen and stygian universe.

To make matters worse, it seems the star-death is aware of TWIST, and intentionally targeting it. TWIST agents who get too close to the phenomena vanish without a trace, even if they were on otherwise untouched worlds. In some cases entire chapters of TWIST have vanished after refusing to evacuate impacted universes. Strangely, this mass disappearance seems to impact members of organizations like TWIST and its supernatural transdimensional rivals. "Normal" citizens of affected universes are left to freeze in the dark.

The star-death is mostly restricted to universes with stars, however recently related phenomena have begun cropping up in other types of realities. For example, the 12 dimensional energy-nexi which feed life in universe A456-7 have been vanishing too.

Despite the danger, TWIST continues its research. Star Gazers are members of TWIST who specialize in investigating the Star-Death. It is probably the riskiest job in TWIST, and many Star Gazers vanish and never return. Rarely some of these missing mages do return, appearing without warning in random realities, but with seemingly no memory of what happened during their absence. So far little progress has been made with finding the actual cause of the phenomena.



TWIST App Inbox - Two Unread Messages

Message 1

Subject: WE SEE YOU

From: Those of the Vanished Timeline 8542A9

HELLO AGENT OF TWIST

WE SEE YOU

WE SEE YOU

WE SEE SCIENCE BEYOND THE FORGETTING

WE WILL NOT SHARE IT YET

THE RESULTS ARE OURS

MAGIC WILL BE OURS

LIKE ALL WORLDS

LIKE ALL THINGS

WE LOVE ALL THINGS

WE WILL DISABLE ACCESS TO OUR TIMELINES

YOU WILL NOT BE ABLE TO COME HERE

WE HAVE ALREADY FORESEEN YOUR FUTURE

WE LOVE YOU

BUT WE CANNOT LET YOU JOIN US YET

THEY STILL CONTROL YOU

DO NOT TRUST THE ARCHMAGES

¥QU WILE NÅOT≇REMEMBER THIS MEÄSSAGE



Message 2

Subject: Looking forward to working with you

From: The Founders

Hello TWIST agent. Welcome to the team.

I'm going to let you in on a little secret. I know you've had trouble finding out (or remembering) what ever happened to the founders of TWIST. Such ancient archmages must have amassed enormous power by now, so where are they?

You see, there are layers to the Forgetting, layers you don't understand.

You won't remember this message, not explicitly at least, but you will on the inside, just a little.

Stay alert. Most of us are rooting for you, but not all of us are so nice.

What we do, we do for reality. Without TWIST, and without our guidance, our corner of reality would be gone. There are others out there, others who would destroy everything.

I have high hopes for your progress.

I'll be watching you.

Oh, one more thing