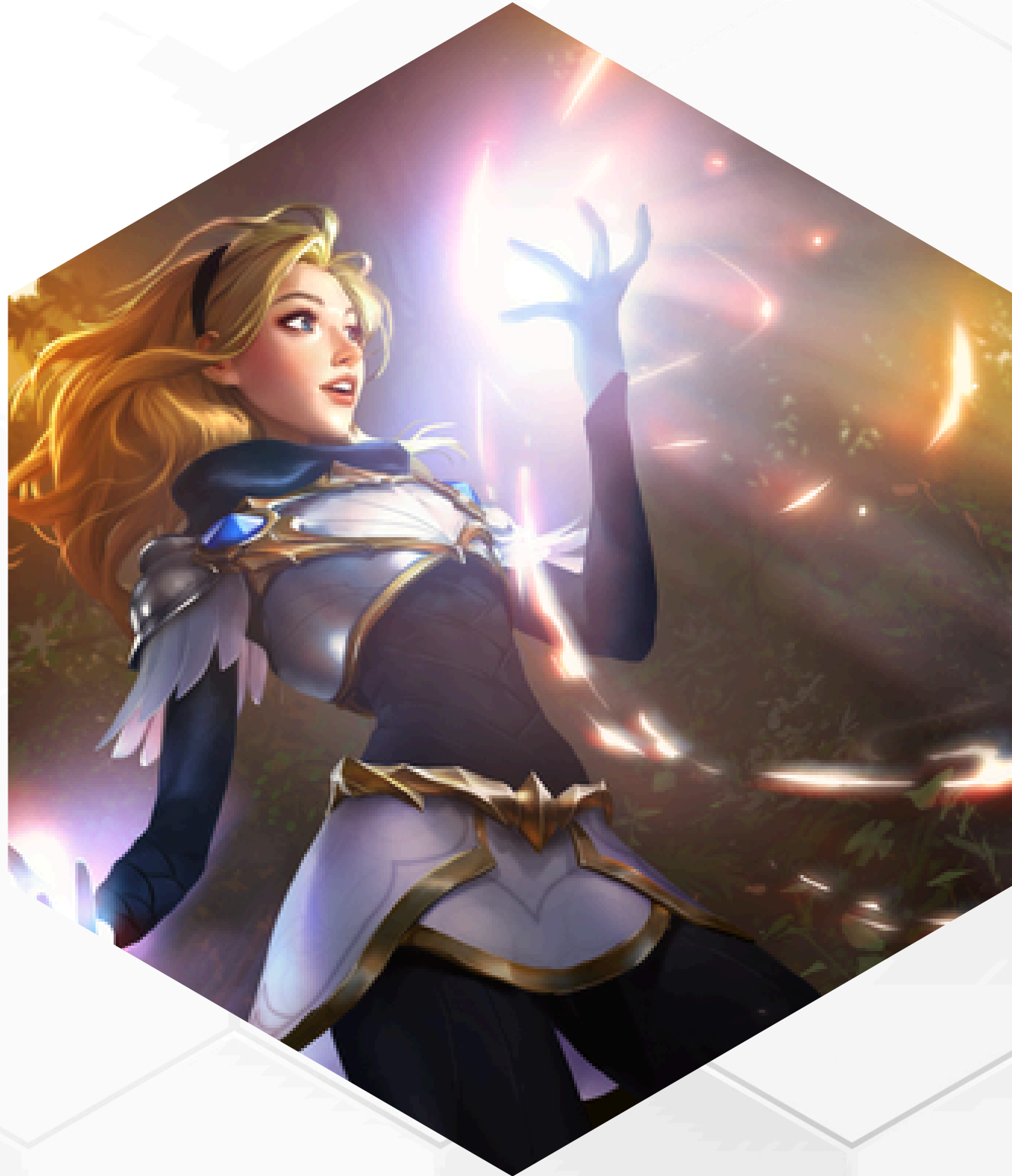




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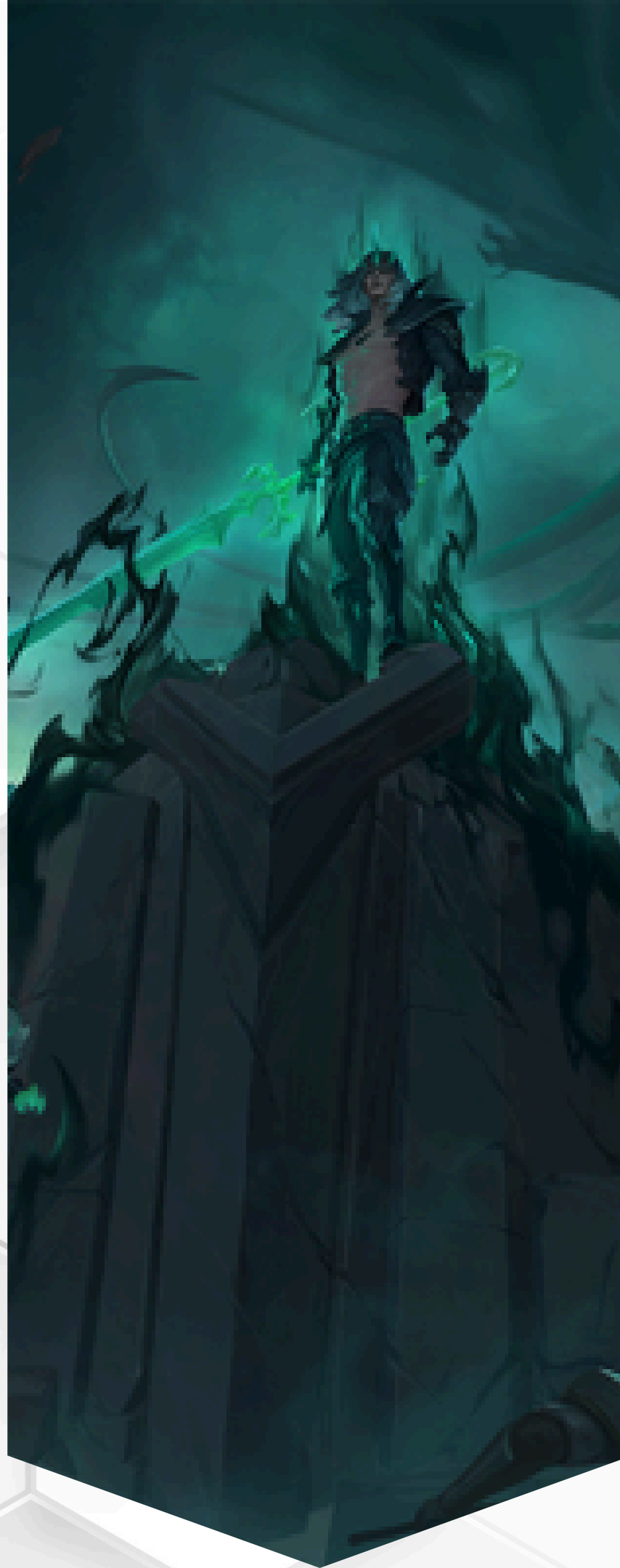
Region Expressions

- **What is it?:** A format that identifies thematic sub-identities within each region that control which cards can be played together in PvP.
- **Why?:** To keep all cards playable, introduce creative deck-building constraints, and prevent unhealthy combos without bans or rotations.
- **Design Goals:**
 - Keep every card viable (no global bans/rotations).
 - Add meaningful constraints that shape deck identities.
 - Avoid degenerate cross-region synergies.
 - Maintain a clear competitive format distinct from casual modes.

How It Works

Region Expression Tags:

- Some cards are tagged with a Region Expression. Each region has multiple possible “expressions” (sub-identities).



Example 1: Ionian Expressions

- Negation
- Recall
- Mana-Manipulation

Example 2: Piltover & Zaun Expressions

- Discount
- Cloning
- Throwaway

Example 3: Bandle City Expressions

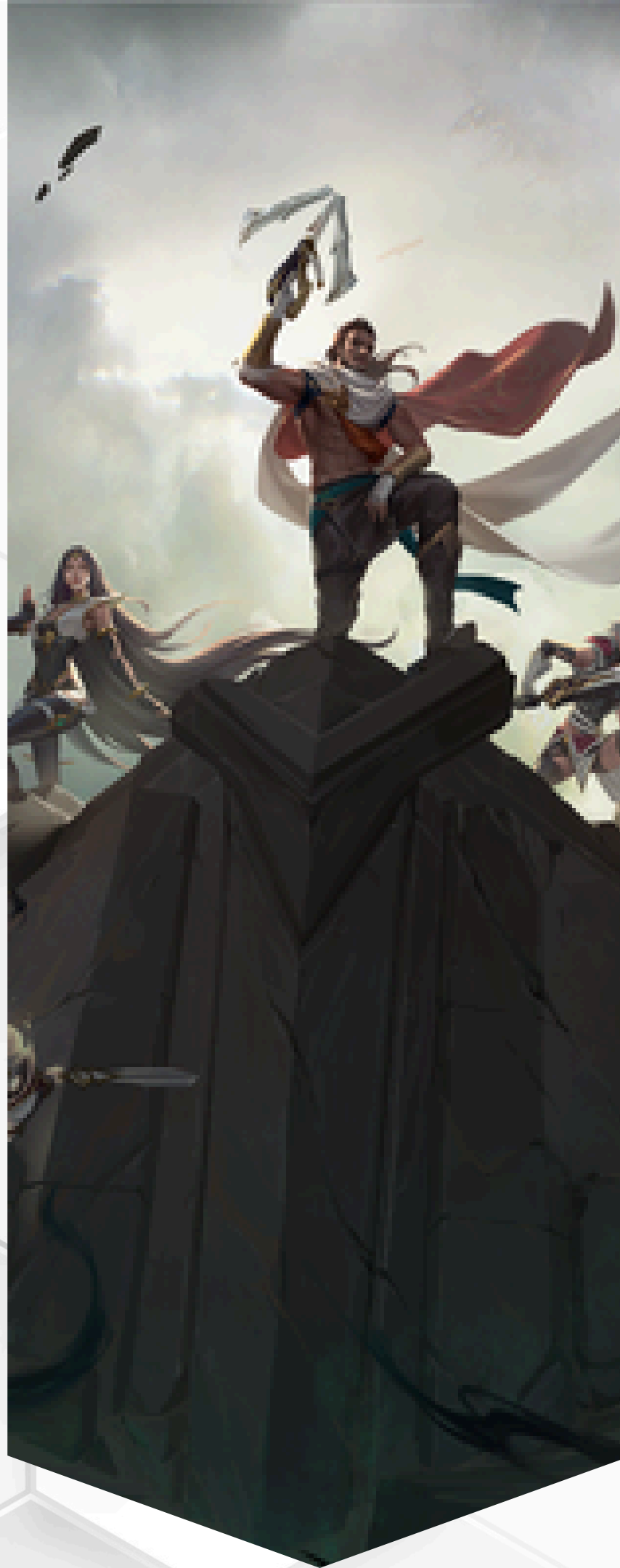
- Discard
- Prank
- Copy

Example 1:

Adding Deny (tagged as “Negation”) prevents inclusion of Ionia cards tagged with “Mana-Manipulation” (like ‘coin’ generators) because they are both Ionian Expressions.

Example 2:

Adding Sunken Temple (tagged as “Discount”) prevents inclusion of certain Piltover & Zaun cards tagged with “Cloning” (like Evil Imperfectionist or Counterfeit Copies).



One Expression Per Region

Cards without Region Expression tags can be freely included in deck-building.

- When deck-building, if you include a card with a Region Expression tag, you may not include cards from a different expression in that same region.
- Most cards will **NOT** have a Region Expression Tag.
- It is possible for a region to **NOT** have Region Expression Tag Cards.

Cross-Region Restrictions

Certain powerful cross-region combos may also be restricted.

- This maintains fun expression identities while removing unhealthy combos.
 - Example: Heisho, Shell of the World (Ionia: Mana Manipulation) + Spectral Matron (Shadow Isles: Revive/Ephemeral) = Banned Region Expression Synergy.



Champions & Dual-Region Cards

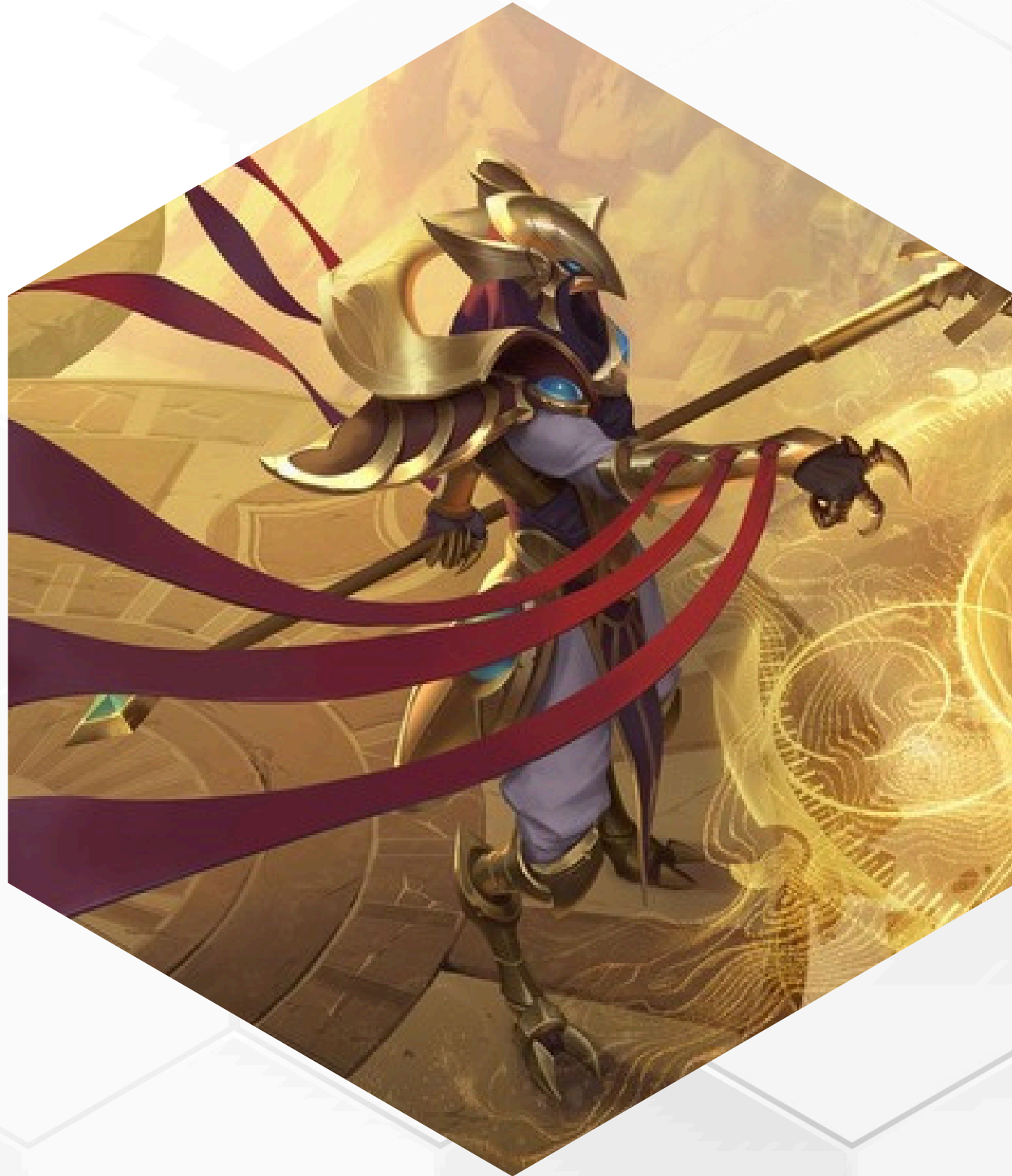
Champions may carry expression tags.

- This guides their intended archetypes while reducing power creep.

Dual-Region Cards:

- If a dual-region card has an expression tag for one of its regions, the restriction applies only if you select that region for deck construction.
 - **Example:** An Ionia/Noxus dual card tagged with an Ionia expression only restricts you if Ionia is one of your regions. If you build as Noxus + another region, the Ionian tag is irrelevant.

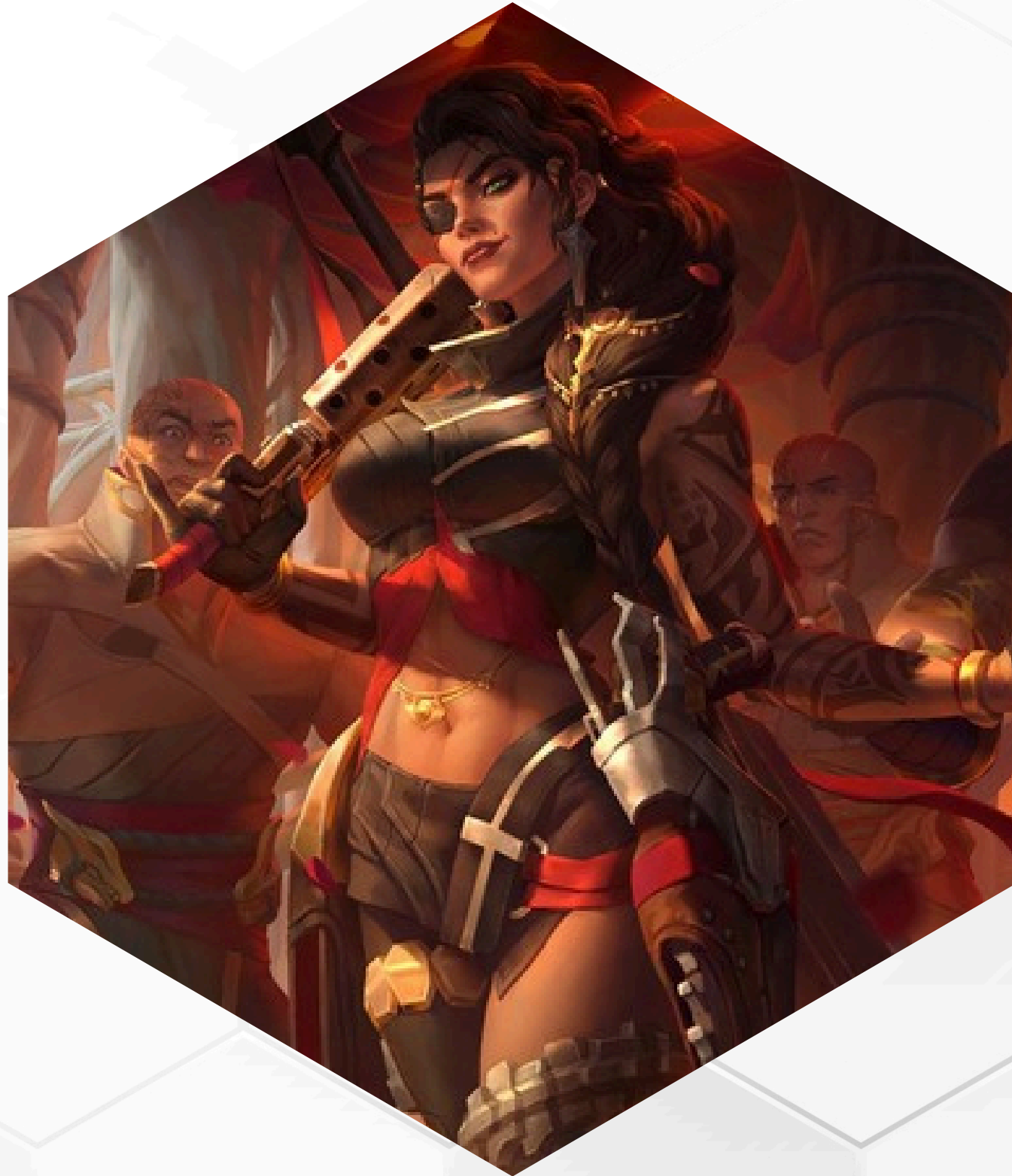




Multi-Expression Cards

Some cards may carry multiple expression tags if they're particularly strong or overlap design space.

- **Example:** Aloof Travelers, tagged as Scavenge (Bandle City) and Scrap (Piltover & Zaun). Its dual tag limits cross-region pairing of discard and hand-control effects, keeping Aloof strong but stopping double-dip disruption between both regions.



Generated Cards

Specific generation (Ex: "Create a copy of X") overrides expression restrictions so the generated card functions as printed.

- However, random generation respects expression restrictions (it won't randomly generate a card that would create an illegal expression pairing).
 - **Note:** *This only applies if this format is successful and changes are made in-client.*

Benefits & Outcomes

Adds depth to deck-building without outright bans or rotations and encourages diverse strategies and exploration of underplayed archetypes.

Competitive Integrity

- Prevents unhealthy combos that dominate metas.
- Establishes Ranked as reflection of competitive play (like LoL and TFT), but keeps casual modes unaffected.



Retention & Return

- Players who loved specific champions/cards can still play them.
- No “feels bad” rotations → all cards remain viable.

Design Freedom

- Developers can safely design new champions/cards without risk of cloning or power creep.
- Clear archetype identities evolve with lore.



Expressions Per Region Chart

Bandle City

- Scavenge (Discard)
- Mischief (Prank)
- Duplicate (Copy)

Bilgewater

- Sleight (Draw)

Demacia

- Advance (Rally)
- Purge (Curse)
- Skyborn (Dragon)

Freljord

- Icebound (Obliterate)
- Ascend (Ramp)

Ionia

- Balance (Mana-Manipulation)
- Discipline (Negation)
- Reprise (Recall)

Noxus

(None at this time.)

Piltover & Zaun

- Replicate (Cloning)
- Innovate (Discount)
- Scrap (Throwaway)

Shadow Isles

- Decay (Deck-Disruption)
- Vanquish (Kill)
- Haunt (Revive or Ephemeral)

Targon

- Cosmos (Invoke)

Shurima

- Refute (Negation)
- Temporal (Landmark)

Bandle City

- **Scavenge (Discard):**
 - Represents discard-as-value tools. Scavenge is isolated from both recursion (Haunt) and cloning (Replicate) since historically, pairing discard engines with revive or cloning (Ex: Aloof Travelers loops) led to unhealthy infinite-resource states and removal-proof value cycles.
- **Mischief (Prank):**
 - Captures the “trickster” archetype of hand disruption, information play, and soft control. Historically frustrating when combined with tempo tools, the tag ensures Mischief decks remain playful without enabling oppressive synergy.
- **Duplicate (Copy):**
 - Embodies Bandle’s magical mimicry and creation through duplication (Curious Shellfolk, Mirror Mage). Historically oppressive when paired with cloning or mana-cheat effects; this tag preserves creativity without enabling infinite value loops.



Bandle City Card List

Region	Card	Expression 1	Expression 2
Bandle City	Curious Shellfolk	Duplicate	
Bandle City	Mirror Mage	Duplicate	
Bandle City	Aloof Travelers	Scavenge	
Bandle City	Early Bird	Scavenge	
Bandle City	Tricksy Tentacles	Scavenge	
Bandle City	Benenome	Mischief	
Bandle City	Kelp Maidens	Mischief	
Bandle City	Otterpus	Mischief	
Bandle City	Tricket Trade	Mischief	

Bilgewater

- **Sleight:**

- Represents tempo-draw decks (Twisted Fate, Nilah) that once overperformed via multi-region value loops (TF-Ezreal, Nilah-Janna metas). Ensures draw mechanics don't pair with over-efficient discount or mana manipulation engines.

- **Loot ("Placeholder In Case Needed"):**

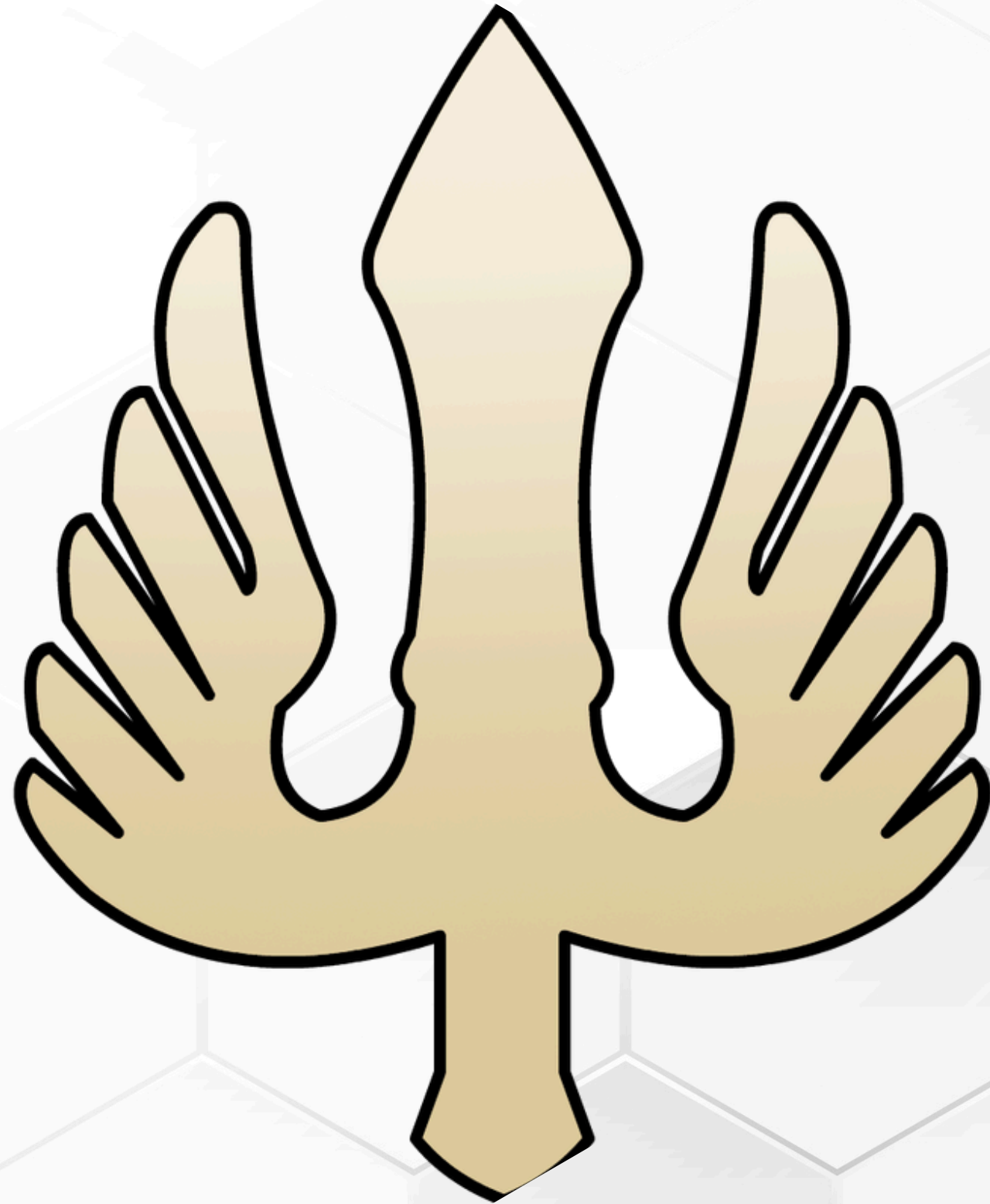
- Reflects Bilgewater's opportunism — stealing or generating value from opponents (Nab). Expected to preserve the fantasy of piracy without destabilizing economy loops.



Bilgewater Card List

Region	Card	Expression 1	Expression 2
Bilgewater	Twisted Fate	Sleight	
Bilgewater	Nilah	Sleight	

Demacia



- **Advance (Rally):**
 - The spirit of relentless offense and coordination. Rally cards define Demacia's tempo dominance but become oppressive when easily splashed. Tagging it limits multi-region rally chains (Taric Aegis loops, Kai'Sa Demacia), maintaining its tactical purity.
- **Purge (Curse):**
 - Represents Mageseeker-style suppression, binding or limiting enemy power. The tag ensures these effects don't overlap with Rally or Recursion, keeping suppression strategic rather than overwhelming.
- **Skyborn:**
 - Represents Demacia's elite aerial and battlefield-finisher units, focusing on powerful late-game threats that reward fair deployment. The tag prevents these high-impact payoffs from being accelerated or repeatedly cheated into play through recursion effects.

Demacia Card List

Region	Card	Expression 1	Expression 2
Demacia	Mageseeker Inquisitor	Purge	
Demacia	Magical Fettering	Purge	
Demacia	Golden Aegis	Advance	
Demacia	Relentless Pursuit	Advance	
Demacia	Cloud Drake	Skyborn	
Demacia	Alatis The Gallant	Skyborn	
Demacia	Dragonguard Lookout	Skyborn	
Demacia	Cithria, Lady of the Clouds	Skyborn	

Freljord

- **Ascend (Ramp):**

- Symbolizes Freljord's ancient strength and growth over time. Ramp cards (Voices of the Old Ones, Catalyst of Aeons) embody patience and inevitability. The tag isolates scaling mechanics that, when combined with denial or protection, led to historically oppressive control decks (FTR Ionia 2022).

- **Icebound (Obliterate):**

- Captures the raw destructive power of the Freljord (Ex: She Who Wanders, Buried in Ice). Tagging these cards ensures board wipes remain high-stakes tools for control, not repeatable effects through recursion or discounts.



Freljord Card List

Region	Card	Expression 1	Expression 2
Freljord	Buried in Ice	Icebound	
Freljord	It That Stares	Icebound	
Freljord	She Who Wanders	Icebound	
Freljord	Catalyst of Aeons	Ascend	
Freljord	Voices of the Old Ones	Ascend	
Freljord	Wild Mysticism	Ascend	
Freljord	Winter's Touch	Ascend	
Freljord	Wyrding Stones	Ascend	
Freljord	Hunting Boar	Ascend	

Ionia



- **Discipline (Negation):**

- Represents Ionia's philosophy of balance through opposition: Deny, Nopeify!, Empyrean Dance. This tag prevents negation from combining with mana acceleration, cost reduction, or protection cards from other regions, all of which historically produced stalling metas.

- **Balance (Mana Manipulation):**

- Reflects Ionia's mastery of flow and energy control: Coins, Place Your Bets, Smooth Mixologist. Isolated to prevent tempo snowballing or endless mana loops.
 - **Dual-Tag Note:** Tag Out! is both Balance and Reprise, since it recalls and generates a coin, meaning players must choose which Ionia expression to commit to when deck-building.

- **Reprise (Recall):**

- Focuses on Ionia's return-and-reset playstyle (Will of Ionia, Homecoming). It's a flexible tool that thrives on timing, not infinite value. Tagging it separately preserves its tactical nature while avoiding cross-region recursion exploits.

Ionia Card List

Region	Card	Expression 1	Expression 2
Ionia	Facebreaker	Balance	
Ionia	Heisho, Shell of the World	Balance	
Ionia	Pit Professional	Balance	
Ionia	Place Your Bets	Balance	
Ionia	Serene Sky-Singer	Balance	
Ionia	Smooth Mixologist	Balance	
Ionia	Tag Out!	Balance	Reprise
Ionia	The Round About Path	Balance	
Ionia	The Heart of the Tree	Balance	
Ionia	Attentive Accountant	Balance	
Ionia	All Seeing Oracle	Discipline	
Ionia	Deny	Discipline	
Ionia	Empyrean Dance	Discipline	Reprise
Ionia	Nopeify!	Discipline	
Ionia	Defiant Dance	Reprise	
Ionia	Homecoming	Reprise	
Ionia	Unworthy Soul	Reprise	
Ionia	Will of Ionia	Reprise	
Ionia	Windsinger	Reprise	
Ionia	Capsize	Reprise	

Noxus

- **NONE AT THIS TIME:**
 - **Fury (“Placeholder In Case Needed”):**
 - Will eventually encapsulate Noxus’s philosophy of power through aggression and self-harm. Expected to limit synergy with recursion or stall tools, ensuring Noxian identity remains direct, explosive, and finite.



Noxus Card List

Region	Card	Expression 1	Expression 2
Noxus	???	Fury	

Piltover & Zaun



- **Innovate (Discount):**

- Captures PNZ's cost-cutting, efficiency-engine identity. These effects let you play ahead of curve. Cross-region bans with Ionia's Discipline and Shurima's Refute exist because historically, cost-cheat + denial/protection creates control shells that are basically untouchable.

- **Replicate (Cloning):**

- Represents scientific imitation (Ex: Evil Imperfectionist). Historically abused with recursion to create infinite boards (Ex: Maokai Mill Loops), so this tag disallows pairing with Decay (Shadow Isles).

- **Scrap (Throwaway):**

- Represents discard and hand-disruption tools like Aloof Travelers. It weaponizes throwing cards away, denying win conditions or controlling tempo through forced discard. The tag isolates this style from cloning or resurrection decks that could repeat the effect endlessly, keeping disruption impactful but fair.

Piltover & Zaun Card List

Region	Card	Expression 1	Expression 2
Piltover & Zaun	Counterfeit Copies	Replicate	
Piltover & Zaun	Evil Imperfectionist	Replicate	
Piltover & Zaun	Iterative Improvement	Replicate	
Piltover & Zaun	Practical Perfectionist	Replicate	
Piltover & Zaun	Drum Solo	Innovate	
Piltover & Zaun	Back Alley Bar	Innovate	
Piltover & Zaun	Maryam, Temple Caretaker	Innovate	
Piltover & Zaun	Piltovan Tellstones	Innovate	
Piltover & Zaun	Progress Day	Innovate	
Piltover & Zaun	Sunken Temple	Innovate	
Piltover & Zaun	The Candlelit Prayer	Innovate	
Piltover & Zaun	Aloof Travelers	Scrap	
Piltover & Zaun	Most Wanted	Scrap	
Piltover & Zaun	Officer Squad	Scrap	

Shadow Isles

- **Haunt (Revive or Ephemeral):**
 - Captures the necromantic recursion of Shadow Isles (Ex: The Rekindler, Spectral Matron, Mordekaiser). Prevents endless resurrection when paired with cloning or mana acceleration.
- **Decay (Deck Disruption):**
 - Decay captures the deck-erosion style tied to Watery Grave that weaponizes mill loops. The tag exists to prevent degeneracy with cloning or copying mechanics, keeping mill and recursion strategies fair without limiting Maokai's broader synergy potential.
- **Vanquish (Kill):**
 - Vanquish represents Shadow Isles' decisive, high-impact kill effects, focusing on permanent removal tools like Vengeance and The Ruination that define its attrition-based control identity.



Shadow Isles Card List

Region	Card	Expression 1	Expression 2
Shadow Isles	Watery Grave	Decay	
Shadow Isles	The Ruination	Vanquish	
Shadow Isles	Vengeance	Vanquish	
Shadow Isles	Dawning Shadow	Vanquish	
Shadow Isles	Realm of Death	Vanquish	
Shadow Isles	Eradication	Vanquish	
Shadow Isles	Utter Devastation	Vanquish	
Shadow Isles	Chronicler of Ruin	Haunt	
Shadow Isles	Legion of the Severed	Haunt	
Shadow Isles	Mordekaiser	Haunt	Vanquish
Shadow Isles	Spectral Matron	Haunt	
Shadow Isles	The Rekindler	Haunt	
Shadow Isles	The Harrowing	Haunt	
Shadow Isles	Shadow Isles Tellstones	Haunt	Vanquish
Shadow Isles	Spirit Journey	Haunt	Vanquish
Shadow Isles	Soul Cleave	Haunt	
Shadow Isles	Mist's Call	Haunt	

Shurima



- **Refute (Negation):**

- Represents Shurima's spiritual defense. When paired with denial or discounts, it created near-unbreakable protection. The restrictions with Discipline, Innovate, Ascend, and Cosmos ensure Refute functions as a unique, situational safeguard rather than a hard lockdown tool.

- **Temporal (Landmark)**

- Encapsulates Shurima's manipulation of time and relics through Zilean and Akshan. Landmark interactions historically led to infinite loops when combined with cloning or recursion (Ex: Akshan-PNZ Iterative Improvement). The tag isolates this to maintain Shurima's thematic identity of time manipulation, not abuse of it.

Shurima Card List

Region	Card	Expression 1	Expression 2
Shurima	Avenging Vastaya	Refute	
Shurima	Rite of Negation	Refute	
Shurima	Akshan	Temporal	
Shurima	Zilean	Temporal	
Shurima	The Emperor's Army	Temporal	

Targon

- **Cosmos (Invoke):**

- Represents Targon's celestial creation: Aurelion Sol, Starshaping, Celestial Trifecta. Invoke decks have historically defined infinite-value metas. Adding a Region Expression Tag and Cross-Region Restrictions (Cosmos × Discipline, Cosmos × Refute) prevent double-protection loops and coin-based stalls, ensuring celestial power feels earned, not endless.



Targon Card List

Region	Card	Expression 1	Expression 2
Targon	Aurelion Sol	Cosmos	
Targon	Celestial Trifecta	Cosmos	
Targon	Cosmic Call	Cosmos	
Targon	Mountain Scryer	Cosmos	
Targon	Starshaping	Cosmos	

Cross-Region Restrictions Chart

Region A	Expression A	Region B	Expression B	Rationale
	Scavenge		Haunt	Prevents discard from feeding revive loops & inevitability engines.
	Ascend		Cosmos	Prevents Ramp from fueling infinite celestial value loops (<i>FTR-ASol</i> control shells).
	Ascend		Discipline	Blocks “Ramp + Deny” lockouts (<i>FTR-Ionia Control 2022</i>).
	Ascend		Refute	Stops “Ramp + Rite of Negation” shells that created unbreakable late-game boards.
	Icebound		Innovate	Prevents discounted board wipes like <i>Buried in Ice</i> from locking out tempo decks.
	Discipline		Innovate	Avoids “Turbo-Control” shells combining cost-cheat and denial (<i>Karma-Sett-PNZ 2023</i>).
	Discipline		Refute	Prevents double-protection setups that erase interaction (<i>Kai'Sa Controlmetas</i>).
	Discipline		Cosmos	Disallows infinite celestial + Deny loops (<i>ASol-Ionia 2021</i>).
	Balance		Haunt	Stops Coin-generation decks from endlessly reviving units.
	Reprise		Refute	Avoids Recall + Rite double-denial decks.

Cross-Region Restrictions Chart

Region A	Expression A	Region B	Expression B	Rationale
	Skyborn		Ascend	Stops Elder Dragon spikes from Cloud Drake + Alatis when combined with Ramp.
	Balance		Ascend	Stops Coin + Ramp synergy from producing “infinite-turn” decks.
	Innovate		Refute	Prevents cost-reduction + negation shells that invalidate midrange play.
	Innovate		Sleight	Prevents draw engines from pairing with cost reduction, limiting explosive Nilah/Twisted Fate tempo turns enabled by Sunken Temple.
	Replicate		Decay	Prevents infinite recursion / self-mill loops (Maokai–PNZ Imperfectionist 2022).
	Replicate		Temporal	Stops infinite landmark duplication through Zilean / Akshan synergies.
	Replicate		Scavenge	Stops discard fueling infinite duplication/value chains.
	Scrap		Haunt	Stops discard engines from refueling undead recursion decks.
	Vanquish		Ascend	Prevents cheap or infinite kill + ramp loops, maintaining cost integrity.
	Refute		Cosmos	Stops double-protection value decks (Invoke + Rite) from dominating.
	Refute		Innovate	Prevents cost-cheat + protection loops that remove counterplay.

Region Expressions Balance Ethos

Region Expressions exist to preserve regional identity while preventing the historically abusive cross-region combos that once warped Runeterra's meta. The goal isn't to delete power, it's to keep power fair and intentional.

- **Example:** Aloof Travelers – Tagged as Scavenge (Bandle City) AND Scrap (Piltover & Zaun). Its dual tag limits cross-region pairing of discard and hand-control effects, keeping Aloof strong but stopping double-dip disruption between both regions.

How We Evaluate & Restrict Mechanics:

We use four principles when assigning expressions and restrictions:

1. Protect Region Identity

- a. Signature mechanics stay playable within their region unless they have proven unhealthy when paired externally.

2. Block Known Degenerate Pairings

- a. If a past synergy created non-interactive loops, infinite value, or unavoidable inevitability, that pairing is separated.

3. Allow Power With Guardrails

- a. Not every strong synergy is removed; the goal is channeling power, not flattening it.

4. Preserve Player Agency & Counterplay

- a. When a mechanic removes meaningful decision-making from the opponent, it gets a closer look.

*TL;DR: Regions can still be strong, they just don't get to break too many rules.



Region Expressions Balance Ethos (Cont'd)

Why Some Expressions Seem Broad:

- Some cards are grouped by function, not flavor because the impact pattern matters more than the theme.
 - **Example:** Spectral Matron sits with revive engines not only because of “revive fantasy,” but because it shares the same cheat-tempo / recursion abuse profile.
- Sometimes:
 - One tag covers multiple mechanical flavors
 - A card fits because of competitive impact, not lore alone

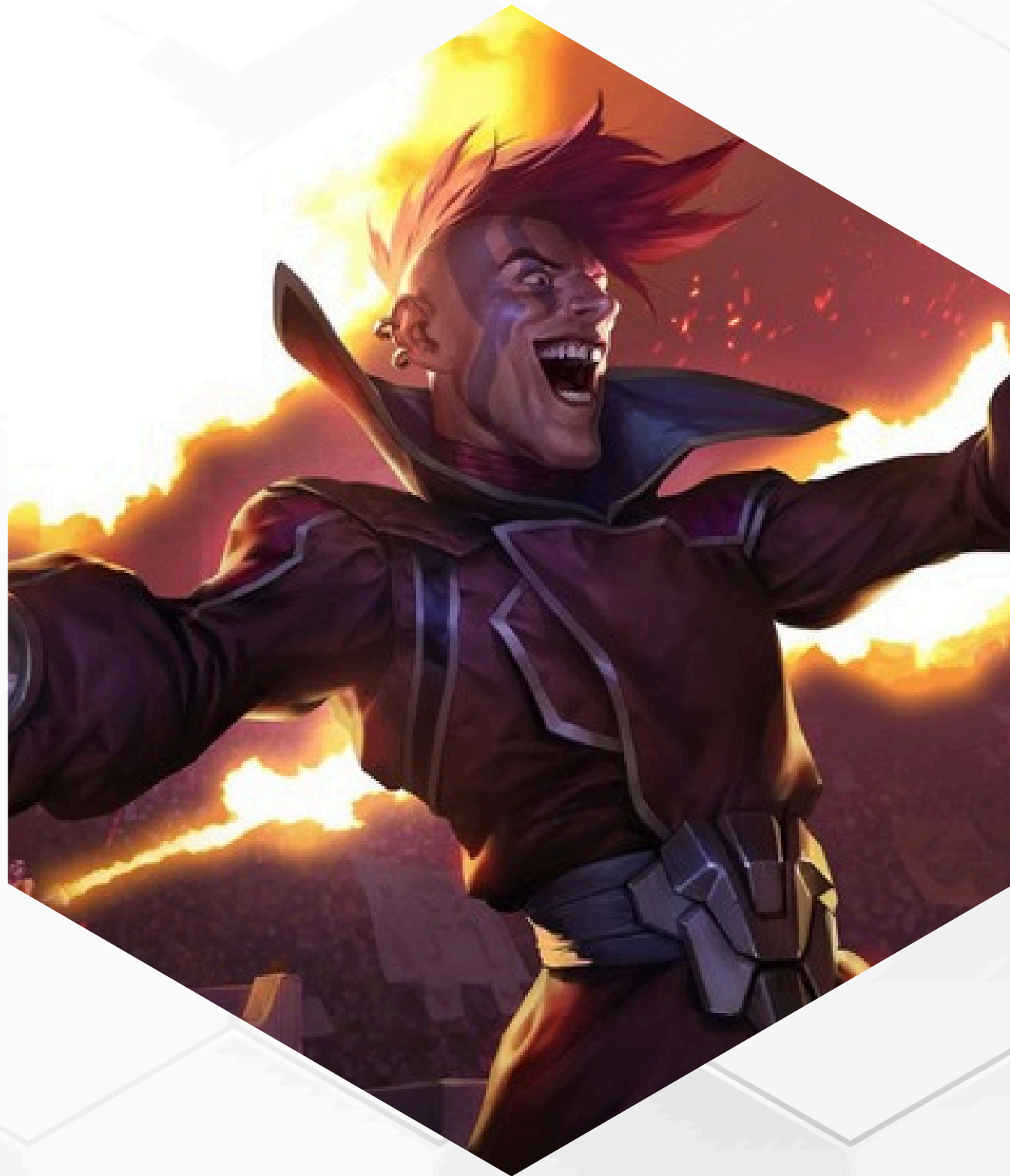
*This is intentional. **Affinity and Purpose > Aesthetics.** We'd rather over-protect the format early than risk recreating past meta failures.

Player-Driven Refinement:

- This system is flexible, not rigid.
- If data shows a restriction isn't needed, or an expression needs re-shaping, we will adjust.
- We commit to:
 - Listening to competitive/community feedback
 - Evaluating real meta data
 - Re-tuning expressions as needed



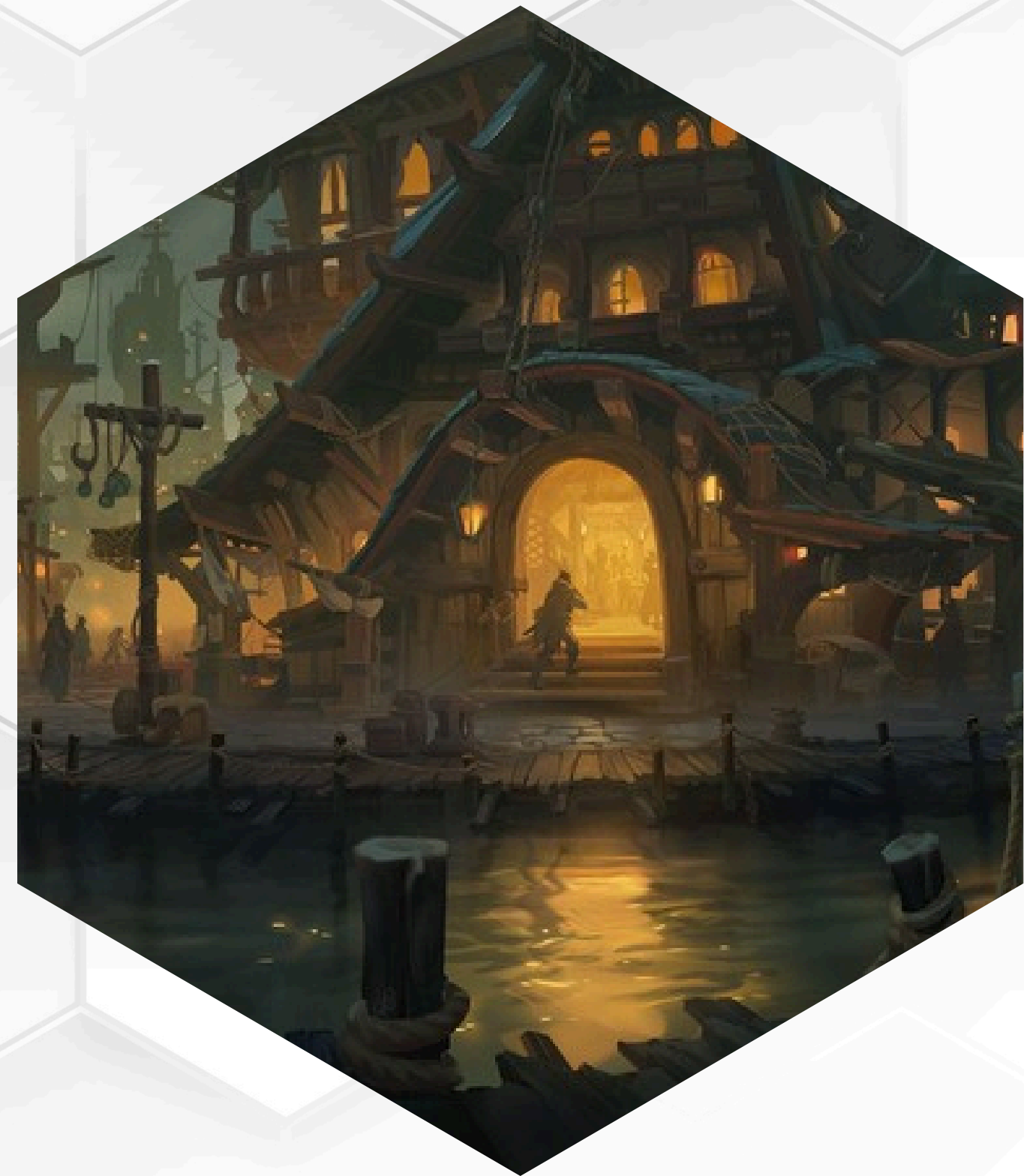
FAQs



- **Q1: Do Region Expressions redefine how regions play?**
 - No. Region Expressions are not new archetypes or play patterns. They are deckbuilding guardrails designed to prevent problematic card combinations. The vast majority of cards remain untagged and unaffected, so regions still play the way you know them (Bandle = swarm/pings, Freljord = ramp/frostbite, Noxus = burn/aggro, etc.).
- **Q2: What happens if a region only has one expression?**
 - Regions with only one expression (Ex: Targon's Invoke) are essentially unrestricted within themselves. All Targonian cards can be played together. The expression exists mainly to prevent cross-region synergies (Ex: Invoke + Freljord Ramp) that have historically broken the meta.

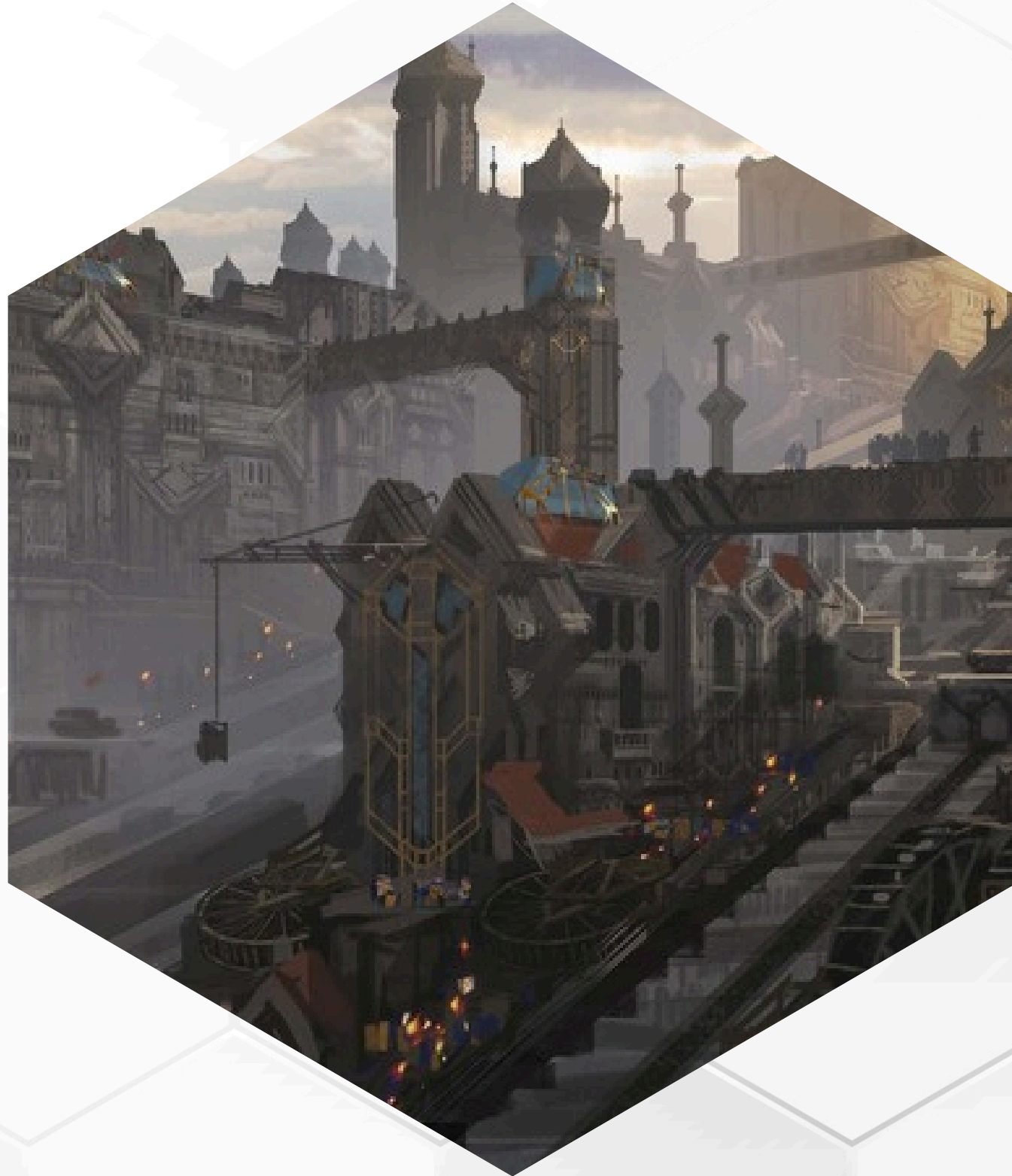
FAQs (cont'd)

- **Q3: How do Runeterra champions (like Ryze or Bard) interact with Region Expressions?**
 - Runeterra champions that expand deckbuilding options are still bound by the “one expression per region” rule.
 - Example: If you’re building a Ryze deck and want to add both Deny (Negation) and Place Your Bets (Mana Manipulation) from Ionia, you must choose one. Once you include one tag, the other expression becomes unavailable for that region.
- **Q4: Can a card belong to more than one expression?**
 - Yes, some cards may carry multiple expression tags if their power level or mechanics would otherwise cause oppressive synergies.
Example: Aloof Travelers is dual-tagged (Bundle “Discard” and PnZ “Throwaway”) to reflect its strength and dual-region nature.



FAQs (cont'd)

- **Q5: Does this system remove cards from play?**
 - No. Every card in LoR remains playable. Expressions only restrict which tagged cards can be combined in the same deck. Untagged cards are freely playable in any deck.
- **Q6: Why not just rotate or ban cards instead?**
 - Rotation and bans remove cards from play entirely. Region Expressions keep all cards legal while targeting only the most problematic combinations. This means older cards stay viable, and the card pool feels more open without devolving into broken metas.
- **Q7: Isn't this too restrictive? Won't it kill creativity?**
 - Actually, it's the opposite. By dampening only unhealthy combos, Region Expressions open more space for new deck ideas. Players are still free to build with 90%+ of the card pool as normal, but now they must make meaningful tradeoffs if they want to include certain powerful cards.



FAQs (cont'd)

- **Q8: What happens when a new set releases?**
 - New cards are added freely unless they create problematic synergies. If that happens, our balance team can assign them an Expression tag, which is far lighter and more flexible than changing rules, banning, or rotating.
- **Q9: How do dual-region cards work with expressions?**
 - Dual-region cards carry the expression tag of whichever region the tag is associated with. When you include that card in your deck, the restriction applies as if it came from that tagged region.
- **Q10: Will expressions ever change?**
 - Yes. Tags are flexible and can be updated based on community feedback, meta health, and balance needs. The goal is to adaptively fine-tune problem areas, not lock regions into permanent sub-archetypes.



FAQs (cont'd)

- **Q11: Is this just for PvP, or does it affect casual play and PvE too?**
 - Region Expressions apply only to competitive play formats (grassroots tournaments and other independent initiatives).
- **Q12: How will players know what's legal?**
 - An official Deck Validator will be provided to the community with searchable lists, drop-downs, and filters to check deck legality. Over time, the goal is to have this integrated into the client for ease of use.
- **Q13: What if my favorite deck becomes unplayable because of an expression conflict?**
 - Most decks won't be affected since the majority of cards don't carry expression tags. If your favorite deck does get caught in a conflict, you'll still be able to play a very similar version, just with one or two key card choice adjusted. Expressions are designed to dampen only the most broken combos, not invalidate whole decks or play styles.



FAQs (cont'd)

- **Q14: How do you decide which synergies are “too strong”?**
 - Expressions are based on both historical data (decks that dominated or warped past metas) and player feedback. If a combo consistently feels oppressive or reduces variety, it may get tagged. If it's fun and healthy, it stays untouched. This system is flexible and will evolve with community input. *Check out the Region Expressions Balance Ethos (pg. 34 - 35) for more.*
- **Q15: If adopted by Riot, will PvP play have different expression rules than ladder?**
 - No. Ranked Ladder and official tournaments would follow the same expression rules. This keeps the competitive environment consistent and ensures players can practice on ladder for events without running into different restrictions.

