

The Shadowstep

Theory and practices of Shadowmagic

Prologue

Shadows. Areas obscured from light.

They actually have no relevance to the practicality of the ever so mysterious shadowstep.

What they do have in common, however, is that both shadows and the origin of the shadowstep are both the lack of something, instead of anything at all.

A shadow is simply put; the lack of light. It's the most visible non-existence of something in the world. The magic behind the shadowstep is no different. It's defined by nothing, instead of something, which allows the user to become nothing before reappearing in an entirely new location.

The theories within these teachings are entirely those of the author of said teachings; Thexin. Asura, born and raised in the old city of Lion's Arch. My training in shadowmagic began shortly after I turned fourteen, when I broke into my soon-to-be mentor's living space in search of coin and supplies to survive. Ofcourse, a homeless Asuran kid doesn't sneak into the home of a trained assassin without getting caught, but I was lucky. He offered me a chance to become something more than just a poor street rat. I took it and started my training the very next day.

Now, fifteen years later, I am writing these teachings to prevent them from being lost forever. I've mastered the ability to great potential, though there is always more to learn and experiment with. Sadly, I have never been able to achieve invisibility. It's one application of shadowmagic that will not be covered within these teachings and a talent I have yet to acquire myself.

Thread lightly into the shadows, however, there are those in disagreement with the usual application of these practices. Remember that even the dark can be used for good.

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Chapter 1 – Shadowmagic

All magic origins from bending the ambient arcane energies to your will, to reshape reality. How they utilize magic in practice differs greatly amongst individuals. To my personal experience, casting magic is much alike moving your muscles. You don't actively think about it, you simply will it to be so.

Shadowmagic is no different in this regard and follows the same basic rules of magic, as any other school. Both concentration and gestures are required to step through shadows.

Shadowmagic is a branch of the magic school of Denial. It originates from the assassins of Old Cantha, who followed the human deity Lyssa. The practices of these assassins have spread throughout Tyria over the decades and have become a relatively common practice. Some, like me, learnt shadowmagic from a teacher. Others figure it out by themselves, working on their talent, experimentation or innate ability alone.

Mesmer magic has a lot in common with shadowmagic. Mesmer magic follows the school of Denial and is connected to the human deity of Lyssa as well. Both mesmeric and shadow magic utilize deception, trickery, instantaneous relocation and invisibility. They have one critical difference, however. Where the Mesmer works with light and illusions, we work with darkness and shadows.

1.1 The Void

All shadowmagic is deeply connected to what is called the Void. It is yet unclear what the Void is exactly. It could be a realm within the mists where absolutely nothing exists. Perhaps it is something beyond the mists; the mists are everything, the void is nothing. None of these theories are proven, but the existence of this Void, whatever it is, cannot be denied.

Some people carry an innate connection to the void. Those that do are capable of utilizing this connection to execute shadowmagic. You might have this connection even without realizing it yet. Those talented can concentrate on this sensation of absolute nothingness, the complete lack of either warmth or cold, of no emotion and no thoughts. By clearing your mind, by achieving this sensation of nothing, you perceive the Void itself. In time, it becomes a familiar feeling,

something to access on a whim.

The following theory is one which I've personally been taught, and have confirmed by what I've perceived from my own many practices. When something shadowpasses from one location to another, they enter this Void for less than a fraction of a second, before being pulled back into our reality. Nothing can remain within the void for longer. It's a place where nothing exists. The existence of anything is cast out almost immediately.

The dark wisps often visible with the use of shadowmagic are the magical energies originating from this Void. They appear from the tears you create in reality, and move according to the way you've shaped your use of the shadowmagic. A practiced user might be able to bend and control these wisps in more specific ways, perhaps even to establish dark illusions. Some years ago, I encountered something that looked like an illusionary figure made up out of shadowmagic, detailed enough to look like an actual person. I've never confirmed whether it actually was an use of shadowmagic, or something else, and have never encountered anything like it.

1.2 Shadowpass

My mentor taught me an uncommon name for the ability we use. Instead of a shadowstep, he called it a shadowpass on an abstract level. The act of any object entering and being cast out the void, whether it be a person or an item, would be called a shadowpass. If it refers specifically to one or multiple persons, the term shadowstep is used, as the individuals themselves choose to step through the void. There is little differences to the actual mechanics between the two, though a shadowpass does not cast a living soul into the void, while a shadowstep does.

Any shadowpass has two key elements. The entry and the exit.

The entry is relatively easy to achieve. Once you are able to concentrate on the sensation of shadowmagic, you can leap into the void with almost any gesture. The most common gesture used is an actual step forward with your feet, as it is most in tune with your instinctual knowledge of movement. Over time, you can develop your own gestures to entering the Void. I have narrowed my gesture down to almost nothing, allowing me to use it even while completely restrained in the blink of an eye.

We do not think about walking, running or leaping. You instinctively know how to do so. In time, this will apply to the shadowstep as well. You simply take that step, without having to think logically about the act of doing so.

Once entered, the void will immediatly cast you out into reality again. If unfocused, your return will be uncontrolled, chaotic and most likely highly random. It is often vaguely in the direction you were already moving to, or within a small area of your previous location if standing still. If instead you use a clear mind to concentrate on where you wish to go, your willpower bends the fabric of reality, allowing you to be cast out at the desired position.

Chapter 2 – Limits of the Arcane

All use of magic drains both the body and mind considerably. The extended or heavy use of magic can leave one entirely exhausted, unable to even stand on his own two feet. Being mindful of your limits is essential in any situation regarding magic, as magic becomes more chaotic as your energy and concentration runs out.

2.1 Shadowpass Toll

With shadowpasses, there are two largely defining factors that lead to energy drain. Power and precision. The more of either, the faster you'll be fatigued.

The amount of raw arcane power you'll need is mostly defined by the amount of mass you wish to relocate, the true distance to move it and how much resistance it's facing. Resistance can be either physical such as being tied down, magical such as barriers or by the pure willpower of those involved. In my experience, moves requiring raw power drain your physical fatigue more than your mental focus.

The precision required for a shadowpass is defined by the amount of objects, the small size of them or the complexity of an advanced shadowpass which changes your direction, posture, velocity, or execute something unusual. It's also defined by how precise you desire to land at your target, or whether you're using any glyphs. I have deducted that moves requiring precision drain your mental focus more than your body, requiring a greater concentration to accomplish them.

I have personally specialized in the use of precision over power. Without a doubt, there are many shadowmagic users more capable in moving more mass over longer distances, but there are only few more capable than myself in the most complicated variations of the shadowpass.

2.2 Arcane Aura's

Our reality is saturated with ambient magic. Every person, creature and item has a residual aura of magic inherit to itself and what it's been in contact with. Some are able to sense these aura's, but I cannot. It's not within the expertise of most shadowmagic users, but these aura's do affect

our abilities.

You have your own aura. As such, you are completely in tune with yourself. Any shadowmagic you utilize to step through the Void by yourself will be relatively easy.

When you try to shadowstep something that does not carry your aura, or is that of someone else, it becomes much more difficult to do so. When a creature is actively hostile to you and unwilling to shadowstep with you, it becomes incredibly challenging to take the creature with you into the Void. Any magic is affected by the willpower of those afflicted. Their willpower counters their entry to the Void, increasing the resistance you'll face when you try to force them through.

This is also in effect when you shadowstep towards or from someone. Their arcane aura acts much as a dampening field, preventing your connection to the void from forming an exit-point. This is the main reason why it's nearly impossible to shadowstep into point-blank range to someone, dagger already at their throat.

When someone has grabbed hold of you, it becomes much more difficult to escape that grasp with a shadowstep as well. This is due to both the physical limitation of being grabbed, their unwillingness to join you through the void and their aura.

But there's good news to these aura's as well. Items you interact with or carry with you a lot will take on your residual aura, lowering the amount of resistance you'll face when you attempt to cast them into the Void.

The people that regard you as a friend become easier to take with you in a shadowstep, and it might become easier to shadowstep towards them. Your endured presence together brings your aura's in tune with each other, harmonizing your natural energy, lessening the resistance you face with the shadowpass.

At the time of writing, I am currently experimenting with a new ability regarding this. Pushing my own arcane aura onto an item, so I can more easily access it. The practice is not unlike applying an imprecise shadowmark by the act of holding the item. If perfected, it would allow me to become instantly in tune with an item at the cost of some fatigue.

Chapter 3 – Specialized Applications

Many are familiar with the basic shadowstep. Disappearing from one point, appearing in another. Aside from this use of shadowmagic, there are many more variations. Your imagination is the limit, with understanding of the theoretical mechanics behind the shadowpass, anything is possible.

Of the below, any number of combinations are also possible. Note, however, that the more complicated your magic use becomes, the higher the chance of failure, inaccuracy and impact on your fatigue. Be mindful of your own limits.

3.1 Position, Direction and Velocity

When an object passes through the void normally, only its position changes. Your direction within our world remains the same as before. It is important to keep this in mind, as you might want to turn yourself around before your shadowstep. Your velocity remains the same as well. If you enter a shadowstep with a leap or a fall, you can expect to come out the shadowstep with a leap or a fall.

It is however possible to change more than only the position. A practiced shadowmagic user might change direction, or even posture, in the middle of his shadowstep. Turn from casually sitting on the ground to a ready combat posture in the blink of an eye, or quickly relocate to behind your opponent, already facing in his direction.

Or the user might mend velocity within the void. Stopping a lethal drop from a cliff, darting from standing still to a powerful leap, or throwing yourself upwards into the air. Adjusting velocity is by far one of the most challenging applications, requiring a great deal of arcane power.

The user might also have learnt to move vertically, instead of only on the ground. Shadowstepping on top of a steep cliff, tall building or even in the middle of open air before falling down to surprise your foes. This application is relatively more common.

The possible variations with these more advanced abilities are endless, but with any amount of

added complexity and strain it is expected to drain both your mental and physical strength within moments.

3.2 Item Relocation

It's possible to not only step yourself through the Void, but also any object around yourself. When not stepping through the Void yourself, it is much more difficult to use any distant point away from yourself with any precision. The use of shadowmagic to relocate objects separately from yourself has been dubbed 'projecting' by my mentor. You project your connection to the Void onto a distant point. It's exceedingly more difficult to control and draining to both the mental and physical fatigue.

There are two main methods of this, named Cast and Recall. Both are advanced, high precision shadowpasses. Only small items are reasonable to use this for, as anything too heavy is quickly too draining to throw into the void. As such, recalling or casting other people on a whim is regarded as near impossible. An exception might be possible in a situation where your aura is in great harmony with the target individual, or where a prepared glyph is utilized.

The natural arcane aura of other individuals greatly affects any high precision shadowpasses, including item relocation. As such, it becomes incredibly difficult to project the distant point of the Void near creatures whose aura is not harmonized with your own. Stealing items from their hands, or making them appear at point-blank range will be near impossible.

Cast is the act of sending an object or item on yourself to a distant point. This can be used to quickly deploy smoke pellets, cause distractions or hand your distant ally a weapon.

Recall is the act of returning a distant object or item to yourself, usually to immediately grasp in your hands. It could be a weapon, a data chip, a key, or anything else you'll need within a split second or is otherwise out of reach.

Cast and recall can be combined to move something on your own body to your hand, or back. It can be used to instantaneously switch weaponry, tonics or other items within the palm of your hand without anyone noticing. With it, you might even cast and recall your dagger from one hand to another, to surprise your foe.

I'm currently still researching the combination of Recall and Cast. Being able to move a distant item to another distant point, without first recalling it to myself proves to be an interesting challenge. It takes a high amount of precision to focus my own connection to the Void at two foreign points at once, creating a gateway inbetween them. At the time of writing, the experiments are only in the earliest stage, using glyphic marks to move a single coin between two different points.

3.3 Relocation of Multiple Individuals

Taking yourself and what you carry with you through the void is relatively easy. Taking another individual is something else entirely.

For the following, we disregard the unwillingness of the target and assume it is an ally. Arcane aura's and the resistance of the target individual's willpower are not accounted for.

Most obviously, the amount of mass you'll need to take with you through the shadowstep becomes much greater as you take another person with you. But this is not the only added burden. Taking another soul through the Void takes a lot more power and precision to execute properly. The influence of your company's mind will play out on the shadowpass. If you're not ready to counteract and stabilize the resulting unharmonized shadowmagic energies, the shadowpass becomes unpredictable.

With continued practice, taking a single person with you becomes fairly easy. Even though it's still considerably draining, it'll be a relatively common shadowpass. Taking more than one person obviously becomes exponentially more difficult. It's regarded as near impossible to transport more than two other individuals at once without the support of a shadowmark. The havoc caused by their souls passing through the void would be far too intricate to resolve, even if they are unconscious.

Combining a shadowpass with someone who is actively casting their own magic can have very chaotic and deadly results. As such, I don't recommend trying to take a fire-throwing elemental, a energy shielded guardian or anything else with you through the void without proper consideration. Usually, you simply wouldn't be able to enter the void with them, anyhow.

3.4 Projectile Relocation

Shadowmagic can theoretically be combined with the use of projectiles. Whether it's imprinting a simplistic glyph or raw shadowmark onto the arrow or dagger to shadowstep towards the point of impact, or literally passing the projectile itself into the void. Glyphs of shadowmagic will be described further in these teachings, but this specific section only covers the shadowpass of a projectile.

Casting projectiles into the void with any precision is a highly advanced application of shadowmagic. Only a rare few are capable of this feat, myself not included. The required precision and reaction time is nearly inhuman. Projectile relocation is almost identical to item relocation, but you will have to adjust the shadowpass to capture the extremely high velocity of the projectile.

Within the application of projectile shadowpasses, the least difficult one is the Projectile Cast. It's essentially the same as an item relocation, but the projectile will be moving at high speed. It's done by casting an arrow, dagger, dart, crossbow bolt or something of similar size and mass into the void after throwing or firing it. It is easier to accomplish with ammunition of your own, as they'll be harmonized with your natural arcane aura.

The difficult element of the Projectile Cast, however, would be the exit point. As with item relocation, you project your connection to the void to a distant point, causing the projectile to appear from it. Accomplishing this with any accuracy is challenging at best. The closer the end-point is to other creatures, the more difficult it becomes as well. Their natural arcane aura shields them from point-blank shadowpasses of this advanced nature.

Projectiles such as bullets are ever so more challenging due to their even higher velocity and smaller size. I personally consider Projectile Casting specific bullets as a nearly impossible feat.

There is one more application of Projectile relocation I have heard mention of, albeit only in legends. Projectile Interception. The ability to intercept an incoming projectile of a hostile, cast it into the void and make it reappear safely behind you or catch it within your hand. If mastered, it could provide the shadowmagic user with a powerful defense, though I have yet to see it in action myself.

3.5 Shadowpass Channeling

While most shadowpasses last for only a fraction of a second, it's possible to create a longer lasting connection between start and end point. Essentially, this creates an active portal through the void, usually one-way, though two-way is theoretically possible with practice.

Due to the extended duration of the opening to the Void, this kind of application is extremely energy-consuming. When the channel is kept tiny, it becomes more reasonable to keep the connection open, though the precision required for it is still tremendous.

There are not many practical uses to a tiny shadow portal, except for the possibility to cast whispers of sound to other people, streams of energy or other things that do not consist of solid matter.

3.6 Delayed Shadowpass

When something enters the Void, where nothing can exist, it is immediately cast out into our reality again. Powerful shadowmagic users, however, might be able to stay within the Void for a prolonged time. This is still referring to durations not more than a single second, but that might be enough to avoid an incoming projectile or wave of hazardous magical energy.

Remaining in the void for any duration generally takes ever so much concentration and energy that actually moving to another point becomes even more difficult. This means delayed shadowpasses are practically only possible without actually changing location, though rare exceptions might exist.

Chapter 4 – Glyphs of Shadows

As with any form of magic, shadowmagic can be utilized to create complicated glyphic marks. They provide a wide range of uses, though require time to prepare before being ready for use.

Glyphs of shadowmagic are often called shadowmarks, as the user marks a surface or item with shadowmagic. Some marks are simply raw energy imbued onto the object, allowing the user to focus and use the object as a relay point. Other marks are complicated writings of runes and miniature leylines allowing for precise instructions and effects.

Note that most marks contain only enough energy to be used once before fading. Exceptions are possible with hard-inscribed marks that utilize a different source of energy, such as your own arcane pool, as is the case with permanent recall marks imbedded on items.

4.1 Raw Marks

When you simply imprint your arcane energy onto an object or surface, you create a raw shadowmark. This mark does not contain any specific triggers or effects, and you require no knowledge of the language of runes. It usually acts as a well or simple anchor, allowing you to shadowstep towards the mark from longer distances, or when it's out of your line of sight.

As the spy grabs her arrow, she imbues it with her arcane energy before firing it at a distant point. Upon impact, she concentrates and allows her mind to follow the imprint she left on the projectile, shadowstepping towards its new location. Using raw marks is a fairly common practice, many shadowmagic users apply it to make it easier to project their connection to the Void to the exit point.

Despite having knowledge of more advanced shadowmarks, I too still apply raw marks on many items and surfaces I come in contact with. It is simply much easier and faster to apply.

4.2 Shadow Runic Language

The language of runes required to develop and imprint more advanced shadow glyphs is a more of a science rather than an actual language. I will not cover every conceivable rune and

connection in these teachings, as it would cover an entire book of its own. I will, however, describe the basics behind it, so you may grasp the concept behind their abstract mechanics.

With the creation of a shadowmark, you draw within several different layers, starting from the centre of the mark as they grow outward. Each layer of the mark governs their own function, though the runes often blend and mix as they guide the arcane energy through their connections.

It is not unlike the writing of a sentence. Each rune applied would be a word from this metaphorical sentence, put together with the correct 'grammar' to enable the required functionality.

Every rune and line has a certain flux rate. The higher the flux rate, the more arcane essence can travel through it per second. There are many variations on the type of essence a rune allows to run through, and what the flux rate might be.

Below are a few of the general categories of runes. Many variations and other categories exist.

- Energy Well Runes Charged with shadowmagic in varying harmony.
- Focus Runes Improve mark alignment and ease of focus on them.
- Mirror Runes Capture a state, re-form it upon activation.
- Stability Runes Counteract interference and soul chaos.
- Power Runes Counteract greater mass and resistance.
- Relay Runes Binds your connection to the Void to it, for entry and exit.
- Aura Runes Rune harmonized to a specific aura; friend or foe.
- Capture Runes Capture the essence of what is near the mark.
- AuraSeal Runes A seal that breaks upon interference from someone's aura.
- ShadowSeal Runes A seal that breaks by your remote command.
- Void Runes Opens to the void, casting everything within.

4.3 Surfaces and Materials

A shadowmark is always imprinted into solid matter. The properties of the imbued matter can affect the duration and power of the mark greatly.

Hard surfaces such as rock, wood and diffuse metal are excellent choices. They often provide a flat area large enough to place the mark and allow the mark to remain strong for many hours.

Sturdy yet moving surfaces are a reasonable choice as well. Cloth, paper, leather, skin. They often provide large, flat surfaces that remains in place. They often bend and shift, though, which causes a slight amount of decay on the mark. A mark can be built to compensate for this to some degree. Very thin cloth or paper might not capture the arcane energy of the mark very well, however. It might fade much more quickly that way.

Reflective surfaces such as glass, polished metal or mirrors are fairly bad choices for shadowmarks. They rarely capture the energies of the shadowmark, reflecting them out diffusely instead. If one is managed to be placed, however, they tend to stay reliable for a long time.

Unreliable surfaces such as sand, dirt, grass and mud are terrible choices for shadowmarks. They can be placed with ease, as the material captures the energy well enough. But due to the shifting nature of the material, marks often fade or break with the slightest change to the surface. Don't expect marks placed on these materials to last for long. Most only minutes, some only seconds.

Small items are difficult to inscribe a complicated shadowmark on, due to the lack of a flat area. Only raw shadowmarks are often realistic for small items, unless you take your time to apply a smaller scale mark to it.

The inscribing of a permanent, almost physical shadowmark into a material is possible. It takes a long time to complete, but will stay reliable until the hard surface is shattered. This is commonly used to 'enchant' certain items such as weapons, allowing you to recall them to yourself with ease.

4.4 Alignment

Upon creation of a shadowmark, you will have to align yourself to it in order to access it. You capture the unique sensation of the specific shadowmark in your mind and focus on it. It's easy to align to a single shadowmark, though aligning to multiple will take practice.

It's possible to sense when a shadowmark you're aligned to activates or breaks, though this too requires practice to perfect.

Without alignment to a shadowmark, it becomes impossible to utilize it from a distance, and it becomes useless. Even shadowmarks that activate by other means will become disconnected. They would still function, but you wouldn't know or have control over it.

4.5 The Anchor

One of the most basic glyphs, and usually the first to be taught, is the Anchor shadowmark. It essentially captures your current position, direction and velocity. Once you return to the mark, you will be in the exact position and pose as when applying the mark.

The mark's centre acts as a well of shadowmagic harmonized to your natural aura, along with focus runes and shadowseals. It will allow you to concentrate and locate the Anchor from extreme distances, activate it upon command. The surrounding mirror runes capture your current state upon creation. When it's activated, the energy within the well disperses, flowing through the mirror runes, placing you back where you started with the correct direction, pose and velocity. You still cast yourself into the void towards the mark, the mark will not do so for you.

Anchors can also be used to Cast items or other people to it, without taking yourself through the Void. You'll want to prepare the mark for the ability to take more than yourself along with it by including stability runes. If you plan to Cast something through it, you'd need to inscribe it with relay runes that will more easily cast your connection to the Void at its location.

4.6 The Gateway

An advanced variation of the Anchor would be the Gateway. It's essentially the reverse of it, allowing you to pull items or people standing on the mark towards yourself. It only changes the position of the target. The Gateway mark can be triggered either by your own activation, or when someone with either a friendly, hostile or any aura passes over it.

This mark allows you to prepare a trap that will take someone to you, though actively unwilling

targets might prove too difficult to cast through. It often succeeds with a surprised target. It's most effective as a means of escape for an ally, however.

You will need alignment to recall anything from the mark to yourself. Without it, those affected are relocated a short distance randomly. Without alignment, you can't activate it either.

The Gateway mark is formed by creating a ring of an energy well containing seal runes. Capture runes will capture what is on top of it. You can include aura runes with the capture to prevent unwanted things from passing through. Relay runes will connect the mark to your connection to the Void. Stability runes will allow you to bring other people. The centre of it requires a void rune, that will cast everything present into the Void.

If you manage to connect the harmony of both an Anchor and a Gateway using relay and void runes, you might be able to connect them together. Someone steps on a Gateway and ends up at the Anchor instead of at your location. This is a challenge at best, one misaligned rune and the connection will fail.

4.7 The Recall

The Recall is much like the Gateway, but instead of capturing what is on top of the mark, it will cast the item it is inscribed on into the Void. It can be inscribed on something permanently, such as weaponry, but you will have to bridge your connection to it if this is the case. In that situation, you will need a line of sight with the mark.

A recall mark that activates by itself will require an energy well rune in the centre, bound by either shadowseals or aura seals. The shadowseal is most common, allowing you to recall an item on demand, though including aura seals is also an option. By including an aura seal, the mark will activate as soon as someone attempts to pick it up or touch it.

Same as the Gateway, the mark will require relay runes and possibly stability runes, along with a void rune to enter the Void. Focus runes will allow you to stay aligned over longer distances. You could include mirror runes to relocate it to the correct position in your hand. Wouldn't want a dagger ending up with the wrong end through your flesh.

Permanent recall marks don't need an energy well rune if you plan to recall it while near you. It

will simply enhance your ability to recall them, as the regular application of shadowmagic.

4.8 The Tracer

The Tracer mark is an unusual mark that will project a raw mark onto something that passes over it. When an enemy or friend runs over the mark, they pick up the arcane energy within, carrying it with them. You will be able to focus and shadowstep towards the energy signature, allowing you to more easily chase in pursuit without establishing a line of sight.

The mark is difficult to establish, requiring some time to place proper. It'll need a powerful energy well rune with carefully harmonized energy. It'd need auraseal runes, as well as projection and focus runes to cast the raw mark onto the target. The target walks over the rune, triggering the auraseal. The projection and focus runes apply the raw mark onto the target, and the energy will remain there for a couple of minutes, depending on how fine the initial mark is.

4.9 The Aura

An aura mark is an unusual, advanced mark that is not directly tied to a shadowpass. Instead, it attempts to merge reality with the Void itself. Within an area of an aura mark, the power of a shadowmagic user is greatly enhanced as his connection to the Void is empowered.

It's a complicated mark with several centre-points working together. You'll need to place several energy well runes at the area you need the effect. Surround these runes with focus runes and stability runes, as well as ample Void runes in various different set-ups. Lock each energy source off with harmonized shadowseal runes, allowing you to activate the entire mark in one go.

The mark will remain active for a long amount of time, if ample energy is imprinted upon the marks. Because of the high energy required, it can take several days to set up a powerful aura mark. If a constant supply of power is provided by magitech or other means, the mark can remain active permanently.

An aura mark allows someone to execute the most advanced shadowmagic with ease and grace. As the Void and reality itself are merged together seamlessly, you become master of reality, of

what is allowed to exist in our world, and what is cast into the void. No matter how abstract a concept it might be. Things that you couldn't begin to imagine would become a possibility.

4.10 The Dispell

The Dispell mark is designed to nullify and prevent the use of a certain type of magic within an area. It creates a vacuum that draws in the magic it's designed for, casting it into the Void to remove and disperse it. It has many useful applications.

The first use of it is to mark off an area that will actively draw in and consume the arcane energy of the specified type. This will prevent someone from using that magic type when within the spot, unless the person summons up more energy than the mark can disperse. A higher flux rate of the mark is important to compensate for it.

The second use of this mark is to inscribe it upon a piece of leather or chains that can be applied onto a magical object or a person. These marks will absorb the magic, rendering it harmless.

This mark requires a small energy well rune for shadowmagic, along with capture, stability and void runes inscribed together in such a way that it draws in and disperses the correct type of energy. You'll need to add neutral essence energy well runes that are able to hold any type of energy. Be mindful, though, without enough flux rate to the void runes, the energy might build up with explosive results!

4.11 The Shadowphase

The Shadowphase mark is an invention of myself. It's a mark that functions inverted to a regular Anchor, pushing it's essence through thick, solid matter. Once placed, it will allow you to literally phase through a wall or floor. Excellent to get into places you're not supposed to, or to escape from confinement.

Shadowphasing is a much broader application than merely used in this shadowmark. It's not a subject I myself am entirely familiar with. The idea is to become one with the Void itself, allowing parts of yourself to phase through solid matter.

This shadowmark is placed on a surface, which is no simple task. Upon activation, it will pull

you to the other side of the surface in a shadowphase-like state. The whole event happens within a split second, but you'll find yourself on the other end of the mark.

It requires a powerful energy well rune in the centre, accompanied by several surrounding it. More resistant and thicker materials will require more energy to push through. Shadowseal runes and inverted focal runes must be added to every well, aligned towards the surface area. Relay runes are needed to project the void through the wall, which need to be intertwined with power and stability runes for raw strength. The relay runes surround a ring-shaped void rune which surrounds the centre energy well. All the energy will flow, generating an exit point on the other side of the matter. Finally, capture runes imbedded with void runes will drag you into a phase-like state through the solid matter, to the exit point.

4.12 The Shadowpocket

One of the most advanced marks to apply. It personally took me years to perfect. Applying a single mark took weeks of intricate and careful balancing. The execution has to be absolutely perfect.

A Shadowpocket mark can be imprinted on an object, theoretically even a person. Once completed, it will allow the creator to cast the object into the Void at will. Permanently. The glyph uses the natural shadowmagic originating from the Void itself, forcing the object to remain within the Void. If there is any imbalance to this the object might, after a time from hours to months, relocate to an entirely random location within the world. The functionality needs to falter only for a fraction of a second to be cast back into reality.

The mark will also allow the creator to summon the object from the void, at will. So, essentially, whatever item the mark is inscribed on can be stored safely in a place where noone can find it. Because it simply wouldn't exist in our very own world. No matter where you are, you can always summon the item, as well.

As with any mark, you will need to stay aligned to it. Occasionally retrieving it from the void makes it easier to keep that alignment in check.

Now you might wonder how to create such a mark. It is one of the most complicated marks to craft successfully, requiring almost every type of rune known, and then some. The layout of it

will likely vary for every item you want to apply it on, it's not something you can memorize and apply on a whim. Every item is unique, has unique properties and scale, and will require an unique glyph to function. This is no easy task to begin.

Chapter 5 – Closing Statement

The theories within these teachings are meant to be shared with all. Shadowmagic has long been a myth to many. By recording what I've learned about the art over the many years, I hope this mystery will be solved a little bit more.

There are many more things I could say about the art of shadowmagic. Details of how to actually cast each spell, or a full description of the runic language. In time, perhaps these will be recorded as well. But until that time, you're best off experimenting on your own. Magic is not an exact science, and for shadowmagic it's about emptying your mind, capturing the sensation of nothing, and entering the Void.

There are still many mysteries to the shadowstep that I have yet to discover myself. All I can do is provide insight into the practical applications and the unverified theories spawned by my own experimentation and experience. All you've read here is what I was taught by my mentor and myself, whether any of this is accurate for your situation is impossible to confirm.

It is my hope you will use this knowledge to expand your mind for the greater good of all Tyria, though I realize many might use these practices for matters less noble. It is not my place to judge who should or should not access these teachings. All I can do is share my knowledge before it is lost forever.

Thread lightly into the shadows, for it is neither good nor evil.