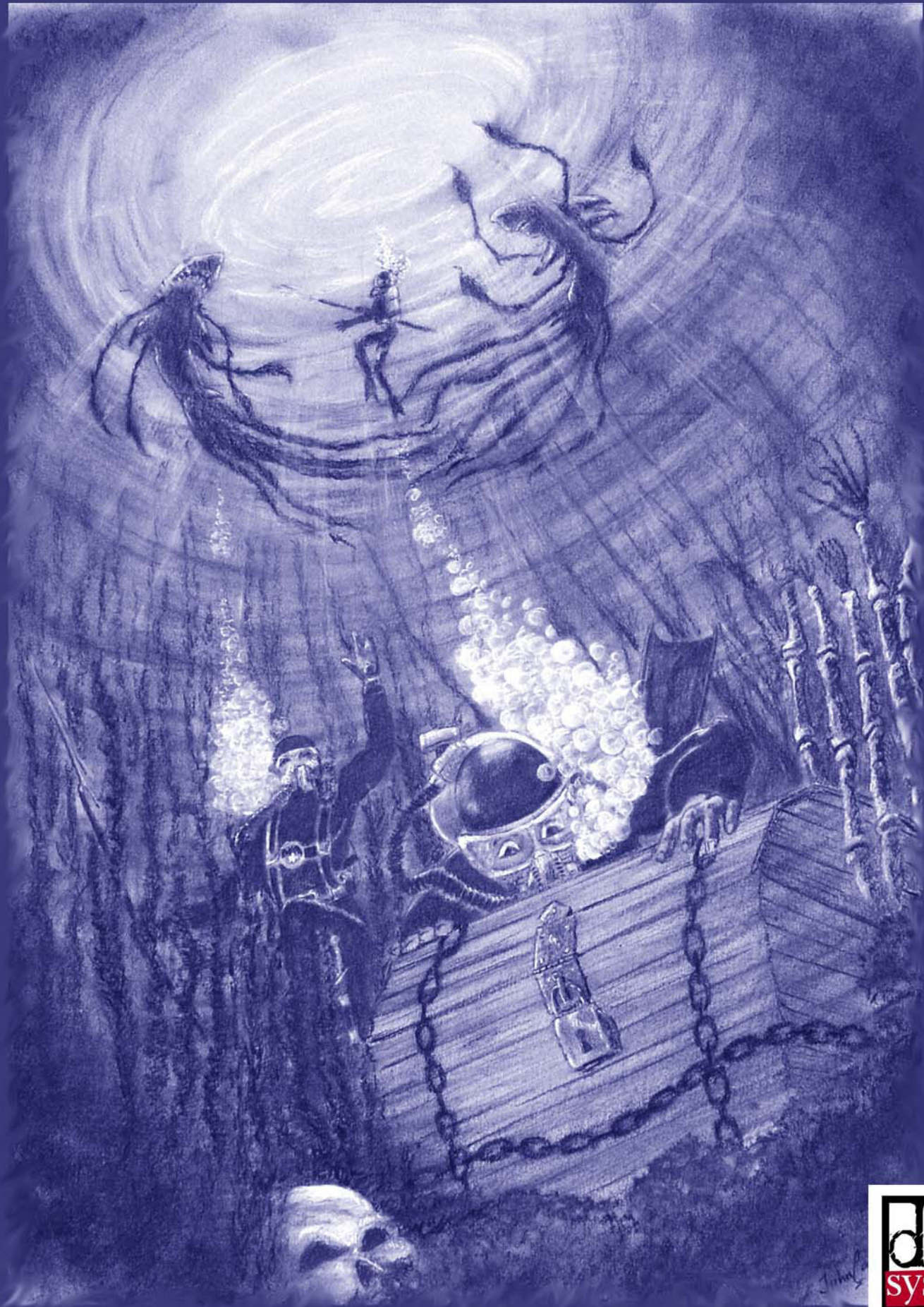


Dreamwalker d20:

Modern Day Roleplaying in the Land of Dreams





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Introduction

“Oh God, I could be bounded in a nutshell, and count myself a king of infinite space, were it not that I have bad dreams.”

---William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*

Humanity is under attack. The enemy is an alien species that assails us in our most vulnerable state--- while we sleep.

The Taenia Spiritus are a race of soulless, hive-minded creatures that invade our dreams in order to foster and feed off the negative vibes and emotions caused by their presence. You are a Dreamwalker. Whether through the use of drugs, prayer, meditation or natural ability, you are able to leave your own dreams and travel into the Dreamworlds of others. Once there you can manipulate the dream's spiritual energy, or mana, to produce wondrous effects.

You have been recruited by Project Dreamwalker---a government backed organization that unites others like you in order to rid the spirit world of the Taeniid plague. The task is difficult. Not only do you face the Taenia but you must also satisfy the whims and desires of the Dreamer in whose mind they are ensconced. Can you do this and still maintain a grasp on your own sanity?

Good luck, Dreamwalker. You may be our last hope.

What This Book Is

A work of fiction. Dreamwalkers are able to pass freely into the dreams of others. Mastery of dream magic enables them to change shape, fly and alter the very fabric of the Dreamworld itself as they seek to destroy an alien foe.

However, the existence of the Taenia Spiritus, the ability to Dreamwalk and many of the other supernatural concepts expressed herein were designed solely for the purposes of this game. Once again, Dreamwalker is a work of fiction---as far as we know.

What this Book is Not

A medical treatise on the psychological meaning of dreams and their effect on the human psyche. While many of the groundbreaking, dream-related theories of psychoanalysts such as Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung and Fritz Perls are alluded to within this work (especially those of Jung), Dreamwalker is not an endorsement for any particular person, viewpoint or field of study.

We have provided just enough background information on dreams and the process of dreaming to make the game both interesting and playable. Medical references (particularly descriptions of mental conditions) have been altered to suit the needs of the game. For those who would like to incorporate more real world personas, theories or themes into their game or for those who would just like to learn more about dreams in general, please visit some of the links posted on our website.

DreamwalkerRPG.home.att.net

What to Expect

Due to the sheer diversity of dreams and the powers available to each character, many of the game systems included herein are offered as rough guidelines rather than unbending law. This means Game Masters must be flexible during the course of each session and may have to make more judgment calls than with the average roleplaying game.

A perfect example of this are the sample adventures included in the back of this book. During playtesting sessions, even we were amazed at the direction some of these adventures took. Some Game Masters were adept at making quick, on the spot decisions while others did not fare so well. If this kind of flexibility suits your style of play, then by all means buy this book. If not, you may want to reconsider this purchase. We're not trying to turn away potential buyers but we believe that in the long run, happy customers are better for Dreamwalker than bulk sales.

Why We Created Dreamwalker

Because we get bored playing one type of game setting each night. Because we get tired of changing settings and systems each month. Because we felt there was a need for a good roleplaying game about dreams---a game where your characters could be and do almost anything they wanted. Because we love roleplaying games and we hope Dreamwalker brings you as much enjoyment as it has us.

Oh, and because we wanted to make money. ☺

Why We Converted Dreamwalker to d20

There's no denying the impact that d20 has had on our beloved gaming community---love it or hate it, d20 has become a force to be reckoned with. While we're awfully proud of our in-house percentile system, d20 has a huge fan base and we hope this conversion will introduce our game to a much broader audience.

So, again, the answer is, because we wanted to make money. ☺

Simpler Times

If you haven't read it already, check out the short story, [Simpler Times](#), which provides a taste of some of the atmosphere and style representative of Dreamwalker, as well as an example of a typical dream adventure.

BOOK ONE

Player's Section

Kubla Khan

By Samuel Taylor Coleridge

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure dome decree:
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea.

So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round:
And here were gardens bright with sinuous rills,
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree,
And here were forests ancient as the hills,
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

But oh! that deep romantic chasm which slanted
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!
A savage place; as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon-lover!
And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething,
As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,
A mighty fountain momentarily was forced,
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,

Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail:
And 'mid these dancing rocks at once and ever
It flung up momentarily the sacred river.
Five miles meandering with a mazy motion
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,
Then reached the caverns measureless to man,

And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean:
And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far
Ancestral voices prophesying war!

The shadow of the dome of pleasure
Floated midway on the waves;
Where was heard the mingled measure
From the fountain and the caves.
It was a miracle of rare device,
A sunny pleasure dome with caves of ice!

A damsel with a dulcimer
In a vision once I saw:
It was an Abyssinian maid,
And on her dulcimer she played,
Singing of Mount Abora.
Could I revive within me
Her symphony and song,

To such a deep delight 'twould win me,
That with music loud and long,
I would build that dome in air,
That sunny dome! Those caves of ice!
And all who heard should see them there,
And all should cry, Beware! Beware!
His flashing eyes, his floating hair!
Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread,
For he on honey dew hath fed,
And drunk the milk of Paradise.

On Dreams

“A dream is a microscope through which we look at the hidden occurrences in our soul.”

---Erich Fromm

Dream (dreem) n. A series of images, ideas, emotions and sensations occurring involuntarily in the mind during certain stages of sleep.

Dreams have been a natural part of our sleeping lives since the beginning of time but only recently have we started to harness their potential. Dreams offer us unlimited opportunities for fun, adventure and romance and sometimes even personal insight. They are a private means with which we may explore our own inner realities, a way to experience things that our conscious mind can hardly imagine. Overwhelming evidence now indicates that dreams can also be used to improve our waking life as well.

REM Sleep

Dreams occur throughout the night but studies show that we experience our most vivid dreams during a period of sleep known as Rapid Eye Movement (REM) sleep. During REM sleep, the brain is very active; the eyes move rapidly back and forth under the lids and the body secretes a chemical that paralyzes the larger muscles of the body in order to keep us from acting out our dreams. REM sleep occurs every ninety to one hundred minutes, about three to four times a night, and lasts for up to forty-five minutes.

The Meaning of Dreams

“Dreams say what they mean, but they don’t say it in daytime language.”

---Gail Godwin

Although scientists continue to debate the issue of whether or not dreams have meaning, most people find their own dreams to be of great personal significance. Dreams can provide insight into feelings, thoughts, behavior and motives of yourself and others. Actual cases have been documented in which dreams have been used to solve problems or improve skills, sometimes drastically and even overnight. Artists, writers, and scientists especially often get creative ideas from their dreams.

Unfortunately, not everyone enjoys the benefits of such profound dreams. Some people find it difficult, or even impossible, to remember their dreams. Others suddenly remember a dream later in the day or on another day, suggesting that the memory is not totally lost but for some reason has been buried deep in the subconscious mind. Sleep, dreams and dream recall may also be affected by a great variety of drugs and medications, including alcohol.

Nightmares and Night Terrors

Nightmares are very common among children and fairly common among adults. Often nightmares are caused by stress, traumatic experiences, emotional difficulties, drugs/medication, or illness. However,

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some people have frequent nightmares that seem unrelated to their waking lives. Recent studies suggest that on the average, these people tend to be more open, sensitive, trusting and emotional.

Night terrors are more frequent in children and usually subside with age. They differ from nightmares in that they occur during non-REM sleep and are usually so intense that the sleeper awakens in panic, often screaming, with heart pounding, and with less or no recall of the dream's content.



The History of Project Dreamwalker

“All men who have achieved great things have been great Dreamers.”

---Orison Swett Marden

Dr. William Morris Black

As a child, William Black was subject to the semi-rare sleeping disorder known as night terrors. In time, he eventually overcame his affliction but because of the experience grew up fascinated by the process of dreaming.

By the mid 1940's, William Black, now an esteemed clinical researcher and professor at M-----, began a series of experiments focusing primarily on dreams and their relationship to the health of the human psyche. Several groundbreaking discoveries involving dreams and their effects on the human psyche were attributed to Dr. Black's work.

Black25

In the late 1940's, Dr. Black developed an experimental sleeping drug known as Black25. Numerous tests on laboratory animals ensued and after extensive interpretation of the results, it was theorized that Black25 stimulated the parts of the brain responsible for inducing the function that would later come to be known as REM sleep, allowing for longer and more vivid dreams. In addition, the animals responded surprisingly well to the drug, becoming much more healthy and active than before.

In 1950 Dr. Black felt it was time to test Black25 on human subjects. The board of directors firmly denied this request and then denied it again for each of the ten years following.

Discouraged and fearing he might never get the chance to explore the true potential of Black25 he secretly gathered a few of his most trusted assistants and former students who had worked closely with him on the Black25 animal experiments. After explaining the potential risks (both career and physical) and consequences of unauthorized testing, he proposed a plan to administer the drug to himself under their close observation. In this way, Dr. William Morris Black became the first person injected with Black25.

The results were far greater than anything he could have possibly imagined. Dr. Black entered the dream state as a fully lucid Dreamer, retaining complete control over his own thoughts and actions. Ironically, the Dreamworld he found himself in was an exact replica of his first meeting with the board of directors.

The board members were exact duplicates of their counterparts in the real world and with some amusement, Dr. Black decided to pitch his proposal again and attempt to do what he had been unable to do before---convince the board to approve testing of Black25 on human subjects. To his surprise, the board unanimously approved his proposal. When he was awakened by his assistants after the allotted time had passed, he felt invigorated and refreshed. What's more he had total recollection of the things he had experienced in his dream.

Dr. Black had always been a proponent of the Jungian theory that the purpose of dreams and the unconsciousness were to show the conscious mind what needs to be done to get rid of unease and unhappiness and to achieve fuller satisfaction in life. The resolution of his dealings with the dream board seemed to confirm this theory on the importance of resolving dream goals, which Dr. Black later termed

denouements. A host of related tests followed and the results were surprisingly irrefutable. When he resolved his dream's denouements, he woke up feeling well rested---when he did not, he awoke frustrated and irritable.

Dreamwalking with Black25

Dr. Black soon began to explore the boundaries of his Dreamworld and eventually learned that not only could he travel to the hidden levels of his own psyche, but he could actually leave his Dreamworld and enter the dreams of others. These dreams also had denouements that needed to be resolved although the resident Dreamer was frequently unable to do so.

It was during this time that Dr. Black first encountered the Taenia. He did not know what they were at first but they instilled in him a primal dread that he fought hard to overcome in order to pursue his research.

In his travels throughout the Dreamworlds, Dr. Black realized that the Taenia were readily recognizable despite drastic differences in their appearance. Over time, he was able to catalogue the three basic types---larva, drone and Queen although he only saw one Queen as the drones grew hostile whenever he ventured too close to a nesting area. Otherwise, the Taenia ignored him as long as he kept his distance.

Dr. Black also noted the way the Taenia actively worked to hinder the Dreamer from achieving the dream's denouement and thus hypothesized that they somehow gained sustenance from the negative emotions incurred. He soon discovered that their efforts slowly eroded the sanity of the host and surmised that if he could find some way to combat the Taenia, he might be able to heal the psyche of those infested.

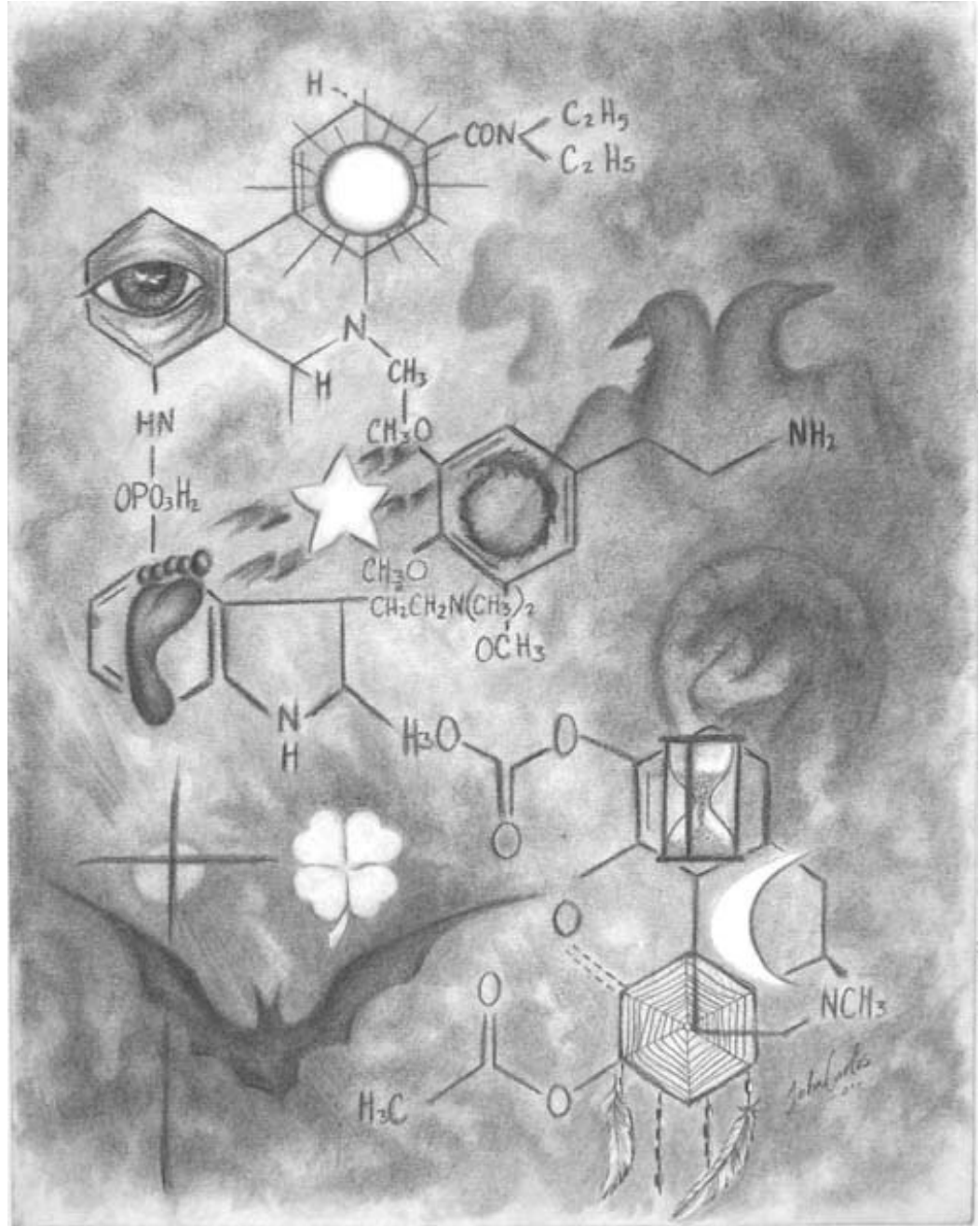
A year of Dreamwalking research passed without any apparent ill side effects. Dr. Black finally relented to overwhelming pressure from two of his senior assistants, Kevin Laerty and Dawn Rogers, and agreed to administer Black25 to them so they could experience the wonders of the Dreamworlds for themselves. With practice, they discovered that they too could leave their own respective Dreamworlds, meet in the Periphery and then travel throughout the Empyrean together. They kept extensive records of their travels and experiences during this time---the compilation of notes and papers now known as the Black Files.

Exposure

It was toward the end of this second year of Dreamwalking that disaster struck. Dr. Black and his two assistants were investigating the mind of a particularly disturbed individual when they encountered their first Broodking. The creature attacked them immediately. In the ensuing conflict, Dawn Rogers was killed and Dr. Black and Kevin Laerty barely escaped the Dreamworld with their lives.

Back in the lab, they discovered that Dawn Rogers was truly dead. Dr. Black was overcome with grief despite the reassurance of his assistants that it wasn't his fault. He immediately phoned the campus police and informed them of what had happened.

The following investigation into the death of Dawn Rogers led to the exposure of the entire Black25 project. The results were withheld from the general public but caused quite a stir in the scientific community. Reactions ranged from mild interest to angry disbelief. Many scoffed at the contents of the Black Files and refused to even accept the possibility of traveling into the dreams of others. This was the 1960's and most believed that Black25 was just another dangerous, hallucinogenic drug similar to LSD, which easily explained the strange accounts documented within the Black Files.



A Ray of Hope

Meanwhile, William Black was brought up on charges of malpractice and neglect. Just when it seemed inevitable that he would serve jail time for the death of Dawn Rogers, Black was contacted by Senator Wade Wilson of Texas. Following a riding accident, the Senator's daughter, Sarah, had been comatose for over a year. Senator Wilson heard about Dr. Black's radical new dream experiments through an old M---- alumnus and wondered if Black25 could be used to help coma victims. Dr. Black wasn't sure, but not having anything to lose, he agreed to try.

He was granted the use of a government facility and together with the help of his assistants, he entered the dream state intent on reaching out to Sarah Wilson's unresponsive mind.

No one really knows what happened next. One minute, William Black's vital signs were normal, the next he was flat-lining. By contrast, the girl's eyes fluttered and opened. She sat up in bed and dazedly

watched as medical personnel tried to revive William Black. After a year of being in a coma, Sarah Wilson had finally awakened.

William Black died despite all attempts at resuscitation. Nevertheless, the wheels were in motion and the work he had begun would not remain idle for long.

Project Dreamwalker

Sarah Wilson made a full recovery and grew up both physically and mentally sound, possessing a strong desire to be the best at everything she did. She had no memory of Dr. Black, or of the time spent in the coma, but it was hardly surprising that she became obsessed with the process of dreams and dreaming. Her graduate studies reflected this interest and in the early 1980's, as a graduate student and dream researcher, she attempted to retrieve Dr. Black's notes and records from M---- archives. To her surprise, she discovered that the Black Files had been classified and withdrawn by person unknown. No other information was forthcoming.

Not one to be discouraged by such minor setbacks, she cajoled her father into pulling a few strings and discovered that Dr. Gunther R. Endell had recovered the Black25 program in 1976. With government funding and supervision he established The Clinic in eastern Virginia and resumed Dr. Black's dream research and experimentation. Sarah visited The Clinic several times but was denied access. Attempts to contact Dr. Endell himself were repeatedly and rudely rebuffed.

Then, one day Sarah was approached by Dr. Black's former assistant, Kevin Laerty, now a senior Clinic staff member. Kevin was willing to answer all of Sarah's questions about Dreamwalking and Dr. William Black. To her surprise, Sarah learned that not only could Dreamwalkers travel into the dreams of others, but that now they could manipulate mana (the spiritual energy of dreams) to produce wondrous effects. Kevin and most of Dr. Black's former assistants had been recruited by Dr. Endell and were currently working at the Clinic but many were unhappy with the direction his experiments had taken. Dr. Endell and his government superiors seemed more concerned with the military applications of Black25 than fighting the Taenia and healing the human psyche.

With backing from her father and a few other prominent politicians (mostly rivals of Dr. Endell and his supporters) Sarah Wilson staged a minor coup, enticing Laerty, a few researchers and several Dreamwalkers away from The Clinic. With their help, and "liberated" records on Dreamwalking experimentation, she established the basis for Project Dreamwalker.

Characters

“A man must not deny his manifest abilities, for that is to evade his obligations.”

---William Feather, *The Treasure of Franchard*

Dreamwalkers are the unsung heroes of the Empyrean. They are spiritual healers who traverse the vast realms of the human psyche in order to seek out and destroy the Taenia. They operate in secret, for the benefit of all mankind. Without them, there is no hope.

Most of the following text was written for beginning characters and assumes the characters are employed by and have an allegiance to Project Dreamwalker. With a few minor tweaks, this game is also backwards compatible, meaning that for instance, if you have a 5th level Strong hero you've been playing for the last year or so, the Game Master can arrange to have him meet up with Project Dreamwalker or acquire the Dreamwalker feat in some other fashion.

Allegiances

Characters begin the game with an allegiance to their employer, Project Dreamwalker. The Project trains its Dreamwalkers in the ways of the Empyrean as well as in the basic skills needed to survive. If necessary it may actually bestow the ability to Dreamwalk on the character via Black25. More information on Project Dreamwalker can be found on [page 55](#).

Bonus Skills: Knowledge (Arcane Lore)

Bonus Feats: Dreamwalker (Analyst Archetype)

Special: +2 bonus on Charisma-based skill checks when dealing with other members of the Project provided the character has had enough interaction with the other member to discover the connections and bring the bonus into play.

Archetypes

For game purposes, the ability to Dreamwalk is gained via the Dreamwalker feat. However, there is a bit more to it than just penciling in the new feat on your character sheet. It is up to each player to determine how the ability to Dreamwalk developed in his character. In order to help do that, four basic Dreamwalker Archetypes have been outlined below---Natural, Mystic, Analyst and User.

A character's Archetype is not dependent on class, age, race or level---theoretically anyone can learn how to Dreamwalk at any point in his or her life. However, one does not just wake up one day and decide to become a Mystic---it takes an intense amount of dedication to some cause or belief. Similarly, Project Dreamwalker does not hand out doses of Black25 to anyone on the street in order to recruit new Analysts, nor do all drug addicts become Users. The Archetype you choose for your character should in some way reflect his background, concept or even his personal views on life.

After reading over the Archetype descriptions, you should have a better idea of which one best fits your character's concept. If you have an idea for a new Archetype, feel free to talk it over with your GM.

Natural

A Natural is born with the ability to Dreamwalk. The talent manifests at a very early age and gradually fades (but never disappears) as the child matures and the demands of reality become more pressing.

As a child, most natural Dreamwalkers are too young to realize the exceptional nature of their dreams. Most of these children would be unable to properly communicate what is happening even if they did. Some become so enamored with the things they see while Dreamwalking that they spend as much time sleeping as possible. Others are so traumatized by encounters with the Taenia they become subject to night terrors---a defense mechanism of the subconscious mind that stops the child from Dreamwalking. Night terrors eventually subside as the ability to Dreamwalk becomes dormant with age.

Some adult Naturals have suppressed the ability to Dreamwalk but continue to have lucid dreams. These people are usually artists, poets or otherwise highly creative individuals who gain nightly inspiration from the experiences in their own Dreamworlds.

Most Natural Dreamwalkers are discovered by the Project at a young age. Project therapists single out children who exhibit severe sleeping disorders. Upon reaching adolescence, experienced Dreamwalkers visit these children in their dreams to determine if there is any latent Dreamwalking ability. These children receive Project funding and scholarships to further their education and are eventually recruited by the Project and taught to develop their unique abilities.

Naturals enter REM sleep 90-100 minutes into the sleeping cycle. These REM periods last up to 45 minutes and occur three or four times during the course of the night. Naturals are more at home in the Emyrean than any other type of Dreamwalker and are less likely to be harmed by premature awakening. Naturals receive a +10 bonus to the Will save that follows premature awakening or ejection (see Awakening, [pg. 42](#)).

Most Naturals are between the ages of 19 and 22. They start out weaker than the other three types of Dreamwalkers but have an almost unlimited potential for advancement.

Bonus Skills: Knowledge (Art)

Beginning Mana: 1d6 + 10

Mana Points Per Level: 1d8

Maximum Number of Mana Feats: Unlimited

Mystic

Mystics are spiritual and holy men from all walks of life who have learned the art of Dreamwalking through intense rituals, meditation and/or prayer. Throughout history Mystics have received prophetic visions and sudden inspiration through the process of Dreamwalking. Many are unaware of what is happening at first and often assign religious significance to the things witnessed within the Emyrean.

Mystics view Dreamwalking as a highly spiritual and rewarding experience. Each has his own method of entering the dream state, most often in a way reflecting his individual faith or religion. For instance, a Catholic priest might begin Dreamwalking only after receiving (or giving) communion and prolonged prayers. A Baptist minister may speak in tongues and dance with serpents until his mind is properly focused. Buddhist monks enter deep meditative trances. Many primitive tribal shamans have developed elaborate dances and rituals that are passed down from generation to generation. Whatever the process, the results are essentially the same.

The Mystic follows a strict code of guidelines, morals and/or taboos related to his particular faith, often making his life seem rigid and unyielding to others. These ethics translate into the Dreamworld and can

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sometimes cause conflict with his team's objective. For instance, murder is a mortal sin for a Catholic priest. He may find it unbearable to kill or allow harm to befall innocents, even the Unreal. The consumption of beef is forbidden by those of Hindu faith. Muslims refuse to partake of swine or alcohol and must still pray at sunrise and sunset, even in a dream. Celibacy is a common restriction that is often retained in a dream. Because the Taenia are universally recognized as enemies of mankind, these taboos never inhibit their destruction although in most cases, Unreal infested by larvae should be neutralized rather than killed.

Mystics take a variable amount of time to enter the dream state. The mental and physical preparations necessary to properly focus their minds can take anywhere from a few minutes to several hours. Some Mystics enter the dream state through the normal course of sleep (in 90-100) minutes) and may remain in REM sleep for periods of up to 45 minutes that occur 3-4 times each night. Others achieve the dream state through meditation or prayer and can remain in the dream state almost indefinitely unless their concentration is broken.

Since Mystics exercise such control over their passage into the Dreamworld they too are less apt to be harmed by premature awakening. Mystics receive a +5 bonus to the Will save that follows premature awakening or ejection (see Awakening, [pg. 42](#)).

Mystics usually find their own way to Project Dreamwalker whether by word of mouth or sudden, seemingly divine inspiration.

Bonus Skill: Knowledge (Theology and Philosophy)

Beginning Mana: 3d6 + 10

Mana Points Per Level: 1d6

Maximum Number of Mana Feats: 2d8



Analyst

Analysts are the direct result of the vast amounts of time and money spent on Project Dreamwalker. Analysts are relative newcomers to the Dreamwalking experience who reach the Emyrean through routine injection of Black25.

Most Analysts begin their careers as students interested in the study of psychology and dreams. Those that excel are singled out and approached by agents of Project Dreamwalker. After extensive background checks, they are granted an internship at a nearby chapter house and some are eventually given the opportunity to use Black25.

Analysts reach REM sleep in 10-60 minutes and can remain in the dream state for up to 2 hours. This is due to the effects that Black25 has on certain portions of the brain.

Analysts come from all walks of life. They are scientific and analytical by nature, hence their name, but many have a strong creative side.

Bonus Skills: Knowledge (Behavioral Sciences)

Beginning Mana: 2d6 + 10

Mana Points Per Level: 1d6

Maximum Number of Mana Feats: 2d4

User

Users are drug addicts, plain and simple. They are either chemically or psychologically dependent upon some sort of hallucinogenic drug (LSD, ecstasy, peyote, marijuana, etc.) and must have regular doses of this drug to function properly. This drug also enables them to enter the Emyrean.

Users are recruited from clinics and halfway houses throughout North America. They can sometimes be encountered aimlessly wandering the Periphery in a drug-induced stupor. Project Dreamwalker does not attempt to corrupt Users trying to overcome their addiction. Rather, they target those so hopelessly addicted that they continually backslide.

The arrangement works out well for most Users. In return for their service they receive regular doses of their chosen drug. The moral and ethical concerns of giving Users the drugs that eventually destroy their sanity has caused more than a little consternation among many Project members.

Users can be difficult to work with and as such their actions are more closely monitored than other Dreamwalkers. When Users become too unstable, or if they ever decide to rehabilitate, they are relocated to secure government funded clinics. After rehabilitation, Users are given minor government jobs although they remain under supervision for the rest of their lives. In addition, they must take regular doses of GRE-13 (see Dreamwalking Drugs, [pg. 52](#)) in order to suppress their Dreamwalking ability.

Users reach their version of REM sleep in a relatively short amount of time (30-90 minutes) and may remain in the dream state for periods of up to six hours in length while on an especially good high. Unfortunately, Users suffer the worst from premature awakening; -5 penalty to the Will save that follows awakening (or ejection). In addition, they sometimes suffer the effects of a "bad trip" that must be roleplayed out.

Users start out more powerful than other types of Dreamwalkers but have a limited potential for growth.

Bonus Skills: Knowledge (Streetwise)

Beginning Mana: 5d6 + 10

Mana Points Per Level: 1d4

Maximum Number of Mana Feats: 1d3

The Empyrean

“To confine our attention to terrestrial matters would be to limit the human spirit.”

---Stephen Hawking

Project Dreamwalker teaches the following information on the Empyrean, its realms and inhabitants to each new member via the Knowledge (Arcane Lore) skill.

The Empyrean is the name given to the land of dreams. It is a realm of pure spirit mana where anything is possible. The Empyrean is comprised of four basic parts--the Barrier, the Periphery, the Dreamworld and the Underpsyche.

The Barrier

The Barrier is the thin membrane of mana that divides the other three levels of the Empyrean. The Periphery is the astral border between the real world and the land of dreams. The Dreamworld is the spiritual manifestation of the Dreamer's current dream. The Underpsyche refers to the nearly infinite number of dormant Dreamworlds, or Underworlds, that lie within the subconscious mind of the Dreamer.

To simplify, try to picture the Dreamer's mind as a cake with an infinite number of layers. The top layer represents a Dreamworld, each subsequent layer represents an Underworld and the coat of frosting on top and between each layer represents a Barrier.

The Three Forms

Dreamwalkers are able to adopt three basic forms--physical, spiritual and pseudophysical.

Physical

The physical form is that taken in what we call the real world. It is made of flesh and bone and is subject to all the laws of science and nature. While Dreamwalking, the physical form is in its most vulnerable state as the mind is totally oblivious to its surroundings.

Spiritual

Although technically everything in the Empyrean is made of spirit mana, the spiritual form refers to the state the Dreamwalker's body assumes while traversing the Periphery. The spiritual form appears as a colored, flickering image of the Dreamwalker's physical self. Dreamwalkers are most vulnerable when in spirit form.

Pseudophysical

The pseudophysical form is that taken within the Dreamworld. Although composed of mana, this “residual self image” is shaped by the subconscious mind of the Dreamwalker (and sometimes the

Dreamer) and usually corresponds with that of his physical form including all ability scores, skills, feats and special abilities.

The Dreamer

Anyone who dreams is considered to be a Dreamer. The Dreamer is the creator of the Dreamworld and may appear as anyone or anything within it (even inanimate objects).

There are two basic types of Dreamers---idle and lucid.

Most Dreamers are idle. An idle Dreamer is unaware that he is dreaming and has little or no control over his own actions during the course of the dream. Idle Dreamers are content to wander through the Dreamworld under the direction of the subconscious mind. The Dreamer finds the experience similar to that of watching a movie in which he is the star.

Lucid Dreamers on the other hand are fully aware they are in a dream. They not only have complete control over their own actions but to some extent, the Dreamworld itself. Lucid Dreamers can be extremely powerful and are therefore rarely subject to Taeniid infestations. Most lucid Dreamers are unaware that others are able to enter their Dreamworld and during the dream it is nearly impossible convince them otherwise. Lucid Dreamers view Dreamwalkers and the Taenia as a natural part of the dream.

Whatever the type or form, the Dreamer always appears as the most bright and vibrant being in the Dreamworld.

The Periphery

The Periphery is the silvery border ethereal---an unbelievably vast, ocean-like realm of spirit mana set beneath a brooding, purple sky. Billions of Dreamworlds lie beneath the Periphery's iridescent waves and its waters often reflect the condition of those below---pure, clear water represents a Dreamworld that is virtually free of the Taenia while turbulent, brackish brown or green tinged seas indicate severe infestations.

As a realm of spirit, the Periphery is bound by no physical laws. Concepts such as time and distance are all relative. Movement through the water is accomplished by thought and is virtually instantaneous. The experience is akin to floating or swimming although no true effort is expended. Perception is limited while in the Periphery---the five senses of sight, sound, hearing, smell and taste are muted by residual emotions drifting up from the Dreamworlds below.

The existence of the Periphery has long been a subject of debate. Many scientists of Project Dreamwalker view the Periphery as a fabrication of the subconscious mind, designed to ease the transition between reality and dream. Throughout history, Mystics have assigned various religious or purgatorial significance to the Periphery while other more altruistic Dreamwalkers view it as proof that all of humanity is linked together by a common bond.

Whatever its true nature and purpose, all who have experienced it agree that the Periphery is a place of great peace and formless beauty. Even so, it is not without its dangers.

Astral storms are frequent occurrences. These vary greatly in size and intensity, the largest mirroring the devastating effects of those in the real world. Spontaneous whirlpools occasionally suck unwary Dreamwalkers down into the depths of a nearby Dreamworld. Just passing over the unwholesome waters of some of the more disturbed Dreamworlds is a danger to one's own sanity and peace of mind.

Worst of all is the constant threat of the dreaded Taeniid Broodkings. These powerful evil creatures often prowl the Periphery, lying in wait beneath the astral waters to attack a passing Dreamwalker.

The Barrier

The thin layer of mana that divides the Periphery from the Dreamworld as well as the Dreamworld from the Underpsyche is known as the Barrier.

Although Barriers are sometimes visible, they can be traversed at will from anywhere within the Dreamworld. The procedure is instantaneous and causes a slight distortion around the character as he passes through. The character may delve as deep into the Underpsyche as he desires but each level costs mana to traverse (see [Traversing the Barrier, pg. 56](#)).

The Dreamworld

Not every dream is accessible to Dreamwalkers---only those that occur during the deepest levels of REM sleep. These pseudophysical landscapes are known as Dreamworlds. Each Dreamer is different and therefore, so is each Dreamworld.

The Dreamworld's appearance is largely dependent upon the Dreamer's psychological state and makeup. Many also reflect his interests and hobbies. The Dreamer's psyche also has a strong influence as to the content of the Dreamworld. More creative Dreamers often have fantastic Dreamworlds while overall mental health and well-being determines the general mood and atmosphere---the more mentally unstable the Dreamer, the more horrid the Dreamworld.

Some Dreamworlds are outlandish creations, others are more mundane. A Dreamer who dreams of captaining a starship from his favorite television series manifests a Dreamworld vastly different than one who dreams of being a princess surrounded by a harem of handsome, obedient men.

Like the Periphery, the Dreamworld is a place of great beauty and danger. The Dreamworlds are the home of the Taenia---the worse the infestation, the greater the Taeniid presence.

The Denouement

Most dreams are a series of scenes or random images reflecting the Dreamer's thought processes and/or current state of mind. However, several times each night (during REM sleep) these dreams take on greater significance. These dreams are not just random occurrences, but rather the psychological manifestation of some real or imagined goal the Dreamer desires to complete. These goals are called denouements.

Denouements are a natural function of the healthy psyche. They are a tool of the subconscious mind used primarily for entertainment, problem solving or resolution of past events. Upon completing a denouement, the Dreamer wakes feeling invigorated and refreshed, despite whether or not having any conscious recollection of the dream or its outcome.

Given time, the Dreamer usually completes a dream's denouement on his own. However, the Taenia subtly work to prevent this from happening in order to feed off the Dreamer's feelings of frustration, failure and disappointment. People who wake up unrested, in a bad mood or "on the wrong side of the bed" have often been unsuccessful in accomplishing their denouement.

The Underpsyche

Beneath the Dreamworld lies a nearly infinite number of dormant Dreamworlds known as the Underpsyche. These Underworlds are the doorways into the subconscious mind of the Dreamer. The

Underworlds are Dreamworlds-to-be and follow much of the same guidelines. However, they are dimly lit and entirely devoid of Unreal. This combination provides for an eerie and unsettling effect.

Despite its emptiness and gloom, there is reason to travel through the Underpsyche. Scattered throughout the Underworlds are hidden pockets of unused mana that may be harvested by Dreamwalkers to replenish their supply. These pockets always appear as something important or interesting to the Dreamer and vary greatly in size and strength. For instance, an Underworld which manifests as the Dreamer's childhood home may contain pockets of mana in the form of his favorite pair of roller skates or his Babe Ruth autographed baseball.

Unfortunately, these pockets of mana are rarely left unguarded. In an infested psyche, Taeniid drones routinely transport eggs to the various levels of the Underpsyche. Some of these drones remain behind to defend their charges and must be dealt with before the mana pocket can be absorbed.

The Unreal

The Unreal are the pseudophysical manifestations of all people, animals and monsters living within the Dreamworld. Some are duplicates of people the Dreamer knows while others are mere fabrications of his sleeping mind.

The Unreal generally act as would their real world counterparts however, they are sometimes bound by the Dreamer's perception of reality. Therefore, Dreamwalkers would do well to learn as much about the Dreamer as possible before entering his dreams.

The Taenia

The Taenia Spiritus are spiritual parasites that derive sustenance from the negative emotions generated by the human psyche. More importantly, they actively attempt to foster these emotions in order to thrive and multiply. Their presence corrupts the Emyrean like a plague, turning otherwise peaceful Dreamworlds into places of nightmare.

It is not known for certain how Taeniid infestations arise in the human psyche although many theories abound, most including Broodkings who roam the Emyrean at will.

At some point or another, everyone is subjected to at least a minor Taeniid infestation and some people play host to them on a routine basis. Strings of bad luck, lingering feelings of sadness, guilt, anger, envy or betrayal are all that is needed for a Taeniid colony take hold. The subconscious mind is not entirely defenseless and often fights off and destroys these colonies while still in their formative stages. Some colonies are not destroyed but instead rendered dormant until revived (even years later) by some trauma, related occurrence, emotion or other unknown event. Each time a Taeniid colony is destroyed, the mind becomes more resistant to new infestation.

Taeniid infestations may spread quickly or over the course of months, years, or decades, depending on the strength of the Dreamer's psyche. The Taenia latch onto and help generate negative emotions. During sleep, the Queen begins laying eggs, dispatching her drones to distribute them throughout the different levels of the Underpsyche. Meanwhile, the infested person gradually sinks deeper and deeper into a state of madness or depression.

These colonies eventually become too large for the Dreamer's mind to handle alone. Lucid dreaming techniques, therapy and prescription drugs have proved useful in combating less severe Taeniid infestations. Failing that, the only thing that can help the patient is the intervention of a Dreamwalker.

Other Types of Dreamworlds

Animals

It has long been established that animals dream in a way similar to that of humans. However, the content of those dreams is largely open to debate and would most likely shed some light on the inner workings of the animal mind as well as the depth of their relationship with humans.

Thus far no Dreamwalker has been able to locate the Dreamworlds of an animal, leading to a host of speculation as well as the belief of an entirely different land of dreams. The quest for the Animal Empyrean has taken on a near mythical status among some Dreamwalkers.

Children

By Project rule, Dreamwalking in the mind of a child is to be avoided at least until the child reaches adolescence. This rule was established for the safety of all those involved. Children do not dream as adults do. Their perception of reality is underdeveloped and concepts such as life and death are often beyond their grasp.

The dreams of a child are sometimes so chaotic and unpredictable that they can be overwhelming and dangerous to an adult mind. One child's Dreamworld was reported as a land made up entirely of cartoon characters. These cartoons fell from cliffs, handled explosives and happily pummeled away at each other with little more than comedic effect. The Dreamwalkers however, were not so lucky.

Criminally Insane

The Dreamworlds of the criminally insane are often dark and hellish creations with cruel and perverse denouements. Even worse, Joining with the Dreamer or Possessing many of the Unreal is enough to threaten the sanity of any Dreamwalker. There is a belief that within each insane mind, a part of the Dreamer's consciousness realizes his beliefs and actions are abnormal. Attempts to contact this alter ego have met with limited success.

Except in extreme circumstances, Dreamwalking in the mind of the criminally insane is forbidden to members of Project Dreamwalker. Unfortunately for its employees, The Clinic has no such restrictions.

Coma Victims

No one knows for sure what took place when Dr. William Black entered the mind of Sarah Wilson. To date, no one else has ever been able to enter the mind of a coma victim. Those that have tried report a Barrier that is impossible to cross. Project Dreamwalker imposes strict taboos on entering the mind of a coma victim but The Clinic continues its attempts to access the unresponsive mind.

Mentally Challenged

The Dreamworlds of the mentally challenged are often a pleasant change from the chaotic and nightmarish Dreamworlds of others. Almost all are surreal and very few seem to have denouements other than enjoying the simple pleasures in life. Mentally challenged individuals immediately recognize and

happily welcome Dreamwalkers into their Dreamworlds. To date no Taeniid infestation has been found in the minds of a mentally challenged person. Project scientists are hard at work trying to figure out why.

Out of Body Experiences

It has been determined that most (but not all) so-called out of body experiences are actually just the dreams of a lucid Dreamer as he wanders about his own Dreamworld---a world mimicking the one he knows. The mistake is a natural one as the mind often cannot tell the difference between the Dreamworld and the real.

Dreamwalkers

Within their own Dreamworlds, Dreamwalkers gain the same benefits as lucid Dreamers. They automatically know their dream's denouement and completion conveys the usual feelings of triumph and euphoria, as well as the backwash of mana. In addition, subdenouements and incidental achievements (see *Designing a Denouement*, [pg. 76](#)) sometimes impart cryptic messages or provide better insight into something that is troubling the character in the real world. Dreamwalkers would do well to heed the workings of their own subconscious minds and investigate all fluff and other strange manifestations occurring within their dreams.

Islands

Islands are pseudophysical manifestations formed by the thoughts and dreams of thousands, sometimes millions, of people that were inspired by the same concept or ideal.

Islands vary greatly in size, shape and content. Some are based around a certain time period, some are centered around a particular person, organization or movement, while others have deep religious significance. In recent years, several well-known books and movies have given birth to brand new islands.

It is also rumored that each island contains an ancient standing column or pillar, supposedly engraved with directions to glorious Manaed, the Lost City of Dreams.

*O' I have walked the halls of noble Camelot
And toiled within long lost Cibolo's mountain mines,
O' I have seen the sun rise o'er Olympus' crown
And fought the endless battle on Valhalla's plain,
O' I beheld Atlantis' gleaming golden spires
And glimpsed dark lands where Elder gods in dreaming
sleep,
O' I have climbed the mountain that to the prophet came
And knelt before the cross upon the hill of thieves,
O' I have walked these paths, and more,
Which follow the Story Stones
And point the way to lost Manaed.*

---Raghib Moustafa, Mystic

Others

The Emphyrean is a land of few laws so who knows what other types of Dreamworlds there may be and what rules they may conform to. This is particularly frustrating to the scientific personnel of Project Dreamwalker as it limits correlation of data.

New Feats, Mana, Mana Powers and Mana Feats

“There is no spoon.”

---Neo, *The Matrix*

New Feat

Dreamwalker

Benefit: Dreamwalkers are lucid dreamers who are able to leave their own dreams and enter the dreams of others. Dreamwalkers are able to “slow down” the process of dreaming and have total dream recall upon awakening. This means that they generally experience and remember more of the Dreamworld than the Dreamer does---the Dreamer might remember only key events or imagery from the dream while a Dreamwalker experiences and remembers it all happening at “real time”.

Normal: Characters without this feat are unable to leave their own dreams.

Special: The player must choose a Dreamwalker Archetype (see [pg. 10](#)) to gain the benefits of the Dreamwalker feat. The character may perform all of the common mana powers ([pg. 21](#)) and may eventually gain mana feats ([pg. 34](#)).

Mana

Mana is the raw spiritual energy from which the Dreamworlds are formed. Within the dream, Dreamwalkers are able to manipulate this energy to produce various spectacular effects.

Mana is Different

For game purposes, the ability to manipulate mana is considered an extraordinary ability (Ex), possessed by all Dreamwalkers. It is nonmagical, its effects do not go away in an antimagic or antipsionic field and it is not subject to anything that disrupts magic or psionic powers. However, since Dreamwalking is a mental and spiritual aptitude, characters with psionic powers may use their psionic Power Points (PP) in the same way they use Mana Points (MP), but not vice versa.

Extraneous Components

Dreamwalkers can manipulate mana with their thoughts alone. However, many choose to do so in a variety of symbolic ways. Some Dreamwalkers learn occult mana “spells” from in ancient tomes. Others focus their spiritual energy through good luck charms, crystals or mystical runes tattooed on their bodies while still others, particularly Mystics, use holy amulets, icons, elaborate dances, chants, body paint or musical instruments to call upon their “magic.” Upon entering a Dreamworld, these extraneous components (spell books, runes, magic staves or wands, good luck charms, etc.) are always included among the character’s possessions and/or incorporated into the Dreamwalker’s pseudophysical form.

Use of extraneous components is highly based on the character’s concept and the player’s ability and willingness to roleplay. Game Master’s may wish to allow the character a +1 bonus to all mana based

Wisdom checks and a -1 to the MP cost (minimum of 1) on such checks when using extraneous components. Similarly, if divested of these components or otherwise prevented from performing his normal routine, the character should suffer a -1 penalty to all mana based Wisdom checks and a +1 to the MP cost.

Believability

Keep in mind that some of the more visual extraneous components and uses of mana in general may produce a negative response among witnesses. The Unreal act as would their real world counterparts. A Dreamwalker chanting and dancing around is likely to draw unwanted attention. Firing Mana Bolts and Creating fire in the Middle Ages is a sure way to be branded a demon or witch and be hunted down by the populace. Blatant use of certain powers in sight of the Unreal (such as Possession or Joining) may even force the Dreamer's mind to rebel (see Violence and Rebellion, [pg. 57](#)).

Mana Points

Characters start out with a number of Mana Points (MP) depending on their Archetype. This total increases by a variable amount (depending on the Archetype) each level AFTER the character acquires the Dreamwalker feat. Each round, a Dreamwalker may spend a number of Mana Points equal to or less than the "tens" of his Mana Point total. For instance a character with 58 Mana Points could spend up to 5 MP per round while a character with 33 MP can spend up to 3 MP per round.

In some cases, a Wisdom check may be required in addition to spending mana. If the roll fails, 1/2 the Mana Points normally spent for that action are still subtracted (minimum of 1). The Mana Point total replenishes itself each time the character returns to his own Dreamworld. It may also be restored by achieving dream denouements and subdenouements or by tapping into mana pockets in the Underpsyche (see [pg. 82](#)).

Mana Powers

A mana power is a one-time effect manifested by a mana wielding character or creature. Mana powers require Mana Points to use. Unlike arcane spellcasters, Dreamwalkers do not have to prepare their powers ahead of time. A Dreamwalker may manifest any common power at will, provided he has sufficient Mana Points to pay for the manifestation. A mana power immediately manifests once the character pays its Mana Point cost.

Mana powers don't require special gestures, words, or materials. They operate as thoughts made manifest. Some powers do have a noticeable display associated with their use, however (see Extraneous Components and Believability, above).

Optional Rule: Game Masters who wish to take a "learn as you go" approach to mana powers may wish to limit the initial number of powers the characters have access to. In this case, all characters should begin with Alteration. Naturals may choose 1d4+1 mana powers, Mystics may choose 1d3, Analysts may choose 1d2 and Users may choose 1 additional mana power to be proficient in. Thereafter, the character may choose one additional power with each increase in level.

Manifesting a Power

To manifest a power, a character selects one power that he knows and pays the Mana Point cost.

How to Read a Power Description

In most significant respects, manifesting a mana power follows the same rules as casting a spell. The differences between a power description and a spell description are summarized in this section.

Manifestation Time

Manifesting a mana power takes either 1 action (move OR attack, player's choice), a move action, an attack action, a free action or a full-round action, depending on the power. See the power descriptions for details.

Range

Some mana powers have a range, as listed in the power description. A power's range is the maximum distance from the Dreamwalker that the power's effect can occur. Unless otherwise noted, the range categories are the same as the ones used for spells.

Duration

Standard duration mana power effects last for the duration of the dream and disappear when either the dream ends OR when the character leaves the current Dreamworld (whether he travels into an Underworld or back into the Periphery).

Mana Point Cost

All mana powers have a minimum Mana Point cost. The point cost to manifest a particular power is also provided in that power's description.

Descriptive Text

A mana power's descriptive text explains how the power works or what it does.

Common Mana Powers

Listed below are some of the more common uses of mana.

Aegis

Manifestation Time: 1 action

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: Standard

Mana Points: 2

Aegis increases the character's Defense by 1 point per 2 MP spent. This manifests as an almost supernatural toughness and an uncanny ability to block or dodge attacks.

Channel Damage

Manifestation Time: free action

Range: Touch

Target: 1 weapon (see text)

Duration: 1 round

Mana Points: 1

Mana may be channeled through a normal attack such as that of a sword or gun in order to increase the amount of damage dealt. Intent to channel damage must be stated before the attack roll is made but the weapon does an extra 1d6 points of damage per MP spent if it hits. If the attack misses or the character is prevented from attacking that round, the Mana Points are still expended.

Multiple Actions

Manifestation Time: free action

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: Instantaneous

Mana Points: 5

Multiple actions may be taken in a round at the rate of 5 MP per extra action. The character gets full bonuses for any attacks, as if he were attacking in a separate round, but otherwise follows the normal rules for taking multiple actions.

Gain New Feat

Manifestation Time: 1 action

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: Standard

Mana Points: 15

New feats (but not mana feats) may be gained in the Dreamworld. The character must still meet the normal prerequisites of the desired feat.

Gain/Increase New Skill

Manifestation Time: 1 action

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: Standard

Mana Points: 1

New skills may be gained or increased in the Dreamworld at the rate of 1 rank in the skill for each MP spent. If the character buys a new cross-class skill, he or she gets ½ rank per MP spent. This power is most useful in surreal Dreamworlds where some skills have no real world counterparts. The character must have at least some idea of what type of skill he needs.

In the Dreamworld, the maximum rank in a class skill is equal to (character level + 3) x 2. The maximum rank in a cross-class skill is one-half of this number.

Healing

Manifestation Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Target: You or the creature touched

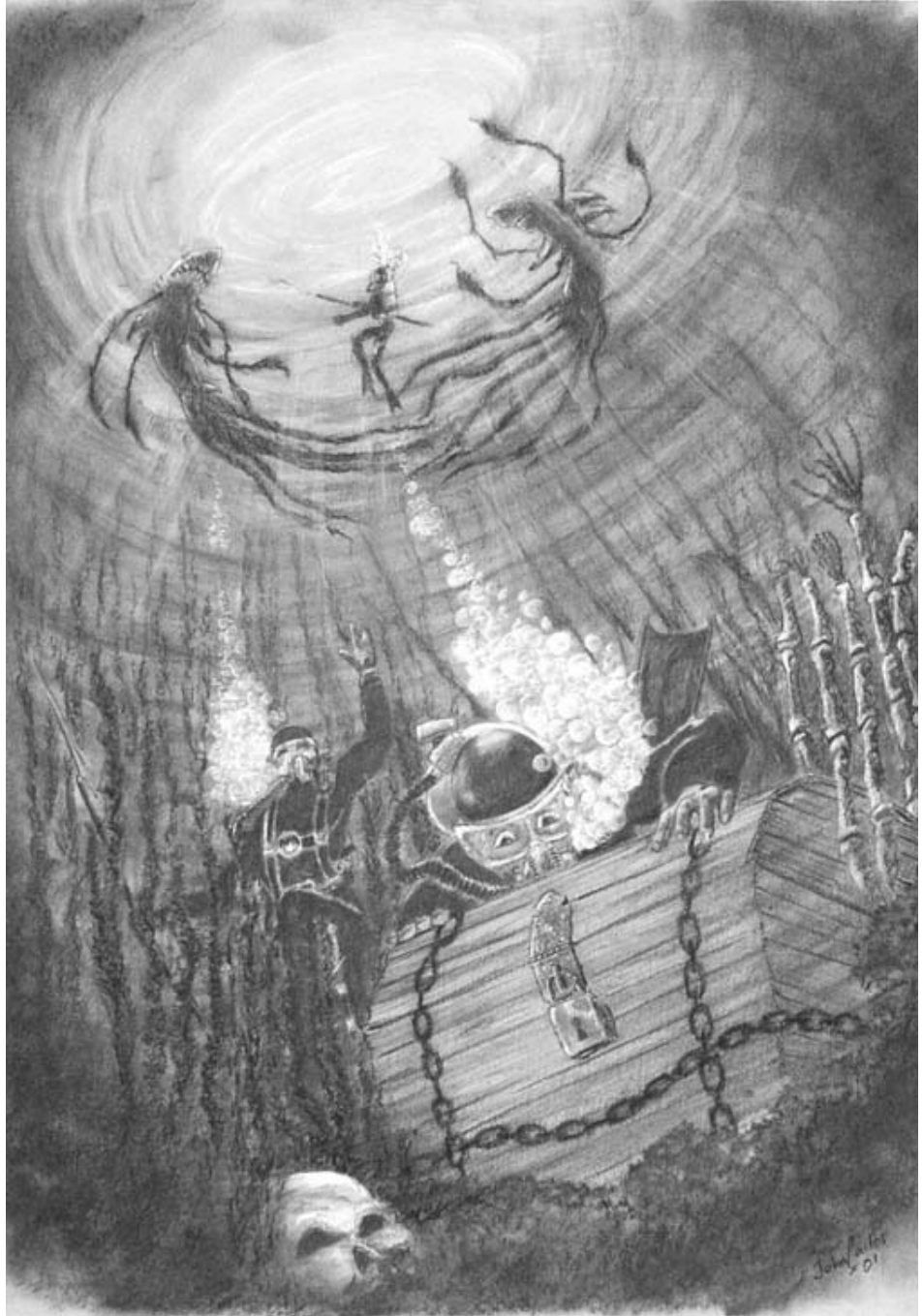
Duration: Instantaneous

Mana Points: 1

Dreamwalkers may heal themselves or others at the rate of 1d6 hit points per MP spent. Healing heals normal damage as well as damage from other sources of injury such as fire and acid without leaving scars however it does not extinguish flames or dissolve acid so the character may continue to take damage on subsequent rounds. Healing can also be used to reattach severed limbs provided the original limb is still available.

Healing is ineffective against disease but does neutralize and heal damage and other side effects (such as ability loss) from poisons and other sources of physical injury.

Healing returns an unconscious character back to full consciousness, without the normal side effects.



Increase Hit Points

Manifestation Time: 1 action
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: Standard
Mana Points: 5

The character's total hit points may be increased at the rate of (class HD + bonuses) per 5 MP spent.

Increase Ability Scores

Manifestation Time: 1 action
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: Standard
Mana Points: 5

Strength, Constitution and Dexterity may be increased at the rate of 1 point per 5 MP spent. These ability scores may be increased beyond racial maximums in this manner although each ability must be increased separately.

Increase Skill

Manifestation Time: 1 action
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: Standard
Mana Points: 1

Permanent skills (skills the character knows outside of the Dreamworld) may be increased in the Dreamworld at the rate of 2 ranks in the skill for each MP spent. If the character increases a cross-class skill, he or she gets 1 rank per MP spent. In the Dreamworld, the maximum rank in a class skill is equal to (character level + 3) x 2. The maximum rank in a cross-class skill is one-half of this number.

Mana Bolt

Manifestation Time: attack action
Range: Wisdom in yards
Duration: Instantaneous
Mana Points: 1

A Mana Bolt is a devastating attack that tears at the very fabric of the Dreamworld. A Mana Bolt produces a rippling pulse of raw mana that streaks out from the character's extended hand. In addition to doing damage, a Mana Bolt can be used to attack larval Unreal without harming the host. This can be done automatically by a touch attack. A ranged attack against a larva infesting an Unreal may be made at

a -5 penalty to the attack roll. If successful, the larva is burned out of the host's body. If the attack misses the larva, but would normally have hit the Unreal target (without the penalty), the host takes damage instead.

Mana Bolts do 1d8 points of damage per MP spent and require a successful attack roll to hit. The range is equal to the character's Wisdom in yards and is subject to the normal modifiers for ranged attacks. Mana Bolts bypass the protection granted by armor and count as a touch attack for purposes of determining the target's Defense. Damage is subtracted directly from the target's hit points and the Bolt continues on for a range determined by the Dreamwalker (up to the maximum).

Nullify

Manifestation Time: free action

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: Instantaneous

Mana Points: 1

Nullify is an instinctive ability inherent to all mana using creatures, enabling them to deflect and disperse direct mana based attacks at a 1 MP per 1 MP ratio, up to the amount of Mana Points the target may spend per round.

Direct mana based attacks include Mana Bolts as well as alteration (Creation and Reshaping) powers that directly affect the character's pseudophysical form (including all clothing and possessions) usually through physical contact although some mana feats make such alteration possible from a distance. Nullify can also be used to counteract alteration powers (most often Distance Reshaping) in the same manner. Nullification happens automatically and is not considered an action, nor does it have any effect on how many Mana Points the character may spend over the remainder of the round.

A Taeniid Queen fires a 4d6 Mana Bolt at Marit who has 31 Mana Points. Since Marit can only spend 3 MP per round, only 3 MP of the Mana Bolt are Nullified and she still takes 1d8 points of damage from the attack.

Suppression

Manifestation Time: free action

Range: Unlimited

Target: the Dreamer

Duration: 1 round

Mana Points: 1

Suppression is used when the team is dishing out large amounts of damage in the Dreamworld. In a Joined character, Suppression adds a +5 per MP spent to the Dreamer's next Will save (for purposes of Dreamer rebellion only, see [pg. 57](#)). If a character is not Joined with the Dreamer, Suppression adds only +1 bonus per MP spent. More than one character can use Suppression to modify the same roll. Suppression counts as a free action and is limited by the number of MP a character can spend in one round.

Possession

Manifestation Time: attack action

Range: Touch

Target: One creature

Duration: Standard

Mana Points: 1

Using Possession, a Dreamwalker may usurp the form and identity of an Unreal. The Taenia (including their Unreal hosts) are immune to Possession.

Physical contact with the Unreal must first be made (possibly via a touch attack). The Dreamwalker's body then melds with the new shape, gaining the outward appearance and form of the Unreal in question.

During Possession, the Dreamwalker takes on the Strength, Constitution, Dexterity, Defense, Fortitude and Reflex saving throws of the host body but retains his own Intelligence, Wisdom, Charisma, Will saving throws, skills, feats and special abilities, all usable at the GM's discretion (for instance, some skills can be more difficult, or even impossible, to accomplish in animal form---a character may have Repair skill but it is hard to hold a wrench with a flipper). All MP costs are raised by 1 MP until the Dreamwalker resumes his regular form.

In the case of a Possessed creature or animal, the character gains use of all of the animal's physical characteristics (birds can fly, sharks breathe water and swim fast, bats "see" by sonar, etc.) and can interact (but not communicate) with animals of the same type. If the creature has inherent special abilities the Dreamwalker gains the use of all extraordinary (Ex) and supernatural (Su) abilities but not spell-like (Sp) ones.

All damage taken in combat is subtracted from the Unreal's hit points instead of the character's. If the Unreal is killed, knocked unconscious or otherwise reduced to 0 hit points or less, the character is incapable of any action other than disengaging from the host. The character does not take damage from further attacks but may be forcibly disengaged if the host body is destroyed (such as by rending apart or burning).

The Dreamwalker does not gain any memories or skills from this power so he must be careful when dealing with friends or relatives of the Unreal Possessed. After the Dreamwalker exits the body, the Unreal has no memory of the Possession and may be extremely confused, especially if he is wounded or in an unfamiliar location.

Possession is near instantaneous but the procedure may prove terrifying to Unreal who witness it, sometimes even forcing the Dreamer's consciousness to rebel (see Violence and Rebellion, [pg. 57](#)). A character may cross from one Unreal to another at the normal MP cost, with no noticeable effect and without having to resume his natural form. Possessed Unreal may not cross any Barrier. Characters who do so and then return to the Dreamworld resume their natural form. Possessed Unreal are easily distinguished by the Taenia and other Dreamwalkers.

Possession costs 1 MP. This amount is increased by +1 MP for each size smaller than the character's original form. There is no cost for disengaging with the Unreal and resuming the character's original form.

Alteration

"That's the funny thing, Chris. Thought is reality. Physical is the illusion."

---Albert, *What Dreams May Come*

Mana can be used to alter the pseudophysical reality of the Dreamworld itself through Creation and Reshaping. Create and Reshape are the most often used (and potentially abused) powers available to characters.

Alteration applies only to nonliving, nonmagical, nonpsionic things---a piece of lumber may be Created or Reshaped but a living tree, a magical staff or an animated chair may not. Only normal items or items inherent to the Dreamworld (such as a laser rifle in a science fiction setting) are subject to alteration. Therefore, the Game Master will have to make a lot of judgment calls as to what is allowed and what isn't during the course of each session.

Altered items may be identified upon a successful DC 15 Spot check. Altered items last for the duration of the dream and disappear once the character leaves the Dreamworld. Creative players may somehow be able to use this to their advantage.

A cautionary word on alteration: The following rules are purposely designed to be flexible and that very flexibility opens itself up for a lot of misuse. Creative use of these powers should be encouraged rather than inhibited but keep in mind that the ability to alter the very fabric of the dream enables Dreamwalkers to accomplish almost anything within reason---don't let players cheapen the fun by rules-lawyering or power gaming (exploiting rules "glitches" that completely unbalance the game). Game Masters and players alike should put the spirit of the game (no pun intended) ahead of the actual rules.

Size

Both Create and Reshape alterations use the item's size (dimension or weight---whichever size category is greater) to determine DC modifiers and Mana Point cost. In some cases, units of measurement (pounds, liters or ounces), especially in regards to fine sized items (such as plastic explosives, acid or poison), may be more appropriate (GM's discretion).

The Game Master should be prepared to allow a lot of leeway here as size refers primarily to the item's actual mass rather than its height, length or width. It is perfectly acceptable to rule that a football field and a 100 yard long piece of string not have the same size (for purposes of difficulty and MP cost). By the same token Creation of ten swords should be treated as Creation of multiple items, even if all of those swords are connected to each other by a tiny piece of metal.

Size	DC	Examples
Fine	0	Quarter, gold ring, house key
Diminutive	0	Disposable camera, roll of duct tape, flashlight
Tiny	5	Night vision goggles, handgun, laptop computer
Small	10	Guitar, assault rifle, television set
Medium	15	Bicycle, flamethrower, entertainment center
Large	20	Car, storage shed, brick wall
Huge	25	Armored truck, swimming pool, skateboard ramp
Gargantuan	30	Tank, bank vault, cement mixing truck
Colossal +	35	Skyscraper, house, aircraft carrier

Additional DC Modifiers	
+1	for multiple items
+1	for complex devices
+5	electronic parts
+15	target not stationary (Distance Reshaping only)
-10	for every additional Dreamwalker concentrating on the act
Note #1: These modifiers are cumulative	
Note #2: Alteration of items which do not fit in with the Dreamworld (such as a machine gun in a medieval setting) are double the normal difficulty and MP cost.	

Also keep in mind that what works in one Dreamworld does not necessarily work in others. If the GM ever has second thoughts about something he allows one night, he should feel free to change his mind the next---the rules of the Empyrean are constantly changing and an increase or decrease in difficulties and/or MP costs often manifests for no particular (or known) reason.

Taking 10 and Taking 20

Characters using alteration may “Take 10” and “Take 20” as per the normal rules for doing so.

Creation

Manifestation Time: full round action

Range: Touch

Target: One object

Duration: Standard

Mana Points: 2

Creation MP Cost	
2	MP per Object Size
+2	MP for multiple items
+5	MP for complex devices
+10	MP for electronic parts
Note: These numbers are cumulative.	

Everything within the Dreamworld is composed of mana and as such, is subject to the whims and desires of the Dreamwalker. Dreamwalkers are able to take raw mana (air) from their surroundings and transform it into something more useful, whether it be a finished item (such as a car), raw materials (lumber or stone), liquids and even gasses. To do so requires a successful Wisdom check (DC varies with size and composition). Characters with the Creative feat add a +2 bonus to this check for every time they have taken that feat.

Creation takes place upon touch and is nearly instantaneous---the desired object literally appears to sprout forth from the character’s hand (or feet, or back or head as the character desires). Clothing does not hinder Creation so a character may still wear gloves (or boots, or a helmet, etc.) and produce the same effect. A working knowledge of the Created item is not necessary (see Imprinting, [pg. 78](#)) although the character must know what kind of item he wants to Create. For instance, a poison antidote may not be Created unless the character knows what kind of antidote is needed.

Once Created, items conform to their natural shape and form. Liquids must be stored in some type of container, fire must have fuel to continue burning, gasses may be dispersed by heavy winds, etc. Created items do not imply motion---air may be Created but wind may not; water runs downhill, fire wafts upward from its source, etc.

Complex Devices

Complex devices include almost any type of mechanical item. The number of mechanical parts does not matter---the difficulty remains the same. Most modern weapons and all vehicles are considered complex devices.

Electronic Devices

Electronic devices include any type of manufactured item with electronic or electrical components. The difficulty to Create such items is higher and the cost greater although the number of electronic parts does not matter---the difficulty and cost remain the same.

Creation Time

Creation time is limited by the amount of MP a character can spend per round.

Multiple or Group Items

Multiple items of the same type or groups of related items (such as a bow and quiver of arrows, a furnished apartment building, a desk and chair, a bed frame, a box spring and mattress, a fully outfitted aircraft carrier, etc.) may be Created with one check. In this case, the approximate size of the largest item or the overall size of the gathered items, as well as their composition, is determined by the Game Master and the appropriate DC modifiers applied. Group items include a castle with full armaments (catapult, ballista, boiling oil, armory, etc.) but not a skyscraper with the same.

Sky wants to Create a tuxedo so he'll look spiffy at the party. Even though each individual part of the tuxedo is Diminutive or Tiny (shoes, socks, pants, shirt, cummerbund, tie, jacket, cufflinks, etc.), the Game Master classifies the entire tux as one Medium-size item and allows the character to make a single Wisdom check at DC 16 (15 Medium-size + 1 multiple items).

Just in case, Sky wants to Create a fully loaded 9 mm, shoulder holster and several extra clips to wear underneath his tux. The Game Master rules this group of items to be Small and allows Sky to make a single roll at an additional DC 12 (10 Small size + 1 multiple items + 1 complex device).

Attack

Creation can be used as an attack form such as when Creating a pillar of fire around an enemy or sending an electrical charge through an iron girder to strike the drone walking across. In most cases, the target should be allowed to make either a Fortitude or a Reflex saving throw to take 1/2 or no damage (GM's discretion).

The character is immune to the effects of his attack for the round in which the attack form is Created only. Thereafter he may suffer damage from his own Creation normally. Other factors may compromise this immunity (GM's discretion). For instance, Creating an electrical charge while standing in a pool of water is generally not a good idea, nor is Creating a bonfire while drenched in kerosene.

Direct attacks against a mana using creature are subject to be Nullified (see Nullify, [pg. 26](#)). Creating a steel box around a character may not be Nullified but encasing him in a solid block of ice would, since it touches him directly.

Damage must be determined on a case by case basis. The nature and size of the attack form often help determine the amount of damage dealt but as a rule of thumb it should be no higher than 1d8 points of damage per 2 MP spent. This is one area where the Game Master must be flexible and "think outside the box" to apply any other adverse affects (such as catching on fire, damage from smoke inhalation, drowning, etc.).

Extended Creations

Creation is only limited by the amount of mana a Dreamwalker has. If the desired item has an MP cost greater than the character can spend per round, Creation carries over into subsequent rounds provide the character continues to concentrate. The order in which extended Creations take shape (and thus, the MP

cost) begins with its size, then multiple items are added, then moving parts, then electronic components. Extended Creation requires the utmost concentration leaving the Dreamwalker vulnerable to outside attack---characters are considered Unaware for combat purposes.

If the character is interrupted before the desired item is complete (such as by the character being attacked), a partially formed item or structure is Created instead. If the character is interrupted during Creation, he loses the MP for the round in which he is attacked.

Several rounds into the Extended Creation of a skyscraper, Joliet is attacked by a swarm of Taeniid drones. By then, the would-be skyscraper is fully formed but is just a shell that lacks any moving parts or electronic components.

Pooling

Some things may be difficult or even impossible for one character to Create alone. Several Dreamwalkers may pool their mana together in order to help with Creation. The DC is lowered by -10 for every additional Dreamwalker who helps with Creation. The Dreamwalkers must be in physical contact with one other and must all concentrate (becoming Unaware for combat purposes) for this to work although only one character does the actual Creation. Pooled Creation time is limited by the Creating character's ability to spend MP per round. The total MP cost of the Created item is distributed evenly among those involved, with the Creating character responsible for the difference, if any.

Dylan, with 53 Mana Points, wants to Create a mountain retreat to safely house himself and his pet bats while they sleep. His DC is 42 (DC 35 (Colossal Size) + 1 complex device (doors, windows), +5 electronic parts (lights, security alarms, air conditioner) +1 multiple items (furniture, food, etc.)). However, two other Dreamwalkers join hands to help him Create his bat cave, lowering his DC to 22 (DC 42 - 20 (2 Dreamwalkers))---a much greater chance of success.

The cost for creating the mountain is 35 Mana Points (18 (Colossal Size) + 5 (complex devices) + 10 (electronic parts) + 2 (multiple items) which is distributed evenly amongst the three Dreamwalkers (11 MP each), with Dylan responsible for the remaining 2 MP. Because Dylan can spend 5 MP per round, the bat cave will be finished in 7 rounds.

Reshape

Manifestation Time: full round action

Range: Touch

Target: One object

Duration: Standard

Mana Points: 1

Reshape MP Cost	
+1	for multiple items
+1	for each Size
+5	for complex devices
+10	for electronic parts
Note: These modifiers are cumulative.	

Reshape is similar to Creation but less costly to perform. The Dreamer's mind imposes a pseudophysical form on everything within the Dreamworld that may be Reshaped with a successful Wisdom check (bonuses for the Creative feat apply, as above).

Only nonliving, nonmagical, nonpsionic solids or liquids may be Reshaped, although these materials can be transformed into almost anything, even a gas. Once again, a working knowledge of the item is not necessary although the character must know what kind of item he wants to Reshape. The original item

must be of roughly the same (or greater) size and mass as the desired item and often becomes unusable after Reshaping.

The DC and the MP cost for Reshaping varies with the item Reshaped. Reshaping may be Pooled or Extended and Multiple or Group Items Reshaped in the same way as Creation.

Unmake

Items may be Unmade by being Reshaped into air.

Mending

Items may be automatically repaired with Reshaping. Mending restores all lost hit points and hardness to vehicles and inanimate objects and completely repairs any moving or electronic components. To determine the Mana Point cost, treat the item as if it were being Reshaped into one of similar size and makeup, then halve the total (minimum of 1).

Attack

In some cases, Reshape can be used as an attack form such as when turning a larval knight's armor suit into an iron maiden or transforming it into pure acid. To do so, the Dreamwalker must first make physical contact with his target---in combat this requires a touch attack. The Wisdom check takes place after contact is made and counts as a free action.

As with Creation, the character is immune to the effects of his attack for the round in which the attack form was Reshaped. Thereafter he may suffer damage normally, depending on the circumstances. It is up to the GM to determine the amount of damage done from a Reshaping attack but by rule of thumb, it should be no more than 1d8 points per MP spent. It is also up to the Game Master to decide if there are other adverse effects, depending on the type of attack.

Once again, keep in mind that direct attacks against a mana using creature or his personal possessions are subject to be Nullified (see Nullify, [pg. 26](#)).

Distance Reshape

A character can use Reshape to alter the form of items (and sometimes even attack) at a distance up to his Wisdom in yards. The character must be able to see the item being Reshaped and some part of the character must be touching something that touches the item---a character standing in a room may Reshape the ceiling as his feet touch the floor which touches the walls which touch the ceiling.

The target must also be stationary in regards to the character. For instance, if the character is aboard an airplane, all items inside would be considered stationary. If the target is not stationary, (i.e. a character standing on the side of the road attempts to Reshape a moving vehicle) the character suffers an additional +15 penalty to the DC. Living creatures are never considered stationary for purposes of this roll. In addition, Dexterity bonuses for Defense are added to the DC of any Distance Reshaping directed against them or their personal possessions (usually through their shoes).

Distance Reshaping produces a visible effect---both the item being Reshaped and the intervening distance ripple during the procedure. Therefore, if the effect is some type of obvious attack form (such as making the floor disappear or growing spikes from the walls), the target may be allowed a Reflex saving throw to avoid the effect (GM's discretion).

The distance between the character and the intended effect is counted towards the item's size for purposes of DC modifiers and MP cost even though the actual affected area (and thus the damage delivered, if any) may be much smaller.

Glory uses Reshape to form a 6 inch hole in the ceiling, 20' above her. Even though the hole is Fine, the size is considered Huge because of the distance between Glory and the desired effect.

Joining

"People seldom refuse help, if one offers it in the right way."

---A. C. Benson

Manifestation Time: attack action

Range: Touch

Target: the Dreamer

Duration: Permanent

Mana Points: 1

Joining is similar to Possession but instead of merging with the Unreal, the Dreamwalker is able to unite with the Dreamer himself.

For Joining to take place, the Dreamwalker must first make physical contact with his target--if in combat, via a touch attack. A DC 10 Wisdom check takes place after contact is made, and counts as a free action.

If the check fails, the Joining is unsuccessful, the Dreamer now believes that the character intends to do him harm and seeks to distance himself from that character and his allies. If pursued, he seeks help from others in the Dreamworld (such as the Unreal police force) and uses any available means to defend himself. This can be particularly lethal when dealing with a lucid Dreamer.

In addition, the Dreamworld begins to reflect this hostility towards the characters. The DC of all further checks and saves made by the Dreamwalkers are increased by +5 for the duration of the dream or until resolution of the dream's denouement. Subsequent attempts to Join with the Dreamer (by anyone) allow the Dreamer to resist the character's Wisdom check with one of his own, as per the normal rules for opposed checks.

In some instances, no one may be able to Join with the Dreamer. In this case, the only way to learn the dream's denouement is by Guestimation (see Interpreting the Denouement, [pg. 57](#)).

If the Joining is successful, the character's pseudophysical form melds with that of the Dreamer. While Joined the Dreamwalker retains all of his own ability scores, skills, feats and special abilities and may manipulate mana normally. In addition, Joined characters are able to use any mana feat the Dreamer had manifested prior to Joining. If the Dreamer's form is something other than human (such as an animal), the character gets the Strength, Dexterity and Constitution, Fortitude and Reflex saving throws and extraordinary (Ex) and supernatural (Su) (but not spell-like (Sp) special abilities of the new form as well.

In combat, the Joined character receives the same bonuses as the Dreamer as outlined in the Combat and the Dreamer section ([pg. 42](#)). A Joined character must subtract damage taken from his own hit points, not the Dreamer's. If the Dreamwalker is killed, he is ejected from the dream as normal; the Dreamer remains unharmed. The Dreamer cannot pass through any Barrier. A Joined character is easily distinguished by the Taenia or by other Dreamwalkers.

A Joined character is immediately able to recognize and interpret the dream's denouement. While Joined, most Dreamers (even lucid ones) are content to let the characters control their actions, viewing the course of events as a natural part of the dream.

The Dreamwalker can feel the mind of the Dreamer lying just below the surface of his consciousness. The Dreamwalker gains automatic access to all of the Dreamer's trivial memories (but not skills, feats, or spell-like abilities). A DC 15 Wisdom check enables the character to delve even deeper into the Dreamer's mind in order to access the Dreamer's more private memories, help recognize the significance of fluff and Taeniid manifestations (a failed check means that information is inaccessible). This includes access to knowledge that the Dreamer knows in the real world so Joining can be disastrous in the wrong hands. Luckily, the Dreamer is not without protection.

If the desired information is extremely important (such as a high level security passcode) or potentially damaging or embarrassing (such as the name of the married woman he is having an affair with), the Dreamer's mind may resist with an opposed Wisdom check. The Dreamer's roll may be modified from +5 to +25 or even higher for particularly vital pieces of information.

If the character loses the contest, he is automatically ejected from the body of the Dreamer and must make an immediate DC 15 Will saving throw or else be ejected from the Dreamworld as well (see Dump Shock, [pg. 43](#)). The character can feel the Dreamer's mind begin to rebel (see Violence and Rebellion, [pg. 57](#)) before the actual opposed check and should be allowed to cease the memory search if he wishes. Once a character has been ejected in this manner, further attempts to Join with the Dreamer (by anyone) are resisted as above.

There is another danger to a successful Joining. Dreamwalkers do not dream as normal people do. They know what their denouements are and are easily able to fulfill them which sometimes makes their own dreams seem routine and uninteresting by comparison.

Upon Joining with a Dreamer, the sensory input is almost overwhelming. A Dreamwalker who scores a critical success on his initial Wisdom check becomes temporarily lost in the thoughts and memories of the Dreamer. He is incapable of any action and can only watch helplessly as the Dreamer wanders about the Dreamworld trying to fulfill the dream's denouement. This effect lasts for 3d6 minutes, after which time, the Dreamwalker may assume control of the Dreamer's mind and actions normally.

Joining costs 1 MP to initiate, none to disengage.

Mana Feats

"My world. My rules."

---Catherine Dean, *The Cell*

Mana feats are acquired in place of normal "real world" feats. They are advanced mana-based abilities that require intense dedication and training to properly develop and learn. Mana feats only affect the character's pseudophysical form and are a direct result of the Dreamwalker finally being able to convince his subconscious mind that he is in a dream.

Mana feats are available to the character whenever he is in the dream state. Within his own Dreamworld, a lucid Dreamer (including Dreamwalkers) may manifest any mana feat just by making a DC 15 Wisdom check (Creative feat bonuses apply). Success indicates the character has gained the desired mana feat for the duration of the dream. If the check fails, the character may not attempt to manifest that mana feat again until his next period of REM sleep.

Mana feats, especially major mana feats, should be rare and powerful. When characters gain a mana feat, they should feel like they earned it. Game Masters are encouraged to develop additional mana feats (perhaps modeling them after special abilities) to suit their own games.

There are two types of mana feats---minor and major. Most mana feats were developed by Mystics and thus many have poetic names.

Note #1: A character must have the Dreamwalker feat for at least three levels before he may begin taking mana feats in place of real world feats.

Note #2: A character must have at least two minor mana feats for every major mana feat.

Minor Mana Feats

Chameleon Skin

Prerequisite: Dreamwalker

Benefit: Chameleon Skin enables a character to appear as one of the Unreal, no matter who he Possesses or what form he takes in the dream. In the Dreamworld, it hides the character from the Taenia (or other Dreamwalkers) until he does something contrary to the nature of the Unreal within, such as manipulating mana in plain sight.

Special: This mana feat is of limited effect in the Periphery.

Combat Focus

Prerequisite: Dreamwalker

Benefit: A character with Combat Focus is able to center his mind entirely on the current combat. As a result, he is never required to make a Massive Damage check and does not fall unconscious until his hit points reach -9 rather than 0.

Destruction

Prerequisite: Dreamwalker

Benefit: A character with Destruction may increase the amount of damage done by his Mana Bolt by +1d8.

Special: This mana feat may be taken more than once.

Gift of Sand

Prerequisite: Dreamwalker

Benefit: Dreamwalkers with Gift of Sand are especially proficient at Joining with the Dreamer and keeping him asleep. The character gains a +5 bonus to his Wisdom check for purposes of Joining (as well as +5 to any opposed Wisdom checks vs. the Dreamer) and while Joined, adds a +5 bonus to the Dreamer's Will save for purposes of violence and rebellion (see Violence and Rebellion, [pg. 57](#)).

Healer

Prerequisite: Dreamwalker

Benefit: Healers may increase the amount of Health points Healed by +1d6.

Special: This mana feat may be taken more than once.

Intense Training

Prerequisite: Dreamwalker

Benefit: Intense Training may be taken to permanently raise Strength OR Constitution OR Dexterity by +5 points, even if this raises the ability beyond racial maximums.

Special: The character may decide whether or not he wants this change visible when this mana feat is chosen. This mana feat may be taken more than once.

Lightning Reflexes

Prerequisite: Dreamwalker

Benefit: Lightning Reflexes enables the character to take an extra move or attack action each round, with no extra penalties.

Special: This mana feat may be taken more than once.

Leap of the Grasshopper

Prerequisite: Dreamwalker

Benefit: This Mana feat grants a +5 bonus to all Jumping checks and doubles the maximum distance jumped.

Special: This Mana feat may be taken more than once, granting a +5 bonus each time and first tripling, then quadrupling, etc. the normal maximum distance jumped. If the character cannot see where he is jumping to, Leap of the Grasshopper does not guarantee a safe landing.

Marksman

Prerequisite: Dreamwalker

Benefit: Marksmen receive a +5 attack bonus to all ranged attacks.

Special: This bonus does not grant extra attacks for a high BAB although it is added to all extra attacks (if any) the character might normally have.

Mettle

Prerequisite: Dreamwalker

Benefit: Mettle adds strength and toughness to the character's pseudophysical form. It effectively provides +3 points of (natural armor) Defense and subtracts -2 from the DC of all Fortitude saving throws.

Special: This Mana feat may be taken more than once.

Peripheral Vitality

Prerequisite: Dreamwalker

Benefit: Peripheral Vitality returns the character's physical abilities (Strength, Dexterity and Constitution) to normal while traversing the Periphery.

Pheromones

Prerequisite: Dreamwalker

Benefit: Pheromones grant the character a bonus of +5 to all Charisma and Charisma-based skill checks. Members of the opposite sex who wish to attack the character must make a DC 15 Will saving throw. If the roll fails, all of the attacker's rolls suffer a -10 penalty because of the intense and overwhelming feelings of passion and desire the character inspires. This penalty is reduced to -5 if the Dreamwalker attacks the affected creature.

Special: This ability is nullified by distance or if the Unreal in question has no sense of smell. The Taenia are susceptible to this feat although their gender (and sometimes the gender of the Dreamwalker) is dictated by their manifestation, rather than their natural form.

Quick Draw

Prerequisite: Dreamwalker

Benefit: A character with Quick Draw is able to draw a weapon with blinding speed. This grants him an extra attack (at full bonuses) before anyone else in the first round of combat only, provided the character is not surprised. Thereafter, initiative is handled normally.

Spider Climb

Prerequisite: Dreamwalker

Benefit: Spider Climb allows a character to climb any type of surface, no matter how sheer, and he may even climb upside down, at a climb speed of 20 feet, without having to make a Climb check.

Special: The character must have his hands and feet free to climb in this manner, although he may still wear gloves, shoes, etc.

Spiritual Balance

Prerequisite: Dreamwalker

Benefit: This mana feat vastly improves the character's sense of balance and body control such that while conscious, the character can never fail a Balance check.

Special: The character can walk across or even fight upon the flimsiest of structures (such as ropes, tree branches and power lines) at normal speed, without fear of falling. The structure traversed must be solid (as opposed to gas or liquid) and capable of supporting at least 01% of the character's normal body weight.

Thief in the Night

Prerequisite: Dreamwalker

Benefit: Thief in the Night grants the character a +10 bonus to all Hide and Move Silently checks.

Special: The character appears hazy and insubstantial to those not looking directly at him.

Whirling Dervish

Prerequisite: Dreamwalker

Benefit: With this mana feat, the character becomes a whirlwind of attacks, jumping around, doing flips and rolls, and attacking his opponents from strange and awkward angles. The character must perform a full-round action, giving up his regular attacks and instead making one melee attack at the character's highest base attack bonus (and an additional +5 attack bonus) against each adjacent opponent.

Special: This bonus does not grant extra attacks for a high BAB although the +5 attack bonus is added to all attacks that round.

Wolf Senses

Prerequisite: Dreamwalker

Benefit: Wolf Senses grants a +5 bonus to all Listen, Spot or Search checks.

Special: This bonus extends to all of the five senses---sight, hearing, taste, touch and smell and perhaps even beyond to the legendary sixth sense as the character may notice even subtle changes (such as tension) in his surroundings. This mana feat may be taken more than once.

Major Mana Feats

Heart of the Beast

Prerequisite: Dreamwalker

Benefit: This mana feat enables the character to assume the form of any type of person, plant, animal or creature. The character retains his own Intelligence, Wisdom, Charisma, hit points, Will saving throws, skills, feats and special abilities (usable at the GM's discretion) and gains the Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, Defense, Fortitude and Reflex saving throws, natural, extraordinary (Ex) and supernatural (Su) (but not spell-like (Sp) special abilities of the desired creature.

Special: Heart of the Beast cannot replicate an existing creature (such as a specific person) but can mimic different ages, genders, races or types of creatures inherent to the Dreamworld (such as a fish-man in an underwater fantasy setting).

Partial transformations (such as growing claws or wings) and transformation into creatures larger or smaller than the character require a successful DC 25 Wisdom check (Creative feat bonuses apply). This check suffers a -1 penalty for every difference in size. Failure inflicts 1d10 points of damage on the character. A natural 1 on the die roll means the character cannot use this mana feat again until his next period of REM sleep.

Crossing Over

Prerequisite: Dreamwalker

Benefit: With this mana feat, characters may choose to "cross over" from the real world into the dream and become a creature of pure spirit. When a character crosses over, he gains a +5 each to his Strength, Constitution and Dexterity and these ability scores no longer have a maximum limit. In addition, the

character automatically gains one minor mana feat and the ratio of minor to major mana feats becomes 1:1 instead of 2:1.

Special: This mana feat is only available to Mystics and Naturals. The Dreamwalker's physical body essentially dies, even though his consciousness continues to live on in his own Dreamworld. A character who crosses over is considered to be a native of the Empyrean. The upside to this is that he becomes considerably more powerful. The downside is that when a character is killed in the Dreamworld, he is ejected into the Periphery. If killed in the Periphery or his own Dreamworld, he apparently ceases to exist.

Game Masters have the final say on whether or not a character may choose this mana feat and cross over. Dreamwalkers who cross over may continue to interact with those who have not for a time, but eventually they lose touch with those in the physical world.

Form of the Earth

Prerequisite: Dreamwalker

Benefit: This mana feat enables the character to assume the form of any type of nonliving, nonmagical, nonpsionic, inanimate object. The character remains conscious and retains his own Intelligence, Wisdom and Charisma, hit points, Will saving throws, skills, feats and special abilities (all usable at the GM's discretion) while taking on the Defense, hardness, Fortitude and Reflex saving throws of the desired object.

Special: Speech and movement are limited by the object in question and the GM's discretion. A car may drive around normally and speak through its radio or horn, but a refrigerator cannot speak (although it could conceivably communicate in code by opening and closing its door) and can only "walk" by rocking from side to side.

Partial transformation (such as a hammer hand or human legs on a refrigerator body) and transformation into objects larger or smaller than the character's size require a successful DC 25 Wisdom check (Creative feat bonuses apply). This check suffers a -1 penalty for every difference in size. Failure causes 1d10 points of damage. A natural 1 on the die roll means the character cannot use this mana feat again until his next period of REM sleep.

Genesis

Prerequisite: Dreamwalker

Benefit: This mana feat enables a Dreamwalker to extend his alteration powers to include living things.

Special: The DC and Mana Point cost are based on the Unreal's size. Only normal Unreal or Unreal inherent to the Dreamworld (such as a troll in a fantasy setting) may be altered in this manner. Genesis does not bestow any particular loyalty to the character in question nor do Dreamwalkers have any control over the memories, personalities or actions of fabricated Unreal, although this is often dictated by the Unreal in question (i.e. a newly Created British soldier will most likely fight Nazi Unreal on the battlefield).

Genesis has no effect on the Taenia or other Dreamwalkers although larval hosts may be affected by alteration in this manner.

Long Arm

Prerequisite: Dreamwalker

Benefit: This mana feat enables the character to use alteration powers at a range equal to his Wisdom in yards, provided he has a clear line of sight.

Special: The MP cost increases by +1 for every yard after the first but otherwise is treated as if the character was actually touching the item or affected area. This mana feat may be taken more than once and doubles the normal range each time.

Mana Control

Prerequisite: Dreamwalker

Benefit: Mana Control allows the character to use mana and extraneous components even while in the Periphery.

Special: Ability score increases, new skills/skill increases and altered items disappear once the character enters a Dreamworld.

Night Whispers

Prerequisite: Dreamwalker

Benefit: This potentially powerful mana feat is still being refined. Night Whispers enables a Joined character to implant a command into the Dreamer's subconscious mind with a successful DC 25 Wisdom check.

Special: This command must be carried out on the following day and must not go against the basic beliefs of the person in question. A secretary will not kill her boss, but she may be convinced to "forget" to lock his office door at night. A politician will not sign a bill he is vehemently opposed to but may decline to speak out against it, at least for a day as long as (to his knowledge) his silence will not directly affect the outcome of the bill.

Whenever in doubt, have the character and Dreamer make an opposed Wisdom check. The Dreamer's check may be modified by +5 to +25 or higher for commands that are total anathema to his beliefs. If the character loses the contest, he is automatically ejected from the body of the Dreamer and must make an immediate DC 15 Will saving throw or else be ejected from the Dreamworld as well.

Raven's Wings

Prerequisite: Dreamwalker

Benefit: This mana feat enables the character to fly at a speed of up to 90' (good).

Special: In some cases, Raven's Wings may add bonuses to Hide and Move Silently rolls for purposes of ambush or trailing (GM's discretion).

Spirit Wind

Prerequisite: Dreamwalker

Benefit: This mana feat enables the character to automatically teleport himself and his belongings to any place within his direct line of sight or to any place within the Dreamworld that the character has been, with a successful DC 15 Wisdom check.

Special: The character never materializes into a solid object and may take others with him only if they are willing---he must make the normal DC 15 Wisdom check, adding +5 to the DC for each additional person taken. Failure indicates only one half the distance is traveled and each character takes 1d10 points

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of damage from the stress. A natural 1 on the die roll indicates the character cannot use this mana feat again until his next period of REM sleep.



Combat

“No more talk. Talking’s done.”

---Roland Deschain, *Wizard and Glass*

Unless otherwise noted, the combat rules from d20 Modern are still in effect while the characters are in the real world. In the Dreamworld however, Dreamwalkers are generally tougher than normal and enjoy a vast superiority over most of the dream’s normal inhabitants.

Combat and the Dreamer

Within the Dreamworld, the Dreamer takes damage as normal. However, he feels no pain and is never required to make a massive damage check. When his hit points reach 0 or less, he automatically wakes up from the dream (see Awakening, below). The Dreamer’s physical form is unharmed but many find the experience unsettling.

In combat, the Dreamer’s opponents all have a Defense 10 (not including bonuses for Dexterity), regardless of what their normal Defense is. This includes the Taenia and other Dreamwalkers.

Combat vs. the Unreal

The Unreal are essentially phantasms with no true form. This puts them at a distinct disadvantage during combat. The hit points of all Unreal are always halved (round fractions up). In addition, when fighting Dreamwalkers, Unreal suffer a -5 Defense penalty. This makes them much easier to hit and kill. Larval Unreal retain the normal hit points and Defense of their host until the larva is burned out of the host body.

Awakening

A Dreamer can be awakened normally by outside sources. He also awakens whenever he fails a Will save or is “killed” in his own Dreamworld. Any Dreamwalkers within his Dreamworld are immediately ejected (see Dump Shock, below) when the Dreamer awakens.

Dreamwalkers who are awakened while in their own Dreamworld are unharmed. Dreamwalkers awoken while in the Periphery or in someone else’s Dreamworld suffer from Dump Shock.

Death

It is hard for a character to really die in Dreamwalker, but not impossible. In the real world, death occurs when a character’s hit points are reduced to -10 or less. In the Emphyrean, when a character’s hit points are reduced to -10 or less, he is ejected from the dream (see Dump Shock, below).



Dump Shock

Dump shock occurs when a Dreamwalker is killed, ejected or otherwise awakened while traveling in the Periphery or while exploring someone else's Dreamworld. The character immediately awakens in an agitated state and must make a DC 30 Will save or else fall unconscious (being awakened from outside sources gives the character a +15 bonus to the save). In addition, the trauma of being hurled through the Empyrean results in a loss of 1d6 MP. If the d6 roll is more than the amount of MP he has left, the difference is permanently deducted from his total.

Narcotics

“If you can remember anything about the sixties, you weren’t really there.”

---Paul Kantner

Narcotics alter the moods, thought process and perceptions of their users in a wide variety of ways. Some narcotics are legal, others are not. Each time a non-addicted character takes a narcotic he must make a DC 15 Constitution or Wisdom check (whichever ability is lower). If he rolls a natural 1 on the check, the character must make a Will saving throw when the effects of the drug begin to fade. If the save succeeds, nothing happens. If the save fails, the character automatically becomes addicted (physically or psychologically) to the drug in question.

Drug addicts must have at least 2-3 doses of their particular drug per week in order to function “properly”. If not, the character begins to suffer a cumulative -1 penalty to all actions per week. During this time, the character may become subject to depression, mood swings, nausea, weakness and/or general disorientation, depending on the narcotic in question. This behavior persists for a “drying out” period of 15 - (Con) weeks (minimum of 1), after which the character may make another DC 15 Will save. A natural 1 on this roll indicates the character will never be able to control his urge. Success indicates that the character has shaken his addiction.

Failure on the Will save means that the character has temporarily overcome the addiction but must make a DC 15 Will save every time he comes into close proximity with the drug in order to resist the urge to take it. These addicts may be treated by those with the Knowledge (Behavioral Sciences) and Treat Injury skills via group therapy and prescription medication. This takes a variable amount of time but in general, the character should be allowed to make a DC 25 Will save every month or so to overcome the addiction.

The benefits and penalties of drug use extend into the Dreamworld. Dream narcotics affect the characters as do real ones---the mind cannot tell the difference therefore, the chance to become (psychologically) addicted remains the same. Prolonged drug use has other adverse effects, not covered in the scope of these rules.

Hallucinogenic Drugs

Hallucinogenic drugs (LSD, marijuana, mushrooms, peyote, etc.) alter the thought processes and perceptions of its users. For most people, hallucinogenic drugs offer a pleasant, if fleeting, high. Every so often however (about 01% of the time), some users experience a terrifying ordeal of disorientation and frightening visions where they become incapable of coherent thought or actions. These “bad trips” must be role-played out by the character and Game Master. In some cases, a User may become lost in a nightmare version of his own Dreamworld forcing the other characters to enter his dreams and help him survive.

It should be noted that not all hallucinogenic drug addicts can Dreamwalk. Users receive the DC bonuses and penalties of hallucinogenic drugs while in the Dreamworld (since they must dose up before entering the dream state).

Game Effects: +1 to +5 bonus to Alteration checks, depending on the strength and type of drug (Project Users are given a low grade, +1 hallucinogenic). ALL other actions suffer a -1 (Project +1) to -5 penalty. The effects generally last for 8-12 hours but begin to fade in half that time.

Depressants

Depressants (pills, heroin, Morphine, alcohol) produce feelings of depression and listlessness and severely worsen reflexes and judgment.

Game Effects: Dexterity and Intelligence-related checks suffer a -1 to -5 penalty, depending on dosage and type of drug. Depressants take effect within minutes of administration and can last for hours after.

Stimulants

Stimulants (cocaine, speed, crack, methamphetamine, etc.) provide a quick boost to a character's energy level and confer feelings of superiority and invincibility. On the down side, they can also foster feelings of paranoia and severely inhibit judgment concerning a character's physical limitations. Thus characters under the influence of stimulants often take extraordinary risks.

Game Effects: Strength, Constitution and Dexterity-related checks gain a +1 to +5 bonus depending on the drug and dosage. Intelligence and Wisdom-based checks suffer a -1 to -5 penalty. The effects begin almost immediately but wear off after 1d3 hours.

Mental Injury

"The distance between insanity and genius is measured only by success."
---Elliot Carver, *Tomorrow Never Dies*

Dreamwalkers become creatures of thought and spirit in order to enter the Empyrean. At times they must delve into the minds of disturbed individuals, often at great risk to the health of their own psyche.

In general, any time a Dreamwalker rolls a natural 1 on a Will saving throw, he succumbs to some sort of mental injury. The type of injury (Phobia or Dementia) usually depends on the conditions that called for the saving throw (fear or mental attack).

Mental injuries may be treated by those with the Knowledge (Behavioral Sciences) and Treat Injury skills via therapy and prescription medication. This takes a variable amount of time but in general, the afflicted character should be allowed to make a DC 25 Will save every month or so to overcome the injury.

Note: The following rules for mental injury have been included to simulate the dangers of the mind. If your group already uses some sort of Fear, Horror and/or Madness checks the GM is encouraged to use those instead.

Phobias

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A Phobia is defined as a persistent, abnormal and irrational fear of a specific thing or situation. A character with a Phobia must make a (minimum) DC 15 Will saving throw each time he is confronted with the object of his fear. Players are encouraged to roleplay their character's Phobia until it can be cured or suppressed.

There are 3 main categories of Phobias---agoraphobia, specific Phobias & social Phobias.

Agoraphobia describes the fear of being confined without any convenient way to escape. This Phobia can manifest while flying on an airplane, lining up in a queue, being in a crowded place, being alone or even when in open spaces.

Specific Phobias are more defined. They include the fear of such things as thunder, animals, water, insects, blood, flying or heights.

Social Phobias include the fear of meeting people, public speaking or any social situation.

The type of Phobia a character develops is up to the Game Master but in most cases should reflect the circumstances that called for the Will saving throw. For instance, say the cause of the Courage roll was a Taeniid Queen using Fear Generation. For whatever reason, this particular Queen happened to manifest as a donkey. After developing a Phobia, the character may be uncomfortable around horses and develop an irrational fear of donkeys even needing to make an additional DC 15 Will saving throw when put into close contact with them.

Phobias must be roleplayed.

Phobias		
1.	Alliumphobia	garlic
2.	Allodoxaphobia	opinions
3.	Arrhenphobia	men
4.	Aurophobia	gold
5.	Autophobia	being alone or oneself
6.	Batophobia	heights or tall buildings
7.	Gamaphobia	marriage
8.	Iatrophobia	doctors
9.	Koniphobia	dust
10.	Panophobia	everything
11.	Papyrophobia	paper
12.	Pentheraphobia	mother-in-law
13.	Philophobia	falling in love
14.	Plutophobia	wealth
15.	Pogonophobia	beards
16.	Pyrophobia	fire
17.	Ranidaphobia	frogs
18.	Rupophobia	dirt
19.	Scolionophobia	school
20.	Scotophobia	darkness
21.	Somniphobia	sleep
22.	Testophobia	taking tests
23.	Thalassophobia	sea
24.	Verbophobia	words
25.	Xenophobia	strangers or foreigners

Dementia

Dementia is defined as a deterioration of intellectual faculties, such as memory, concentration, and judgment, resulting from an acute disorder of the brain. It is sometimes accompanied by emotional disturbance and personality changes.

Dementia must be roleplayed out. Many times, afflicted persons are unaware of their condition, becoming angry or even hostile when others continue to suggest they are less than sane. Dementia should be treated relatively quickly or else it could compromise future Dreamwalks.

The severity of each Dementia varies. Some allow the character to continue to function in his capacity as a Dreamwalker, others do not. The examples and descriptions listed below are not necessarily clinically correct but are designed to fit within the concept of the game. Game Masters should feel free to alter, research or create new Dementias unique to their own game.

Amnesia

Amnesia manifests as the loss of one or more of the character's memories. In game terms, the character simply "forgets" how to perform 1d3 skills, feats or special abilities. These may be chosen at random or be the last 1d3 skills, feats or special abilities the character used before gaining amnesia. This can be particularly devastating if the character recently performed some type of alteration or other special effect.

Anorexia

Anorexia is an eating disorder that manifests as a severe loss of appetite. Characters with anorexia eat little and drink only enough to quench their thirst. A character can go without water for one day plus a number of hours equal to his or her Constitution score. After this, the character must make a Constitution check each hour (DC 10, +1 for each previous check) or take 1d6 points of damage.

A character can go without food for three days, in growing discomfort. After this, the character must make a Constitution check each day (DC 10, +1 for each previous check) or sustain 1d6 points of damage. Damage from thirst or starvation cannot be recovered until the character gets water or food, as needed. Even magical or psionic effects that restore hit points cannot heal this damage.

Bulimia

Bulimia is another eating disorder, this one characterized by periods of binge eating followed by feelings of guilt, depression and self-condemnation. Bulimic characters will take drastic measures to prevent weight gain, such as self-induced vomiting, the use of laxatives, dieting, or fasting. The effects are the same as for Anorexia, above.

Catatonia

Catatonia is a form of schizophrenia characterized by a tendency to remain in a fixed, stuporous state for long periods of time. Catatonics are incapable of independent action and eventually dehydrate or starve to death if left to their own devices. They can be moved, led around, fed, etc. but will not otherwise respond to any sort of outside stimuli, even pain. Catatonia sometimes gives way to short periods of extreme excitement or violence, after which the character returns to his catatonic state.

Dipsomania

Dipsomania has been described as a morbid and uncontrollable craving for strong drink or alcoholic liquors. At least once a week, or whenever beer or liquor are available, a character afflicted by dipsomania will drink until he passes out. If prevented from doing so, dipsomaniacs may become extremely violent. If alcohol is still available when the character awakens, he must make a DC 15 Will save to avoid repeating the process.

Hallucinations

Hallucinations involve perception of visual, auditory, tactile, olfactory, or gustatory experiences without an external stimulus. In other words, the character begins to see, hear, smell, feel and taste things that aren't there. Most characters deny these hallucinations at first or attribute them to fatigue and overwork. Eventually, the character begins to suffer many of the same effects as Paranoia.

Hebephrenia

Hebephrenia is a type of schizophrenia characterized by foolish mannerisms, senseless laughter, delusions, hallucinations, and child regressive behavior. Hebephrenic periods occur 1d6 times per week and last for several hours. During this time, the character will wander about aimlessly, laughing and giggling and trying to entice others into playing childish games.

Homicidal Mania

Homicidal mania outwardly manifests as a unique interest in poisons, weapons and other lethal devices. Inwardly, the character is consumed with an intense desire to kill. The character must satisfy this urge at least once a week. The victim must be human---Unreal are acceptable but those infested by larvae are not. If prevented from committing a murder, the character flies into a maniacal rage and attacks those around him. Upon committing a murder, homicidal maniacs often fall into 1d6 days of Melancholia, after which the homicidal urge once again resurfaces.

Incontinence

Incontinent characters are no longer able to control the evacuation of their own bladder or bowels. This condition is troublesome to say the least. Incontinent episodes are quite noticeable (both from the sound and the smell) and often occur at the most inopportune times. Incontinent characters suffer a -5 penalty to all Charisma and Charisma-based skill checks. In addition, they may be asked to leave certain places (such as restaurants) which could increase the difficulty of achieving some denouements.

Kleptomania

Kleptomania manifests as an obsessive impulse to steal small items, regardless of their worth or the character's economic need. Kleptomaniacs are 90% likely to be spotted stealing although they vehemently deny their own actions or make up lame excuses (such as researching a role for an upcoming movie) even when faced with overwhelming proof.

Lunacy

Lunacy is a type of madness that only occurs when the moon is full or nearly full. During this time, the character may experience terrifying Hallucinations, bouts of Paranoia and sometimes even Homicidal Rages.

Megalomania

Megalomania is a mental condition characterized by delusional fantasies of wealth, power or omnipotence. The character becomes convinced he is the best (smartest, strongest, wisest, etc.) at everything and demands the right to lead and have the final say in important decisions. If denied this privilege, the character becomes belligerent, hostile and may even attack.

Melancholia

Melancholia occurs at random intervals (1d3 times per week) and is characterized by extreme depression, ill-grounded fears, delusions and brooding over one particular subject or train of ideas. Characters under the influence of melancholia suffer a -5 penalty to all actions.

Monomania

Monomania manifests as an obsession with a single idea, goal or project. Monomaniacs work to fulfill this goal in the most straightforward manner, to the exclusion of all else. They become hostile if others try to dissuade them from their task and suspicion and mistrust may arise of those not as dedicated to “the cause.” Once the goal is complete, the character suffers from Melancholia until a new goal presents itself.

Paranoia

Paranoia is a chronic form of insanity characterized by increasingly antisocial behavior and delusions of persecution. Afflicted characters begin to question the motives of those around them, attributing even minor events and occurrences to some type of hidden plot or agenda. The character takes extreme efforts to safeguard himself, his wealth and possessions and eventually attacks even his closest companions in order to “protect” his own life.

Paranoiacs usually show evidence of bodily and nervous degeneration (such as nervous ticks or rapid eye blinking), and many experience Hallucinations, especially of sight and hearing.

Schizoid Disorder

Schizoid disorder is a personality disorder marked by extreme shyness, discomfort with others and an inability to form close relationships. Schizoids avoid contact with anyone else whenever possible. When forced to be around more than one person at a time, schizoids suffer a cumulative -1 penalty to all actions per hour of contact until the character is unable to function.

Schizophrenia

Schizophrenia is the classic split personality disorder. 1d6 different personalities may manifest within the characters psyche, each with his own motivations, goals and temperament. The Game Master should encourage the character to outline each separate personality himself. Whenever the character is subjected to extreme stress (such as combat), he must make a DC 15 Will saving throw or else randomly flip to one of his alternate personalities. That personality will react to the situation accordingly.

Suicidal Mania

Characters afflicted with suicidal mania have an overwhelming urge to destroy themselves. At least once a day, whenever the means is presented (a dangerous situation, a weapon, etc.) the character must make a DC 15 Wisdom check to avoid attempting suicide. Therefore, Suicidal Maniacs should be kept under constant supervision.

BOOK TWO

Game Master's Section

In ancient days there was a land,
Of golden spires and temples grand,
Where water fell from crystal streams,
To rivers in the land of dreams.
Where obelisks to gods unknown,
Stood wet with spay from ocean foam;
And princes tall and just and fair,
Court princesses with golden hair,
In towers rising from the square.

A land where sun and stars and moon,
Inspire a most celestial tune,
And magic fills each tree and stone;
As well as mortal flesh and bone.
Where mystic swordsmen plied their trade
'til legendary tales were made.
Of courage, love and bravery,
And that which all may hope to be.
And rare indeed the traveler when,
In leaving looks not back again,
Nor hopes again his dreams may lead,
To this lost land men call Manaed.

---*The Song of the First City*, by Joeroyela

Behind the Scenes

“The better work men do is always done under stress and at great personal cost.”

---William Carlos Williams

The following sections are primarily designed for the Game Master’s use. These chapters contain some more information on Project Dreamwalker, technical information on the process of Dreamwalking, facts about the Taenia as well as a rundown on recent Dreamwalker related happenings in the real world. Players should consult their Game Master before reading further into this text.

Chapter Houses

Chapter houses are the control centers of Project Dreamwalker. There are currently over twenty chapters operating in North America with half a dozen more scattered throughout parts of Europe and the Middle East. Project headquarters is located just outside of Seattle, Washington.

Most chapter houses are small, isolated compounds located in rural areas but the size and appearance of each varies from site to site. Chapter houses maintain a good relationship with the local communities and are often regarded as private asylums reserved for wealthy patrons. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Staff Members

All staff members are aware of the Project and its true function. Senior staff members and many of the junior staff are trained in lucid dreaming techniques in order to protect themselves from Taeniid infestation or the depredations of rogue Dreamwalkers (see Dreamstalkers, [pg. 75](#)).

Patients

“Pick battles big enough to matter, small enough to win.”

---Jonathan Kozol

Patients are hand picked from an extensive file of would-be candidates referred to the chapter therapist by colleagues in the field. For the most part, these patients are normal people with normal problems. Project Dreamwalker does not normally handle criminally insane patients although special cases may arise. This is a classic example of the needs of the many far outweighing the needs of the few. The idea is that because Dreamwalkers can help heal thousands of people, why risk their lives on the few who are possibly beyond help?

Once chosen, patients are invited to the chapter for a stay that usually lasts from one to four weeks. Except in special circumstances, the patients know nothing of Dreamwalking or the Project.

During the first part of their visit, new patients undergo a comprehensive psychological evaluation. This enables the chapter therapist to make his own decision on whether or not the patient is suitable for treatment. The evaluation also conveys the patient’s hobbies, interests and past or present Phobias and/or

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Dementia. Unless there is a good reason not to, this information should be relayed to the characters beforehand and may give them a better idea of what they may face within the patient's dreams.

Once the psychological evaluation is complete, the Dreamwalkers are allowed to interact with the patients and get to know them on a more personal level. Although the characters are not required to befriend or even particularly like patients, such interaction often helps with locating the Dreamworld and recognizing possible subdenouements or incidental achievements within the dream.

Finally, the Dreamwalkers enter the patient's dreams, help them achieve their denouements and attempt to destroy any Taeniid infestation. Success rates are very high and most patients leave the chapter feeling that therapy and a change of scenery were the reason.

Although many of the patients are wealthy, at least half of those selected are people who could not normally afford treatment. After all, the goal of Project Dreamwalker is to better the human condition, not to make money.

Dear Crystal Bayou Staff,

I just wanted to say a special "thank you" to all those who made my stay at Crystal Bayou such a pleasant one. Although I never thought I'd feel comfortable in the outdoors, I enjoyed the week more than you could possibly imagine. It was a welcome change of pace that has done wonders for my frame of mind. I feel much better now, more able to cope with the little problems in my daily life.

Once again, thank you all very much.

*Sincerely,
Ben G--*

Dreamwalking Drugs

Black25

Black25 (1948, Dr. William Black) is a Vitamin B derivative that stimulates the part of the brain responsible for REM sleep, promoting more vivid and lucid dreams and better dream recall.

Upon administration, ninety-five percent of human test subjects experience an increase in strange dreams as well as mild abdominal discomfort, but are otherwise unaffected. With practice, the other five percent become Dreamwalkers; able to enter the Emyrean at will. Scientists have thus far been unable to determine why Black25 confers Dreamwalking capabilities to some people and not others, but studies indicate that natural creativity, high Intelligence and Wisdom may be a determining factor.

Analysts must be injected with Black25 at least twice a month in order to be able to Dreamwalk. The dosage cuts back to once a month after about five years.

GRE-13

GRE-13 (1977, Gunther R. Endell) inhibits the part of the brain responsible for REM sleep by suppressing the ability to Dreamwalk or have lucid dreams. GRE-13 apparently has no adverse side effects.

Dreamtracer

Dreamtracer (1980, Luther Crane) Dreamtracer is a specially designed drug that enables a Dreamwalker to home in on the Dreamworld of a specific Dreamer. The drug must be administered to both the Dreamer and the Dreamwalker in order to be effective. It may be used in conjunction with Black25 without any apparent ill effects. Slight chemical variations are added to each dosage of Dreamtracer in order to avoid detection by and/or conflict with other Dreamwalker teams.

Dreamwalking, the Process

Project Dreamwalker imposes a strict set of guidelines on Dreamwalking to ensure the safety of all those involved. These rules have been summarized by the acronym P.R.O.J.E.C.T.D.W.---Penetrate, Recognize, Observe, Join, Establish, Contain, Treat, Do your best, and Wipe out.

Before and after a Dreamwalk, characters must undergo a complete physical and psychological evaluation that sometimes takes up to several hours. If everything checks out, the characters are cleared for the upcoming Dreamwalk. Only one Dreamwalk is allowed per team per week. This rule is sometimes broken (or ignored) in extreme circumstances.

Dreamwalkers enter the dream state from a soundproof room that is specially tailored to each team's specific needs. These Dreamwalking Chambers are designed to promote the tranquility and peace of mind necessary to enter the dream state. Audio and visual devices as well as highly technical, but unobtrusive brain wave (EEG) and heart rate monitoring equipment individually monitor each character while they sleep (or meditate).

A discrete viewing room borders each Chamber allowing Project scientists to observe and evaluate the proceedings through a wall length window. This window can be opaqued to minimize light levels in the Chamber and to give Dreamwalkers the illusion of privacy. Instruments in the viewing room record the readouts from the monitoring devices in the Chamber and a general (entire room) and personal (earplug) PA system allows researchers to communicate with or awaken the Dreamwalkers if necessary (see Awakening, [pg. 42](#)).

Beginning characters are awakened by medical staff whenever their physical bodies begin to exhibit predetermined symptoms (such as when the character's pseudophysical form is reduced to 0 hit points or less).

The Dream State

The dream state refers to the REM portion of sleep where people have their most vivid and memorable dreams. Dreamwalking is only possible during this time.

Destination

When a Dreamwalker first enters the dream state, he may choose to remain in his own Dreamworld or go straight to the Periphery. Dreamwalkers must return to their own Dreamworld before waking and automatically return there between periods of REM sleep. Each time he returns, 90-100 minutes of real time pass by in the blink of an instant. This is a normal part of the Dreamwalking process that enables the mind to cycle down as it prepares for the shift from the dream world into the real world or from one dream to another (between periods of REM sleep).

Upon returning to his own Dreamworld, the character's pseudophysical form is healed of all wounds and his mana supply is completely replenished. He may return to the Empyrean normally although the

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amount of real time that has passed may make it impossible to return and achieve the Dreamer's denouement.

PENETRATE	the Barrier surrounding the Dreamworld and enter the patient's dream.
RECOGNIZE	your limitations. Take a moment to get familiar with your newly manifested form. Take a look around the Dreamworld to get a feel for what type of world you are in.
OBSERVE	the Dreamer. If the Dreamer does not seem immediately threatened, watch what he does and how he reacts to the events unfolding in the Dreamworld. You may be able to guess the dream's denouement without having to Join.
JOIN	with the Dreamer. If you cannot guess the dream's denouement on your own, Join with the Dreamer as soon as possible. Not only does this relay the dream's denouement but it also provides the Dreamer added protection against the Taenia. In violent dreams it is best to stay Joined with the Dreamer for as long as possible.
ESTABLISH	a plan to achieve the denouement. When establishing a plan, try to proceed in a manner that most closely relates to the Dreamer's interpretation of how the denouement is supposed to be achieved.
CONTAIN	larvae and drones. Be aware that containment does not necessarily mean destruction. Avoid unnecessary combat whenever possible as sometimes even small amounts of violence may upset the Dreamer and could possibly end the dream.
TREAT	the Unreal as you would real people. Once again, this is an attempt to pacify the Dreamer. The Dreamer is aware of everything that takes place within the Dreamworld, even if his pseudophysical form is not present. He views the Unreal as real people and for the duration of the dream, so should you.
DO Your Best	to achieve the denouement. Some denouements, particularly heavily combat oriented ones, may be impossible to achieve. Do not be ashamed to leave a dream with the denouement unfulfilled. "Live to dream another night," is a common Project proverb. Always think safety first.
WIPE Out	the Taeniid colony. Once again, some colonies may be too large and/or the Queen too powerful to destroy. If this is the case, do not hesitate to leave the dream. The patient can always continue his normal therapy sessions until a more experienced team of Dreamwalkers can be assembled.

Dangers of the Periphery

A lot can happen in the space of a few minutes, especially in a realm where things like time and distance have little meaning. Dreamwalkers are at their weakest while traveling through the Periphery---their Strength, Constitution and Dexterity are all halved and they are unable to use mana, leaving them even more vulnerable to attack. Sensory perception is reduced to a range of about 10 yards therefore it is quite possible for teams of Dreamwalkers or even other creatures native to the astral plane to pass close by each other without even knowing it.

The following are a few of the more common dangers likely to be encountered while traveling through the Periphery. Peripheral dangers should almost never be random occurrences. The Game Master should always plan the encounter ahead of time in case the unexpected happens---the character might fail a roll and get sucked down into a disturbed Dreamworld. The Game Master must be prepared just in case.

Astral Storm

Astral storms quickly manifest and batter away at the spiritual forms of the Dreamwalkers, causing 1d6 points of damage per level of severity (Severity level = 2d6). Dreamwalkers reduced to -10 hit points or less are ejected from the Periphery in the same manner as being ejected from the Dreamworld.

Whirlpools

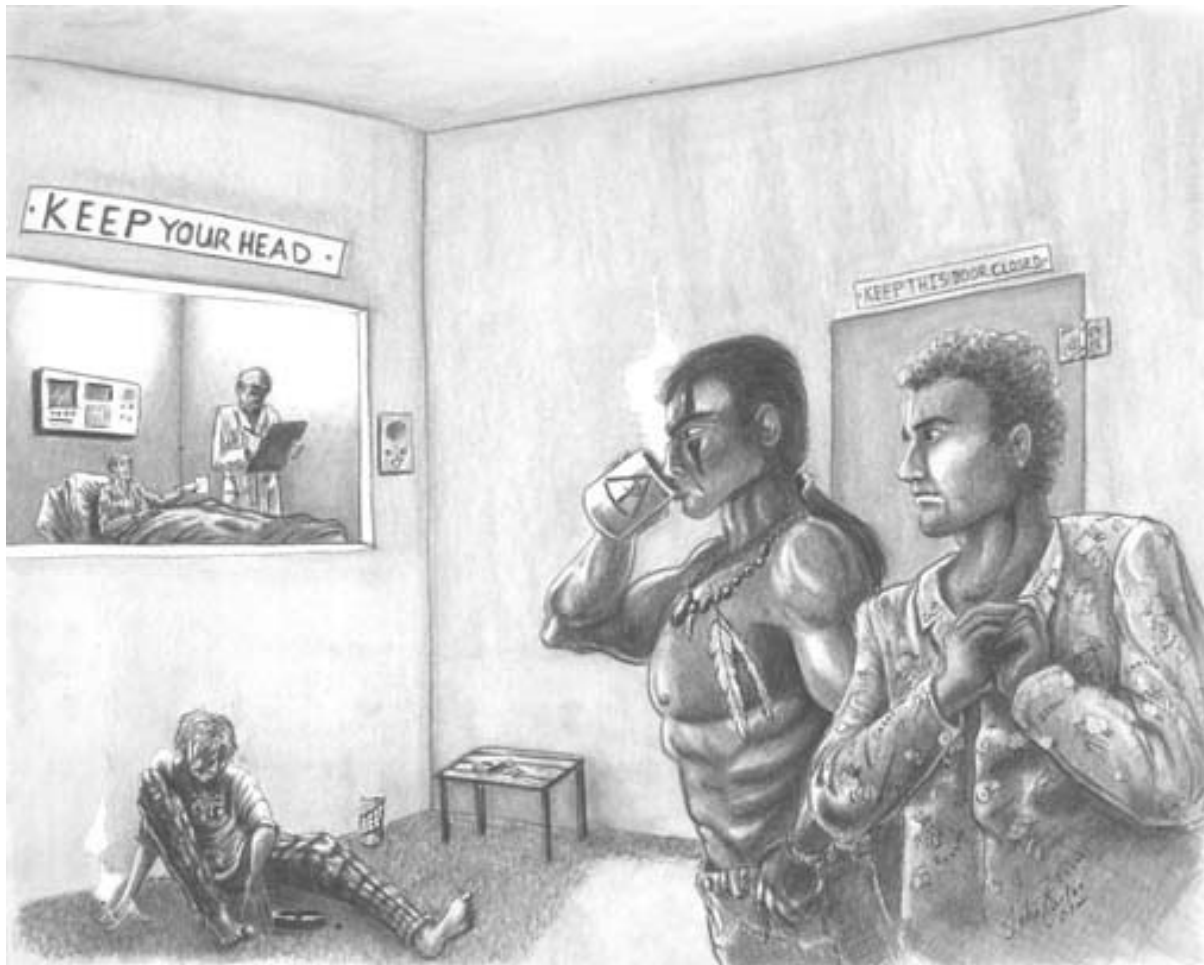
Spontaneous whirlpools occasionally manifest, forcing all Dreamwalkers in the vicinity to make a DC 15 Fortitude saving throw to avoid being sucked down into a nearby Dreamworld.

Disturbed Waters

Passing over the Dreamworld of a criminally insane or otherwise demented Dreamer calls for an immediate (DC 15-30) Will save. Failure causes a spontaneous whirlpool to manifest with effects described above.

Broodkings

Broodkings can sometimes be encountered in the Periphery where Dreamwalkers are at their weakest. The Project has instructed all of their Dreamwalkers to flee these encounters rather than fight.



Locating a Specific Dreamworld

The Periphery is huge. It literally spans the minds of millions of sleeping people so locating a specific Dreamworld is difficult at best, not to mention dangerous.

A successful DC 25 Navigate check is needed to locate the desired Dreamworld. One roll may be made for each Dreamwalker in the group. This chance increases the better the Dreamer is known. Distance is also a factor as Dreamworlds roughly correspond with the physical locations of their Dreamers.

Distance DC Modifiers	
+1	for every 10 miles away
-1	if the Dreamwalker has met the Dreamer
-2	if the Dreamwalker is close friends with the Dreamer
-5	if the Dreamwalker is related to the Dreamer
-10	for the use of Dreamtracer

Traversing the Barrier

Dreamwalkers are able to pass through the Peripheral Barrier and into the Dreamworld and vice versa at no cost. Other Barriers may only be traversed by the expenditure of mana.

The Barrier between the Periphery and the Dreamworld is relatively easy to cross. The Barrier between the Dreamworld and the Underpsyche is somewhat more difficult to traverse and those between the different levels of the Underpsyche get progressively harder the deeper one delves.

Characters who traverse a Barrier and then return to the Dreamworld find themselves 1-100 yards away from the Dreamer. Personal items inherent to the Dreamworld (such as clothes, guns, money) may be transported from the Dreamworld into the Underpsyche and vice versa, but altered items disappear once the Dreamwalker crosses through any Barrier, even if the altered item is no longer in his possession.

Multiple Barriers may be traversed at once, up to the amount of Mana Points a character may spend each round. Pursuit into the Underpsyche is also possible but the pursuer must make a DC 20 Navigate check to correctly intuit the pursued's destination.

Barrier MP Cost	
0	Periphery to Dreamworld/Dreamworld to Periphery
1	Dreamworld to Underpsyche/Underpsyche to Dreamworld
+1	for every Underworld traversed

Attunement

Upon entering a Dreamworld, Attunement enables a character to instantly blend in with his surroundings in a manner that does not draw attention to himself. Attunement manifests in various ways, depending on the content of the Dreamworld. For instance, Dreamwalkers who manifest in a World War I trench would find themselves dressed out in full military gear while those appearing at a Sunday picnic would be clothed accordingly.

In the case of Dreamworlds whose environments are inherently hostile and/or incapable of supporting life as we know it, Attunement provides the necessary means of survival, usually without altering the Dreamwalker's pseudophysical form.

A Dreamwalker who finds himself in an underwater ruin might manifest with an air tank and scuba gear or in the cockpit of a small submersible. On the moon he would be protected by a full, bulky space suit. In a land of freezing cold and ice, shelter or warm clothing would be readily available.

Special cases may apply, depending on the particular Dreamworld and the content of the dream. When in doubt, the Dreamer should be used as a reference as his form should initially be compatible with that of the Dreamwalker.

In a forest Dreamworld where the Dreamer appears as a timber wolf, the characters may also appear as wolves. Similarly, if the Dreamer manifests as an aquatic alien, the Dreamwalkers will mirror this form.

Possession or the use of certain mana feats may eventually alter this form but the initial manifestation is considered to be the Dreamwalker's natural form throughout the course of the dream.

Locating the Dreamer

Dreamwalkers usually materialize within 1-100 yards of the Dreamer although special cases may apply. The Dreamer may not be visible right away but it is impossible not to feel his presence, which makes locating the Dreamer fairly easy.

Getting close to him may prove difficult however, depending on the dream and its denouement. If the Dreamer manifests as a Mafia kingpin or the 14th century King of France the Dreamwalkers will have get creative in order to get close enough to Join.

Interpreting the Denouement

In some Dreamworlds, the denouement is not readily apparent. The simplest method of learning a denouement is through Joining (see Joining, [pg. 33](#)).

Guestimation is another method of discovering the denouement without having to resort to expenditure of mana. No roll is needed. Instead, the characters must make an educated guess after testing the boundaries of the Dreamworld and paying close attention to the Dreamer's actions during the course of the dream.

Violence and Rebellion

Excessive amounts of violence and destruction by Dreamwalkers can cause the Dreamer to panic and awaken.

Any time the damage from a single attack exceeds 50 points (100 points in a dream with an active denouement, or in dream with a passive denouement where the denouement has been achieved), the Dreamer must make a DC 15 Will save at the beginning of the next round. The number of points over 50 is added to the Dreamer's DC. Dreamwalkers can use Mana Points to affect the save via Suppression ([pg. 26](#)).

Goldrush blasts a Taeniid Queen for 73 points of damage. Therefore, the Dreamer's DC to avoid awakening is 38 (DC 15 + 23).

If the roll succeeds, nothing happens. If the roll fails, the Dreamer panics and awakens (see Awakening, [pg. 42](#)). **If the Dreamer awakens, the Dreamer and the Taeniid Queen are unharmed, even if the attack that prompted the saving throw was directed against one of them.**

At some level, the Dreamer is aware of everything that is happening within the Dreamworld. Therefore, Game Masters may also call for a DC 15 Will save any time the characters engage in deviant and/or non-denouement related behavior (such as acts of perversion and murder or sometimes even rudeness) towards the Unreal, especially those related to or close to the Dreamer. The Dreamer's mind "rebels" against this behavior and struggles to wake up, simply refusing to take part in what is happening.

Keeping Track of Time

Because Dreamwalking only occurs during periods of REM sleep, the length of time a Dreamwalker may remain in the dream state varies. But, time is a tricky concept in the Empyrean. Minutes, months, years and even centuries may seem to pass during the course of a dream that lasts only a few seconds in the real world. Exceptionally long Dreamwalks are another good reason to have someone on hand to "talk down" the Dreamwalker until his mind fully returns to the present.

It is up to each Game Master to tailor the game to his own needs and those of his players. Some Game Masters carefully keep track of each passing minute while others assume that each dream only lasts a few seconds, allowing the Dreamwalkers a near infinite amount of time to complete their goal. REM sleep and the threat of awakening is best used as a plot device to heighten tension as the characters race to achieve the dream's denouement and destroy the Taenia.

Aftermath

Achieving the Denouement

In a dream with a passive denouement, it is vital for the Dreamwalkers to help resolve the Dreamer's goal before tackling the Taeniid infestation.

Once the goal is complete, the Dreamer becomes lost in the euphoria of the moment and revels in his success. He becomes less interested in the happenings throughout the rest of the Dreamworld making it much easier for Dreamwalkers to manipulate mana and engage in combat.

For game purposes, resolution of a passive denouement increases the permissible amount of damage dealt by a single attack (see Violence and Rebellion, [pg. 57](#)) from 50 to 100 for the remainder of the dream. In realistic Dreamworlds, all MP costs return to normal (those listed in the book). More importantly, resolution of the denouement creates a backwash of pure mana (3d6 MP per character) that the Dreamwalkers may absorb to replenish their supply. The Dreamworld becomes an even more bright, colorful and vibrant place. Taeniid larvae wither and die while drones scuttle back to the nest to protect their Queen.

In a dream with an active denouement, resolution occurs when the Taeniid Queen is destroyed. This produces a great feeling of triumph in the mind of the Dreamer and causes the same backwash of mana as in a passive denouement. Depending on the content of the dream, there is often some type of celebration by the Unreal during which the Dreamer is honored for his accomplishment. Although the Dreamwalk is essentially over, Dreamwalkers may choose to leave immediately or stay and indulge in the festivities.

In either case, once the denouement has been achieved and the Queen destroyed the characters may choose to leave the Dreamworld or flit through the Underworlds and root out any drones hiding within.

Failing to Achieve the Denouement

In a dream with an active denouement, failure occurs when all of the Dreamwalkers are “killed” or they decide that the Queen is too much for them to handle and leave the Dreamworld.

In a dream with a passive denouement, failure occurs when the Dreamer believes it is impossible to attain his goal.

The denouement involves buying a particular jacket and the jacket is somehow destroyed in the presence of the Dreamer---the Dreamer knows for certain the denouement cannot be fulfilled. If it was stolen however, the Dreamwalkers may be able to track down the thieves or even Create a duplicate of the desired jacket to help achieve the goal.

The dream itself does not end upon failure of a passive denouement. Instead, the Dreamworld becomes much like an Underworld, turning gray and lifeless as the Dreamer wallows in feelings of self pity and regret. In most cases, the Unreal fade away. Most of the larvae die although a small portion metamorphosize into drones. Characters may still attempt to destroy the Taeniid Queen but the additional drones make this a difficult task at best.

Failing to achieve a denouement has other adverse affects as well. The next time the characters enter the Dreamer’s mind, there will be at least double the number of drones lurking about. In addition, the Queen will have Absorbed a number of drones equal to the amount she usually has in her presence. Therefore, it is usually best to wait some time before returning.

Recovery

Once the Taeniid Queen is destroyed, the Dreamer’s mind may begin the long process of healing as, in his dreams, the Dreamer hunts down the rest of the colony. This process can take weeks, months or even years, depending on the severity of the infestation and may be helped along by additional therapy.

The Taenia

“They mostly come at night. Mostly.”

---Newt, *Aliens*

Thus far, information on the Taenia is largely inconclusive. Nothing is known about their origin and any attempts at peaceful communication have failed, disastrously in some cases. Clinic Analysts have captured several Taeniid larvae, drones and Queens in order to examine them within the confines of the Dreamworld. This data has been correlated with the information contained in the Black Files but the highly adaptable nature of these parasites makes any comparisons difficult at best.

Even so, a few things have been determined about Taeniid physiology and behavior. They are hive-minded creatures whose entire existence seems centered around protecting the Queen and enlarging the colony. The colony is only active during sleep, lying dormant while the host is awake.



Infestation Level

A Dreamer's Infestation Level (IL) represents how infested with Taenia the Dreamer's psyche is. Superficial and Mild infestations are the most commonly encountered Infestation Levels for Project Dreamwalkers. Dreamwalkers encountering Severe or Critical infestations have been instructed to exit the dream immediately.

IL	Symptoms
Superficial	The Dreamer has either not been infested long or his mind is especially adept at keeping the Taenia at bay. The Dreamer's psyche often destroys Superficial infestations on its own.
Mild	The Taenia have gotten a foothold in the Dreamer's subconscious mind and the infestation is slowly beginning to spread. While awake, the Dreamer may become irritable and/or experience brief bouts of anxiety and depression. In time, these mood swings may pass as most Dreamers are capable of eliminating mild infestations on their own.
Moderate	The Dreamer has begun a downward spiral into depression and/or madness. Most Dreamers cannot eliminate a moderate infestation without the help of prescription drugs and/or therapy. Other signs of a moderate infestation are similar, though somewhat worse, than those of a mild one.
Severe	The Dreamer is barely maintaining a grasp on his sanity. In the real world, his personal viewpoints often undergo a radical change and he often alienates those around him. Prescription drugs and/or therapy sometimes help a person with a severe infestation, but these cases are rare. More often than not, the intervention of a Dreamwalker is required.
Critical	The Dreamer has either been infested for some time or his mind is particularly inept at driving off the infestation (due to chemical imbalances, alcohol abuse, etc.). His psyche is riddled with Taenia. In the real world, his behavior is similar to those with a severe infestation however in some rare cases, the Dreamer may display an outward turnabout and continue to function normally in society while inside, his mind becomes more and more twisted and abnormal. Only a Dreamwalker can help cure a mind at this stage of infestation, though at great risk to themselves---for some unknown reason, leaving the Dreamworld of Dreamers with critical infestations (and also some severe ones) is almost impossible until the dream's denouement has been achieved or until the Dreamer awakens.

Taeniid Society

A Taeniid colony is comprised of larvae, drones and a Queen. The Dreamer's Infestation Level (and thus his overall mental health and well being) directly reflects the size of the Taeniid colony. Insanity and criminal behavior is often a byproduct of the infestation rather than the cause. One does not have to be crazy to become a Taeniid host; even the most stable person gets angry, feels sad or betrayed. However fleeting, these emotions are all that is necessary to attract the attention of the Taenia.

The colony cannot survive without the Queen. Without her, the Taenia are nearly helpless. If she is destroyed, the larvae immediately go into hiding. Any remaining drones wander about the Dreamworld in confusion. The Dreamer's own mind eventually roots out and destroys them all during the course of future dreams. In addition, the Dreamer's mind becomes resistant, and sometimes even immune, to future infestations. As the saying goes, time heals all wounds.

Combat

Four types of Taenia have thus far been encountered in the Empyrean---larvae, drones, Queens and Broodkings. Each type has its own method of initiating or avoiding combat, depending on its appearance/manifestation and its stage of development, as outlined below.

Taeniid Larva

	Natural Form (Diminutive Outsider)	Host Form (Outsider + Host)
Hit Dice:	1/8 d8 (1 hp)	as host
Initiative:	+0	as host
Speed:	1'	as host
Defense:	14 (+4 size)	as host
Attacks:	bite (+1 melee)	as host
Damage:	1 hp bite	as host
Face/Reach:	1 ft. by 1 ft./0 ft.	as host
Special Attacks:	Bonding	as host
Special Qualities:	Outsider, immune to mind-affecting effects	Outsider, immune to mind-affecting effects
Saves:	Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +2	as host
Abilities:	Str 1, Dex 10, Con 10, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1	as host
Skills:	none	as host
Feats:	none	as host
Climate/Terrain:	anywhere in Dreamworld	any in Dreamworld
Organization:	colony (1d20 x IL)	as host
Challenge Rating:	1/16	as host
Treasure:	None	as host
Alignment:	neutral	neutral evil
Advancement:	-	-

Taeniid larvae may be found throughout the Dreamworld. They are the unformed state of the drone, spawned from eggs that incubate on mana pockets in the dormant Underworlds. These eggs hatch in the presence of the Dreamer (at the beginning of a dream).

In their natural form, larvae are quite helpless. They are worm-like, with no arms or legs, forced to wriggle around on the floor until they find suitable hosts. The head is eyeless and contains several sucking, lamprey-like mouths surrounded by hooks that are used to attach themselves to the Unreal. Larvae cannot cross through any Barrier, even with help.

Bonding (Ex): Upon hatching, larvae Bond with the nearest Unreal in a manner that gives them all the ability scores, skills, feats and special abilities of the host. More than one larva may infest a single Unreal in this manner although without additional benefit. Bonding with Unreal takes 1 round.

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Once Bonded to an Unreal, a larva seeks to hinder the Dreamer from achieving his denouement, thereby prolonging its own existence. Larvae can verbally communicate with and command drones to do their bidding.

The life cycle of a Taeniid larva is very short. Larvae wither and die when the dream's denouement is achieved. If the denouement is not achieved before the dream ends or if the Dreamer believes it is impossible to achieve the denouement, 25% of the total larvae molt into fully functional drones while the rest die off.

Taeniid Drone

	Natural Form Large Outsider	Manifested Form Outsider + Manifestation
Hit Dice:	4d8+8 (26 hp)	4d8+8 (26)
Initiative:	+0	varies
Speed:	30 ft., climb 20 ft.	varies
Defense:	14 (-1 size, +5 natural)	varies
Attacks:	Bite +2 melee, 2 claws +5 melee	varies
Damage:	Bite 1d6, claw 1d8	varies
Face/Reach:	5 ft. by 10 ft./5 ft.	varies
Special Attacks:	improved grab, squeeze	varies
Special Qualities:	immune to mind-affecting effects	Outsider, immune to mind-affecting effects
Saves:	Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +4	Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +4
Abilities:	Str 17, Dex 10, Con 14, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1	varies
Skills:	Climb, Spot	varies
Feats:	none	varies
Climate/Terrain:	anywhere in the Dreamworld	any in Dreamworld
Organization:	colony (1d4 x IL)	colony (1d4 x IL)
Challenge Rating:	2	varies
Treasure:	None	varies
Alignment:	Neutral	neutral
Advancement:	-	-

Taeniid drones exist only to serve the Queen. They are near mindless and usually attack Dreamwalkers on sight unless ordered otherwise. Drones may be encountered throughout the Dreamworld but are most often found in and around the Nest or in the Underpsyche watching over the Queen's eggs.

Drones are entirely fearless and fight to the death. They can be injured and slain in most normal ways but need never make a massive damage check. Some have additional strengths, weaknesses and special abilities, depending on their manifestation (see Taeniid Appearance, below). In combat, their attack form is generally dictated by their manifestation.

Drones only appear in their natural form when encountered in the Underpsyche or when Summoned to a Dreamworld by the Queen. In this case, they manifest as large, shadowy, insect-like creatures with bloated abdomens, sharp spines and barbed appendages.

Drones may be Propelled into the Underpsyche by their Queen but cannot enter the Periphery or bypass any Barrier on their own.

Taeniid Queen

Outsider	
Hit Dice:	5d8 + 1d8 per IL (35 hp)
Initiative:	varies
Speed:	varies
Defense:	varies
Attacks:	varies
Damage:	varies
Face/Reach:	varies
Special Attacks:	varies
Special Qualities:	Outsider, immune to mind-affecting effects, mana usage
Saves:	varies
Abilities:	varies
Skills:	varies
Feats:	2 normal feats and 1d3 mana feats
Climate/Terrain:	any (in Dreamworld)
Organization:	colony
Challenge Rating:	varies
Treasure:	None
Alignment:	Neutral
Advancement:	6-10 (based on IL)

The Taeniid Queen is the heart of the colony and the mother of all larvae and drones within the Dreamworld. Their intelligence ranges from genius level to a crafty, animal-like cunning and a knack for learning and adaptation that should never be underestimated.

Queens have limited telepathic ability, allowing one-way communication and control of her drones. Scientists and Dreamwalkers have thus far been unable to duplicate this effect with any degree of success.

The natural form of the Queen is unknown as she only manifests within the Dreamworld. Her appearance is bound by the fears of the Dreamer and may change each night or even from dream to dream.

The Queen can be injured and slain in most normal ways. She may also have additional strengths, weaknesses and special abilities depending on her manifestation (see Taeniid Appearance, below). The Queen never leaves the vicinity of her nest. She avoids hand-to-hand combat if possible, preferring creative mana use, larvae and Unreal to harm or delay opponents if direct confrontation seems inevitable.

Mana Use (Ex): Taeniid Queens have a number of Mana Points equal to their total hit points, can use both common and Taeniid mana powers but cannot pass through any Barrier.

Taeniid Appearance

The appearance of the Taenia varies between dreams and is largely dependent upon the type of denouement and the fears of the Dreamer. Dreamwalkers can always see through any disguise to the Taeniid presence lurking beneath.

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In a passive denouement, the Taenia often manifest as some deep-seated, past or present fear of the Dreamer. The Taenia instinctively latch onto and give form to these repressed fears in order to gain nourishment from the feelings of uneasiness and revulsion this causes in the Dreamer's subconscious mind. These manifestations are highly diverse and may have nothing to do with the current Dreamworld.

Larval Unreal incorporate a minor characteristic of this fear into their appearance while drones embody it in a more recognizable form. The Queen either appears as a larger version of the drones or as the culmination of the fear itself.

As a child, the Dreamer witnessed a particularly gruesome car accident that left several people severely injured and one man dead. The child had recurring nightmares for weeks after but as time passed, he eventually managed to suppress his fear and forget about the accident. The memory is still there however. Even now he is careful to drive the speed limit and becomes uneasy by the sight of blood.

In the Dreamworld, larval Unreal manifest minor characteristics of those involved in the accident such as glass in the hair, bloody clothing, lacerations or bruises. Drones manifest as more seriously injured people, paramedics, police or news crews that were on the scene. The Queen manifests as the grisly remains of the man who died.

The Unreal are oblivious to the presence of larval manifestations, even when the larvae are in their natural form. Taeniid drones and Queens, on the other hand, may cause uneasiness or sometimes even outright terror throughout the Dreamworld, depending on their appearance.

In an active denouement, the Dreamer is consciously trying to destroy the Taeniid Queen. This is why Taeniid infestations are rare in the minds of lucid Dreamers. Larvae may be found anywhere in the Dreamworld and their behavior is more aggressive than in passive denouements. In addition, there is a distinct absence of drones---the Queen Absorbs them at the beginning of the dream in order to enhance her own power.

The Taeniid Queen manifests as the source of the Dreamer's opposition. Destroying her results in resolution of the denouement. The larvae actively seek to hinder the Dreamer from accomplishing the denouement without harming him directly. The Queen has no such compunction and attacks the Dreamer on sight.

The Dreamworld is set in a medieval fiefdom ruled by a tyrannical Baron. The denouement is to kill the Baron and put his castle to the torch. Since the denouement is active, the Taeniid Queen manifests as the Baron himself. Her larval minions may be found among the Baron's knights or attached to any other inhabitants of the Dreamworld. The larval knights may attack the Dreamer (under orders from the Queen) while other larvae use delaying and misdirection tactics to hinder the Dreamer from accomplishing his denouement.

Strengths and Weaknesses

Some Taeniid statistics (such as HD) remain constant no matter what form the Taenia take. Others, such as ability scores, skills, feats, natural and special abilities, etc. all conform to that of their appearance/manifestation. This includes any strengths, weaknesses or special abilities inherent to the form in question.

Therefore, a Taeniid drone (or Queen or Broodking) manifesting as a vampire would have all of the vampire's special abilities such as **Energy Drain (Su)**, **Blood Drain (Ex)**, etc., but be repelled by garlic and be disoriented and destroyed by exposure to sunlight. Similarly, a Taeniid werewolf takes full

damage from weapons made of silver, a Queen made of ice may be melted by fire, bat-like drones may be thwarted or even “blinded” by loud noises, etc. Note that these strengths and weakness are largely dependent on the Dreamer’s interpretation of the special abilities of the form in question.

In the case of more unusual manifestations, the strengths and weaknesses may or may not be so readily apparent but are most often based in common sense---a Taeniid Queen manifesting as a giant ball of flame may be immune to fire attacks but take double damage from water-based attacks. One manifesting as a giant robot may be susceptible to rust, electricity or even a computer virus.

Even human-like manifestations often have certain weaknesses. A Queen posing as a military general may be immune or resistant to altered weapons but take double damage from weapons native to the Dreamworld. Weaknesses are especially important when dealing with active denouements as they are sometimes the only thing that enable the characters to overcome the Queen.

Keep in mind that the Queen can manifest as literally *anything* and that discovering her weaknesses and defeating her might not involve

combat at all, even in dreams with active denouements. For example, if she manifests as something abstract, like a prominent newspaper, the only way to defeat her might be by discrediting the paper, exposing its journalists as frauds, drawing more subscribers to a rival paper, etc. If the Queen manifests as a police force, one way to defeat her might be by exposing the corruption within. A Queen manifesting as an invasive computer network might only be destroyed by a computer savvy character creating a virus and uploading it past her defenses. A Queen manifesting as a politician running for President might commit suicide if someone else was elected. A Queen manifesting as a plague might only be defeated if the characters Heal a certain number of Unreal, or if they can somehow find a cure. Or a Queen manifesting as the local burger eating champion might explode upon being beaten at this year’s annual burger eating contest at the fair.

In general, even abstract manifestations will be something malevolent (police officers “on the take”, the paper prints slanderous articles, the politician has a history of infidelity, etc.), but the GM is encouraged to use his imagination to keep each session from devolving into a “monster hunt” once the denouement has been achieved---although a good old fashioned monster hunt every now and then never hurt anyone! ☺.

“One of the strangest infestations I’ve ever encountered was based around the Dreamer’s fear of pencils. Don’t ask me where it came from either. The larval Unreal manifested with erasers instead of hair, some had yellow skin and others had words like No. 2 and Berol Black Beauty tattooed across parts of their bodies. The drones appeared as giant, lumbering, six-foot tall yellow pencils with wooden arms and legs and wickedly sharpened, claw-like pencils instead of fingers. Those pencil claws were lead poisonous, as we soon found out. Yeah, I know how it sounds now, but it wasn’t even remotely funny at the time.”

“Worst of all was the Queen. She manifested as a giant pencil sharpener---you know the old kind they used to mount on walls or desks. Her mouth was the pencil slot and when she bit down, the crank would turn, grinding all those metal gears inside. I still remember the sound---it was awful. She damn near chewed off my arm before we finally put her down.”

---Lochlan, Natural

Behavior During the Dream

The Taenia instinctively know what the dream's denouement is and actively seek to prevent its achievement. How they do this depends mostly on what stage of development they are in.

Larva

Taeniid larvae are willful and as intelligent as their hosts. They possess a strong sense of self-preservation that forces them to walk a thin line between their own survival and their obligation to the colony.

The sole purpose of a larva's existence is to become a drone. At the same time, it is loathe to end the brief period of free will bestowed upon it during the course of the dream. Therefore, it tries to keep the Dreamer from completing his denouement in a way so as not to end the dream.

Because larvae are incubated near the source of the dream, they often attach themselves (via Bonding) to Unreal prominent to the resolution of the denouement. These larval Unreal try to distract the Dreamer from accomplishing the denouement in a multitude of ways.

For example, if the denouement involves the recovery of some lost item, the larvae will move the item rather than destroy it as this would most likely end the dream. If the denouement involves travel, the larvae may attempt to disable the Dreamer's vehicle, set up roadblocks and detours along the way or even force the Dreamer into a minor accident in order to delay him from attaining his goal. If the dream involves resolving a conflict with a child, parent or ex, the larvae may kidnap the person in question (or perhaps even the Dreamer) to temporarily keep the denouement from being achieved.

Larvae avoid contact with Dreamwalkers whenever possible and much rather flee than fight. If conflict seems unavoidable they will fight but some have even been known to help or negotiate with Dreamwalkers in order to enjoy a bit more freedom. Dreamwalkers should be forewarned that larvae are not to be trusted.

Larvae are more prone to fight in dreams with active denouements than passive ones. They fully understand that destruction of the Queen ends not only their own existence but that of the entire colony.

Drones

In the Underpsyche, drones attack Dreamwalkers on sight. In the Dreamworld, they are usually subtler as they have a vague understanding of the disruption their actions and presence cause throughout the dream. Some drones are even crafty enough to follow Dreamwalkers, waiting to ambush them in some dark, secluded place.

Queen

The Queen's only goal seems to be procreation and ensuring the safety of her eggs. Her reproductive system is highly active and complex, enabling her to spontaneously lay hundreds of eggs each night. The Queen never abandons her eggs. This behavior is instinctual rather than due to any feelings of motherly love. If the eggs in her nest are destroyed, the Queen uses any means available to hunt down and destroy the perpetrators and has even been known to pursue Dreamwalkers to the edge of the Periphery for such an offense.

The Nest

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The nest is the hub of all Taeniid activity in the Dreamworld. It is the lair of the Queen and the birthing chamber of the Taeniid larvae. Inside the nest, the Queen lays clutches of gelatinous eggs and cocoons them for distribution throughout the Underpsyche.

The appearance of the nest conforms to the Dreamworld and the denouement. Its size depends on the severity of the infestation and may range from an office suite to the inside of a skyscraper. Some nests are even mobile (such as in the back of a truck) and most can be moved through the Dreamworld provided the Queen has enough mana for a massive Reshaping.

Dreamwalkers may determine the direction and location of the nest (within 1d10 yards) on a successful DC 15 Navigate check. In dreams with passive denouements, the DC is modified by +25 if the denouement has not yet been achieved. A 1 on the roll indicates the character must make a DC 15 Will save in order to even approach the nest.

Broodking

Outsider	
Hit Dice:	10 (hp 60)
Initiative:	Varies
Speed:	Varies
Defense:	Varies
Attacks:	Varies
Damage:	Varies
Face/Reach:	Varies
Special Attacks:	Varies
Special Qualities:	Outsider, immune to mind-affecting effects
Saves:	Varies
Abilities:	Varies
Skills:	Varies
Feats:	3 normal feats and 2d4 mana feats
Climate/Terrain:	Any
Organization:	solitary
Challenge Rating:	varies
Treasure:	Varies
Alignment:	Neutral evil
Advancement:	Unlimited

Taeniid Broodkings are the biggest mystery of all the Taenia in part because they are (thankfully) so infrequently encountered. Broodkings are an anomaly among the hive-minded Taenia. They seem to operate independently of any Queen and their motivations and goals are entirely unknown.

Broodkings may be encountered anywhere in the Emyrean and are inherently hostile. The few attempts to communicate with them have resulted in immediate conflict, always initiated by the Broodking. The one documented case of attempted capture (by The Clinic) ended in disaster.

Broodkings are formidable opponents. They are able to manipulate mana and possess abilities, skills, feats and special abilities to rival even the most experienced Dreamwalkers. More horrifying is their ability to enter the real world. Broodkings do this by killing the Dreamwalker's pseudophysical form and "riding" his consciousness out of the Emyrean.

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Since so few cases of Broodkings have been documented, it is unknown if they have developed any other special abilities. Broodkings manifest in various ways, usually as something horrific, alien and violent. To determine the abilities of a particular Broodking, Game Masters may either create a new creature type or choose from a pregenerated one.

*The Broodking manifests as a hideous troll. He has the ability scores, Defense, saving throws, skills and special abilities (such as **Rend (Ex)**, **Regeneration (Ex)**, etc.) of a normal troll but retains his own HD, hp, feats and special abilities.*

Mana Use (Ex): Broodkings have a number of Mana Points equal to their hit points, can cross through any Barrier and have access to both common and Taeniid mana powers.

Spiritual Disturbance (Ex): In the real world, Broodkings create a sort of mind-numbing, spiritual disturbance. Dreamwalkers are unaffected by this disturbance and in fact, it is possible for Dreamwalkers to track down Broodkings by homing in on this disturbance (treat as locating a specific Dreamworld). Once within the area of effect, the Dreamwalkers are able to manipulate mana just as if they were in a dream.

Broodspawn

Broodspawn are vile creatures that are created by Broodkings in the real world either via some inherent special ability, the use of mana or in rare instances, the mating of a Broodking and a mortal (human, animal, etc.).

Broodspawn are much less powerful than Broodkings. The abilities and manifestation of individual Broodspawn vary greatly, depending on the event that brought about their creation, so as with Broodkings, the Game Master can either select a pregenerated creature type (such as that of a dragon, a vampire, a ghost, etc.) or create a new one.

*A Broodking manifests in the real world as a monstrous shark-like creature and mates with a real shark---the offspring is a hideous, shark-like Broodspawn. Similarly, a Broodking manifests as a lycanthrope and inflicts **The Curse of Lycanthropy (Su)** on a woman it bites, thereby creating a new Broodspawn who has her own lycanthropic powers.*

Most Broodspawn serve their masters (either willingly or not) and are only unleashed into the world if the Broodking is destroyed or if it returns to the Emyrean.

Mana Use (Ex): Broodspawn have a Mana Point total equal to one quarter to one half of their total hit points and may perform all of the common mana powers.

Outsider	
Hit Dice:	5d8 (25 hp)
Initiative:	Varies
Speed:	Varies
Defense:	Varies
Attacks:	Varies
Damage:	Varies
Face/Reach:	Varies
Special Attacks:	Varies
Special Qualities:	Outsider
Saves:	Varies
Abilities:	Varies
Skills:	Varies
Feats:	Varies
Climate/Terrain:	Any
Organization:	solitary
Challenge Rating:	varies
Treasure:	Varies
Alignment:	any evil
Advancement:	5-10

Spiritual Disturbance (Ex): Broodspawn emit a spiritual disturbance similar, though weaker, to that of a Broodking, which makes it much harder to locate (Navigate DC 35, +/- modifiers).

Taeniid Mana Powers

Taeniid Queens and Broodkings are able to manipulate mana in much the same way as Dreamwalkers. In addition, they have developed several unique abilities that Dreamwalkers have thus far been unable to reproduce with any degree of success.

Absorption

Manifestation Time: free action

Range: Touch

Target: Self

Duration: Instantaneous

Mana Points: 1

With Absorption, drones may be consumed in order to enhance one's own power. Each drone adds +1d8 hp and increases the recipient's Defense by +1. These increases disappear when the dream ends. The Queen automatically Absorbs all drones at the beginning of a dream with an active denouement.

Fear Generation

Manifestation Time: attack action

Range: Close

Target: one creature

Duration: Instantaneous

Mana Points: 1

Using Fear Generation, the Taenia may cause irrational fear in a character's mind, forcing him to make an immediate DC 15 Will save. The DC is modified by +5 per MP spent. The normal rules for fear apply to a failed save. Fear Generation is only used against the Dreamer in dreams with active denouements, and even then as a last resort, since the Dreamer often rebels and wakes up (something the Queen wishes to avoid). Fear Generation costs at least 1 MP to initiate and is subject to Nullification.

Chaos

Manifestation Time: attack action

Range: Close

Target: one creature

Duration: Instantaneous

Mana Points: 1

Using Chaos, the Taenia may directly attack a character's mind, forcing him to make an immediate DC 15 Will save. The DC is modified by +5 per MP spent. A failed save indicates the character's senses are overwhelmed by chaotic sights, smells, sounds and harsh telepathic shrieks causing all of his DC's to be

raised by the difference between the original DC and the failed roll, so long the character remains in the vicinity of the Taenia. Chaos is only used against the Dreamer in dreams with active denouements, and even then as a last resort. Chaos costs at least 1 MP to initiate and is subject to Nullification.

Summon/Propel

Manifestation Time: free action

Range: Unlimited

Target: one Taeniid drone

Duration: Instantaneous

Mana Points: 1

Queen's often use this power to Propel drones throughout the Underpsyche. In this way, drones are routinely dispatched to carry eggs sacs throughout the levels of the Underpsyche. In times of trouble, she can also use this power to Summon 1d6 drones that arrive in 2d4 rounds. Each drone Propelled/Summoned in this manner costs 1 MP.

Broodkings in the Real World

The worst thing that can happen in Dreamwalker is for a Broodking to escape the Empyrean. Upon entering the real world, each reacts differently to its newfound freedom. Some go on unheralded reigns of murder and violence while others take a more subtle approach, often retreating to some remote location to set up a lair and create Broodspawn to serve them.

Like other Taenia, Broodkings feed off negative emotions such as misery and fear. In the real world, Broodkings (and to a lesser degree, Broodspawn) create a sort of mind-numbing, spiritual disturbance that increases acts of violence and murder as well as feelings of hate, anger and betrayal in all those around them. Those who have experienced this effect describe it as akin to being in a dream (or nightmare). They remember what they saw and did while under the influence but had little or no control over their own actions.

Dreamwalkers are unaffected by this disturbance. In fact, it is possible for Dreamwalkers to track down Broodkings (and Broodspawn) by homing in on this disturbance (treat as locating a specific Dreamworld). Once within the area of effect, they are able to manipulate mana just as if they were in a dream. It is almost as if they have entered the nightmare realm of the Broodking itself.

Several particularly bizarre killing sprees have now been attributed to escaped Broodkings. It is also believed that over the centuries, escaped Broodkings and their spawn may have given rise to many mythical and legendary creatures such as dragons, vampires and werewolves to name just a few.

Final Thoughts on the Taenia

"I hear you now, and see you for the first time, and my shame is very great."

---The Keeper of the Soul, *The Hand of Chaos*

It should be made clear that the Taenia are not inherently evil. They do what they must to survive and procreate just like any other living creature in the real world. While they are responsible for criminal

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behavior and the gradual loss of sanity, the Taenia are not the cause of all negative emotions in the world, nor are they responsible for the actions of every single madman.

Some believe the Taenia have been with us since the beginning of time. Others believe that they are not native to our world at all, but instead have crossed over from an alternate dimension that closely borders our own. Still others speculate that the Taenia may be a tangible reflection of the evil within ourselves. Only one thing is agreed upon for certain---while they may not be evil, the Taenia represent a threat to the psychological well being of all mankind.

Organizations

“The only limits are, as always, those of vision.”

---James Broughton

Below are some of the more prominent organizations that the characters are likely to encounter in the real world. Some have never even heard of Dreamwalking while others have their own unique perspectives on the matter.

Public Opinion

In the early 1970's new age enlightenment began spreading awareness of the importance of dreams and their relationship to our daily lives. Hundreds of dream interpretation books were published. Several even tried to teach normal people how to lucid dream. As a result, a handful of faith healers, psychics and other spiritually aware individuals actually developed the ability to Dreamwalk on their own.

Even so, despite an occasional tabloid article, the general public has very little information on Dreamwalking and even less about the Project. If asked, most people will say that the ability to enter someone else's dreams is pure fantasy. Very few have even heard of the 1960's scandal of Dr. Black and his new dream drug.

This opinion is more than acceptable to the Project and its benefactors. It is commonly agreed that widespread panic would probably result from the knowledge that nearly all of the world's population are routinely exposed to an alien infestation, not to mention the legal complications that would arise from confessions such as “It wasn't me, the Taenia made me do it.”

Religious Groups

Religious groups perceive Dreamwalking in various ways, largely dependent on the beliefs and practices of their individual faith.

Some shamanic traditions, such as that of the American Indians, the Mayans and Australian aborigines to name a few, have been practicing the art of Dreamwalking for generations. Many “Far Eastern” religions have incorporated and accepted the Dreamwalking process as a natural part of spiritual growth.

Unfortunately, many of the more orthodox religions (Christianity being the largest) firmly denounce accounts of Dreamwalking as delusion, heresy or both. Parishioners who express interest or support about the possibility of Dreamwalking are often ostracized, ridiculed or in some cases, even expelled from their respective faith.

The Vatican

Throughout history, the Vatican has had its sometimes not so subtle hand in most controversial and political affairs across the globe. By now it is certain they have encountered at least some evidence of Dreamwalking. Curiously, while individual congregations have their own viewpoints and agendas, the Catholic Church has declined to take an official stance. Project benefactors are not sure if this is a good thing or not.

United States Government

The U.S. Government has an unofficial “Don’t ask, don’t tell” policy regarding government-funded research concerning the Dreamwalking process. In other words, don’t ask them about it and they won’t have to lie.

Project Dreamwalker and The Clinic receive the majority of their funding from government sponsors therefore, both are technically under government control. However, in practice, little authority is actually exercised. Proponents and opponents of both organizations may be found throughout the higher levels of government organizations, including the CIA, FBI and NSA.

The more civic-minded of these supporters sponsor the Project for the good it does mankind while others view Dreamwalking as a potential source of power and gain. So far, the Project has been left to its own devices but it is only a matter of time before someone in authority attempts to exercise more control.

Other Governments

The Clinic has confirmed Peripheral contact with teams of Dreamwalkers from at least three other countries---Egypt, Japan and Great Britain. Suspicions ran high during each occasion and little information was exchanged.

It is quite likely that other countries have developed and are exploiting the ability to Dreamwalk What this means to national security is unknown but soon after contact was made, several Clinic Analysts were transferred to Washington DC for “special duty.”

The Clinic

The Clinic was founded in 1977 by Dr. Gunther R. Endell. Dr. Endell was granted authority to manufacture Black25 in small doses and resume the Dreamwalking experiments detailed in the Black Files. Many of Dr. Black’s former students and original staff were happy to return to their old work. In addition, people from all over the country who had reported experiences similar to Dreamwalking were assembled, screened and recruited. Some of those that came later were experienced Mystics, able to instruct Dr. Endell’s Dreamwalkers in the ways of the Empyrean, the dangers of the Taenia and how to manipulate mana.

Morale was high during The Clinic’s initial stages as Dr. Endell’s experiments closely followed Dr. Black’s line of research. However, as time and the capabilities of his Analysts progressed, his research began to take a more aggressive turn.

Some believe it was urging from one or more important sponsors that caused him to redirect his focus towards more military applications of Dreamwalking. Others believe that this is what Dr. Endell had planned from the start. Whatever the reason, new procedures were planned and enacted.

Under Dr. Endell’s direction, Taeniid larvae, drones and Queens were captured and examined within the confines of the Dreamworld before being destroyed. Many unsuccessful attempts were made to transport and control the Taenia with the intent of distributing them into the Dreamworlds of others.

Failing that, Dr. Endell’s research turned toward influencing the subconscious mind of the Dreamer. The idea was to see if thoughts could be imprinted on the subconscious mind in such a manner as to make the sleeping person do things after he awoke.

These experiments did not go over well with many of the original Analysts and members of Dr. Black’s staff. Their complaints were ignored and many contemplated early retirement.

It was about this time that disaster struck. Failing in attempts to transport the Taenia across the Barrier and also having limited success with mind-affecting techniques, Dr. Endell proposed a plan to locate and capture a Taeniid Broodking. The original members of Dr. Black's staff were vehemently opposed to the plan. In particular, one Kevin Laerty, the only one present who had ever encountered a Broodking, got into a heated argument with Dr. Endell and had to be forcibly removed from the facility.

Despite opposition, Dr. Endell proceeded with his plan. It took several weeks but finally, a Broodking was located. The Dreamwalkers were no match for the creature's ferocity. In minutes, several were killed and subsequently dumped out of the Dreamworld. What's worse, the Broodking actually rode the conscious mind of one of the Dreamwalkers out into the real world.

The Broodking killed all of the Dreamwalkers, several other Clinic staff members and destroyed the lab before fleeing into the nearby Appalachians. It migrated to a small farming community, causing horrible mutations among the local people and animals before it was finally tracked down.

Under Dr. Endell's recommendation, a covert military strike was ordered on the community. A Special Forces unit entered the area and summarily fell under the negative effects of the Broodking's spiritual disturbance as did the second unit sent in after.

A team of Clinic Analysts were then assembled to infiltrate the community. However, before they could act, a band of Mystics calling themselves the Sword of Gaia entered the affected area. According to eyewitness reports, the group captured the Broodking using a large web-like net made of pure mana. After which, both the enraged Broodking and members of the Sword disappeared into thin air.

The Sword of Gaia

The Sword of Gaia is a mysterious group of Dreamwalkers made up entirely of Naturals and Mystics who seemed to resent the infringement of Analysts into the Empyrean. From the only brief encounter with the Sword, it was learned that their order was founded in 1237 with the purpose of hunting down and destroying Taeniid Broodkings---a tradition they continue to uphold to this day. Other than that, their motivations and whereabouts are entirely unknown.

Dreamstalkers

Power corrupts. This is one of the oldest and truest facts of life. Not all Dreamwalkers are interested in helping others and healing the human psyche. The ability to enter the Dreamworlds and influence the minds of others is too great a temptation for some people to resist. These rogue Dreamwalkers are known as Dreamstalkers. The Project has given its Dreamwalkers unofficial permission to "extradite" a suspected Dreamstalker if encountered in the Dreamworld. Otherwise, contact with Dreamstalkers is to be avoided if possible.

"Dreamstalkers. That's the name they give people like me. What a joke. I believed in the Project, once, I really did. All that crap they tell you about how you're doing the right thing. How you're helping humanity fight this ancient enemy."

"Only now, I'm the enemy. Why, you ask? Because I like to think for myself, that's why. Because I refused to be brainwashed by their little reconditioning program. They said I was insane and tried to lock me up. Therapy is what they called it---prison is what it was."

"You don't believe me, do you? That's all right, too. I'm still out there and I'm gonna do all I can to make things hard for you and your precious little Project. I'll kill you if I can, so watch your back."

---Turk, Rogue Natural

Dream Design

This chapter focuses on the bare bones of designing the denouement and the Dreamworld.

Designing a Denouement

Before designing a Dreamworld, the GM must first design the dream's denouement. Denouements are the adventures of the Dreamwalkers---the goal they must complete to better help the Dreamer overcome the Taeniid infestation. Since a dream can be about anything, denouements are limited only by the imagination of the Game Master.

Achieving the denouement produces a feeling of triumph accomplishment in the mind of the Dreamer resulting in a backwash of pure mana. 3d6 Mana Points may be absorbed by each character (roll for each separately).

Denouements are divided into two general categories---passive and active. 99% of all dreams contain passive denouements.

In a **passive denouement**, the Dreamer seeks to accomplish a goal independent of the Taenia. In fact, more often than not, the presence of the Taenia is not even apparent to the Dreamer's conscious mind.

Passive denouements need not always involve combat. Most revolve around the completion or resolution of some task (either mundane or abstract) important to the Dreamer. This is a great chance for the Game Master to make characters pay for bypassing such "wimpy" skills as Perform (Keyboards) or Knowledge (Popular Culture).

Winning the local bake-off, finally getting up the nerve to ask a coworker for a date, getting an "A" on a biology exam, taking a long overdue vacation to Rome or standing up to the schoolyard bully are all examples of passive denouements.

In an **active denouement**, the Dreamer is consciously trying to fight the infestation in his psyche. He may not realize what the Taenia are, but he instinctively knows that the colony must be destroyed.

Active denouements are combat oriented. The Taeniid Queen manifests as the chief antagonist of the Dreamworld and the Dreamer's goal (with the help of the characters) is to destroy her. Killing the Queen is always a difficult task in a dream with an active denouement as she Absorbs her drones as the dream begins. At no other time is she more prepared for combat than when the Dreamer himself is out to destroy her.

Defeating the alien army sent to invade earth, storming the beach at Normandy or hunting down a pair of man eating lions are all examples of active denouements.

Keep in mind that things such as time and distance are relative in the Dreamworld so there is no set limit to the time allotted to accomplishing the denouement. Dreams may span days, weeks, years or, in extreme cases, even centuries in the mind of the Dreamer.

Subdenouements

Subdenouements are smaller goals that may be accomplished within the dream. Some have a bearing on the dream's denouement while others do not. Subdenouements are more common in passive denouements and are useful for breaking longer Dreamwalks up into smaller sessions.

Resolution of a subdenouement produces a mildly euphoric feeling of accomplishment in the mind of the Dreamer (whether he is present or not) that results in a backwash of 1d6 Mana Points per Dreamwalker. All characters may absorb the mana but sometimes only one or a few characters should get the Story Awards at the end of the Dreamwalk.

Resolution of each subdenouement is handled separately. Characters should be unaware of the dream's subdenouements until they are resolved and thus, some subdenouements may never be completed.

Upon Joining, the Dreamwalker learns that the denouement is to take a pleasure cruise past the nearest cluster of moons. Related subdenouements may involve procuring passage aboard the next available starliner, helping to apprehend a notorious jewel thief plying his trade on board and repairing the propulsion system damaged by the Taenia.

In the example above, the apprehension of the jewel thief is entirely extraneous to the dream's denouement and the characters may never even get involved with the investigation. However, ignoring the other two subdenouements make achieving the denouement near impossible.

Incidental Achievement

Incidental achievements are even smaller goals that may be achieved and usually have more bearing on the Dreamer's thoughts or the dream's content than its denouement. For instance, in a fantasy setting, incidental achievements might include grabbing a mug of ale at the local tavern, haggling with a smith over the price of a sword, entering an archery contest at the edge of town or anything else the Dreamer feels is appropriate for the setting. Incidental achievements are a tool best used to get characters to take some time to explore the Dreamworld, interact with the Unreal and maybe gain a few extra Experience Points.

Designing a Dreamworld

Since dreams are shifting and malleable, like the denouement, the types and content of Dreamworlds are limited only by the creativity and imagination of the Game Master. Thus there are very few guidelines to go by when designing a Dreamworld. The main thing to keep in mind is that a dream can take place anywhere and at any time.

Dreamworlds are categorized into one of two basic types---realistic and surreal. All dreams have elements of both but one is always more dominant than the other.

Realistic Dreamworlds are subject to most of the laws of science and nature and can appear as anything from any time or place in the real world. A modern day city, a medieval village or a vast forest or desert are all examples of realistic Dreamworlds.

Alteration Mana Point costs are doubled in Realistic Dreamworlds as abundant use of mana often upsets the Dreamer's concept of reality.

Surreal Dreamworlds, on the other hand, are often bizarre landscapes populated by wondrous creatures. A medieval fantasy setting, the inside of a computer chip, a distant planet in a galaxy far, far away or even a hodgepodge collection of different places or worlds are all examples of surreal Dreamworlds.

Alteration DC's are halved in surreal Dreamworlds as the Dreamer is more open to radical changes in the environment.

Dreamworlds of either type can undergo sudden, radical changes in time and location, all subject to the whims of the Dreamer's subconscious mind. These changes are centered around the Dreamer but affect characters and the Taenia as well. Most are denouement related. The Joined Dreamwalker might be walking through a house on his way to the airport, open a door and suddenly find himself aboard an airplane, well on the way to his destination.

Imprinting

The Dreamworld is a collection of the Dreamer's past and present life experiences and on some conscious or subconscious level, everything he knows is contained within. But what about things the Dreamer has no knowledge of such as the cockpit of an F-14 Tomcat, how to glaze a ham or the components necessary to repair a nuclear missile?

Although no one has been able to explain it as of yet, the Dreamer's knowledge seems to have little or no bearing on the authenticity of things found within the Dreamworld. A Dreamworld African swallow would be identical to one encountered in the real world even if the Dreamer has no idea that an African swallow exists.

In the case of real life people and places, general characteristics are conveyed rather than specific ones so information such as Israel's missile launch code sequence, the layout of Fort Knox or Bill Gates' ATM number are still safe. These items would have different representations in the Dreamworld.

Some researchers have hypothesized that the correct information is being imported from the Dreamworlds of others. While this theory is so far unconfirmed, this "collective unconscious" is viewed by many as further proof of the bond that exists between all of mankind.

Fluff

Fluff are extraneous touches and details that can be used to reinforce the impression that the characters are in a dream. Fluff usually has no bearing on the denouement and most often manifests as things that have left a mark on the Dreamer's subconscious mind. Put more simply, fluff are those confusing little things that seem both natural and out of place during your dream but whose meaning sometimes becomes clear once you wake up and have time to think about it ("Oh! So, that's where that came from.").

For instance take a Dreamer who just returned from a trip to Japan. Although his dream takes place in Los Angeles, all the Unreal within might be dressed in traditional Japanese clothing because that was what was on his mind when he went to sleep.

Fluff can be insignificant, humorous or dangerous. While fluff usually has no bearing on the outcome of the dream, it can sometimes be utilized by creative players to help achieve the denouement. Fluff can also provide clues or answers to puzzles troubling the Dreamer in the real world.

Fluff is more common in realistic Dreamworlds and less (or more?) evident in surreal. Generally 1d3 items of fluff appear over the course of the dream. Some examples of fluff are given below. For more information on including fluff, see Appendix I: Redefining Fluff.

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- Streets are lined with gears, cranks and pulleys that serve no apparent purpose but occasionally turn and wind.
- Winged horses nest upon rooftops of skyscrapers.
- The forest looks impenetrable but the trees and shrubs part way whenever approached.
- Marathon runners race by at random intervals.
- All vehicles are covered with fur (or leaves, or grass).
- All plants and trees are pink (or blue, or red, etc.)
- All buildings except those related to the denouement are empty storefronts. The Unreal disappear as they enter and reappear when they exit.
- Tumbleweeds made of barbed wire blow through town.
- The streets are filled with water, there are no ground vehicles only water craft.
- A green flag flies from every rooftop.
- The Unreal are all elderly (or obese, or men, or women).
- Police state: The military closely monitors all actions through the use of security cameras, listening devices and undercover agents. Big Brother is watching you.
- An unseen woman screams in agony whenever someone steps on a crack in the sidewalk.
- The Unreal spontaneously combust. This does not affect the Taenia or Possessed characters.
- All entrance doors are false; entry into any building is gained through trapdoors resembling doormats.
- The entire dream takes place as a black and white Noir type film instead of color.

Inhabitants of the Dreamworld

The Dreamer

For the most part, Dreamers are content to wander about the Dreamworld trying to accomplish the dream's denouement. In combat, the Dreamer's opponents (including Dreamwalkers and the Taenia) have a Defense of 10 (not including bonuses for high Dexterity).

There are two types of Dreamers---idle and lucid. 99.9% of all Dreamers are idle.

An **idle** Dreamer usually (though not always) manifests in a form that directly corresponds with that of his physical one including all ability scores, skills, feats and any other special abilities.

The appearance of a **lucid** Dreamer also varies, but once again usually corresponds with that of his physical form. His abilities, on the other hand, are vastly improved. For game purposes, a lucid Dreamer (this includes a Dreamwalker in his own Dreamworld) has a Strength, Constitution and Dexterity of 25 and possesses whatever skill or feat (normal or mana) he desires. In addition, he has an unlimited number of Mana Points (it is his dream, after all) and is able to use mana at the rate of 10 MP per round. However, many lucid Dreamers are unaware that they can manifest skills and feats or spend mana. These benefits disappear if the Dreamer leaves his own Dreamworld.

The Unreal

The term Unreal is somewhat of a misnomer as for all intents and purposes these beings are real, at least for the course of the dream. They have names, personalities and all the ability scores, skills, feats and special abilities of their counterparts in the real world however since they are essentially phantasms, their

total hit points are halved and in combat against Dreamwalkers or the Taenia they suffer a -5 penalty to their Defense.

The appearance of the Unreal generally conforms to the characteristics of the Dreamworld. In some cases however, the Unreal are bound by the Dreamer's perception of reality rather than reality itself. For instance, if the Dreamer belongs to a family full of police officers, the Unreal police force in his dreams will most likely be friendly and helpful. On the other hand, in the Dreamworld of a career criminal, the police will be arrogant, rude and more prone to violence and brutality. Similarly, a Dreamer who was once bitten by the family dog may view all dogs as vicious and unpredictable, thereby making every dog in the Dreamworld a potential danger.

The Unreal may be divided into two types---mobile and inert. This classification depends primarily upon their behavior once the denouement is achieved and should be decided when creating the Dreamwalk. It is even possible to have some of each type within the same dream.

Mobile Unreal continue to interact with the characters and the Dreamworld even after the denouement has been achieved. Their actions and behavior remain the same---firemen act as firemen, secretaries act as secretaries, gang members act as gang members, etc. Intelligent Taeniid Queens often uses mobile Unreal to help thwart her enemies.

Inert Unreal, on the other hand, cease to interact with the Dreamworld once the denouement is achieved. In some cases, they remain present, but are entirely wrapped up in the Dreamer's post-denouement celebration and are oblivious and immune to anything the characters do.

The Taenia

The appearance of the Taenia varies from Dreamer to Dreamer and sometimes even from dream to dream. Therefore, each manifestation should be interesting and unique. This is no difficult task "thanks" to the number of real world fears the Game Master may choose from.

Taeniid manifestations are easiest to incorporate into dreams with active denouements as the Taenia represent the dream's chief antagonists. In dreams with passive denouements however, the manifestation is drawn from the Dreamer's subconscious mind and sometimes has little or nothing to do with the Dreamworld itself (for more on Taeniid manifestations, see Taeniid Appearance, [pg. 64](#)).

The following are three basic types of fears that the Game Master can use to determine the appearance of the Taeniid colony.

Traumatic/Disturbing Events

Taeniid manifestations sometimes center around Traumatic/Disturbing Events. These can be drawn from anything the Dreamer has experienced, witnessed or heard about, even those his conscious mind has forgotten or repressed. The Taenia manifest as people the Dreamer associates with the event itself. A plane crash, a horror movie or book, the death of a loved one, being tortured, beaten up or witnessing a murder or rape are all Traumatic/Disturbing Events.

Concrete Fear

Concrete Fears are easy to represent and center around some tangible aversion or fear that is easily incorporated into the Taeniid manifestation. Game Masters need only do a quick Internet search or visit the local library to find a host of phobias to choose from. While it's no laughing matter, you'll be shocked

at some of the things people are afraid of. Fear of fire, cats, wings, grass, plastic, eyes, cars, guns, rocks, television sets and virtually anything else are all Concrete Fears.

Abstract Fear

Abstract Fears are a little harder to represent in game terms but can be much more interesting to roleplay. Abstract Fears center around negative emotional and/or perceptual responses---things like fear of heights, getting lost, open spaces, closed spaces, crowds, aging, conversations, motion and being embarrassed are all Abstract Fears. With a little thought, these can all be incorporated into the Taeniid manifestation.

Take fear of heights for instance. The larval Unreal might be ridiculously tall or walk around on stilts. Drones, if any, resemble vaporous clouds that produce feelings of vertigo with each attack. The Queen is a larger version of the drones with the nest set atop the highest building in the Dreamworld, and the only way to defeat her might be to demonstrate a complete lack of fear of heights (possibly through a successful Constitution or Wisdom check).

Enemy

Taeniid manifestations, particularly those appearing in active denouements, are sometimes based around a central antagonist or group of antagonists. Enemy manifestations can take the form of a predatory animal, a neighborhood bully, an organized crime ring, an invading army, a rival corporation, in-laws, a local street gang or a government agency.

Nonstandard Weapons, Vehicles and Creatures

What is the range of a Martian death ray? What is the top speed of a flying saucer? How much damage does the fiery breath of a Mixoplixosaurus really do? The truth is, we don't know for sure and chances are you don't know either.

So, what is a Game Master to do in a world of dreams where anything is possible? Where fantastic items and vehicles can be Created at will and mythical creatures are encountered on a routine basis? The answer is simple. Rather than designing a long list of boring stats, Game Masters are encouraged to match nonstandard items and animals with ones of the same general size and type.

For instance, you can use the statistics for any handgun to calculate the fire mode, range and damage of a Martian death ray, a flying saucer could correspond with the statistics of any comparably sized aircraft and a Mixoplixosaurus's breath weapon can do 5d8, 3d10, 9d20 or whatever amount of damage you want it to.

Don't be afraid to change stats, ad-lib and make things up. Your players might think they know how much damage a .45 pistol does, but if the Dreamer is terrified of guns after being shot in real life, even a small gun could call for an immediate massive damage check each time it hits. Remember, in the end, it's all just a dream.

Boundaries of the Dreamworld

Each Dreamworld is usually centered around its denouement. In general, the further one travels away from the denouement, the less distinct and populated the Dreamworld becomes. For instance, take a denouement centered around a cross country hike from New York City to Los Angeles. The Dreamworld

would be clear and distinct along the route the Dreamer plans to take, becoming less so the farther one ventures away from the route until reaching the Barrier at the edge of the Dreamworld.

Designing an Underworld

Beginning characters will need to replenish their mana supply often so the Game Master must be prepared for short trips into the Underpsyche. Several Underworlds should be loosely designed ahead of time. These don't have to be full sized Dreamworlds, only rough outlines to give the characters an idea of where they are and what they are seeing.

Underworlds are devoid of Unreal but otherwise follow much the same design rules as a Dreamworld. However, instead of a denouement, each Underworld contains a single pocket of 5d6 Mana Points that may be harvested by the characters. One roll should be made for each Underworld.

Characters enter the Underworld 1-100 yards away from these pockets and may return to the Underworld later if the total number of points in the mana pocket has not been used up. Mana pockets sometimes ($20\% \times \text{IL} = \text{chance}$) act as incubators for Taeniid eggs and are guarded by $1d4 + (\text{IL})$ drones.

Designing an Island

Islands follow the same rules for design as do Dreamworlds although they do not have denouements. The inhabitants of an island are considered to be Unreal. Of all the Taenia, only Broodkings have been known to manifest on an island. Islands are most useful for Game Masters who wish to run long campaigns using the same setting.

An island constantly floats through the Periphery. Therefore, Dreamwalkers wishing to return to an island may do so only at the Game Master's discretion.

Islands are shifting and malleable and concepts like time and distance can never be trusted. Some islands undergo normal changes with the passage of time but most islands do not. Instead, they continually repeat major events as they originally happened and only change if a Dreamwalker intervenes. In these cases, the island splits off into two parts---one part reverts to its original form, while the other becomes a "new" island.

This new island is entirely dependent on the Dreamwalker (or Dreamwalkers) who caused it to form and dissolves if the character leaves the island for a variable length of time. Therefore, only characters who have "crossed over" may permanently alter the fabric of an island.

Adventures

Designing a Good Dreamwalk

Now that we've discussed the different types of denouements (active, passive) and Dreamworlds (realistic, surreal), this chapter focuses on how to put everything together in order to design a good Dreamwalk.

The task of designing a denouement and populating a Dreamworld is less daunting than it first appears. Ask yourself a few basic questions before you start. What do you dream about? Think about the dreams you have had in the past. Did they have a common theme? A purpose? A goal you were trying to attain? Could they somehow be worked into a suitable Dreamwalk for the characters.

Try keeping a piece of paper and a pencil on your nightstand. When you wake up in the morning (or if you wake up during the night), try and write down everything you can remember about the dreams you just had.

Pester your friends and family into telling their strangest or most important dreams. Most will be happy to comply. People love to talk about their dreams even though the content usually has meaning only to them. If they can't remember their dreams, give them a Psychological Evaluation Sheet to fill out (but make sure to tell them it's just for fun!). You might be surprised at what ideas their answers spark.

Most people become Game Masters because they like to tell stories. Chances are you've had at least one idea you think would make a good book or movie. Even if you never get a chance to write it, the idea need not be wasted---it can be used as the basis for a Dreamwalk. Just lay out the setting for the Dreamworld, the plot for the denouement and make the main character the Dreamer. It's that easy.

The same process can also be used with books and movies that have already been written. These are an unlimited resource of potential Dreamwalks. Although plagiarism is illegal, nothing says you can't borrow someone else's idea as long as you're not doing so for publicity or profit. For best results, try and pick movies or books the players are unfamiliar with or change the setting enough to make it unrecognizable.

Note: We'd like to tell you that sometimes you can make the dream entirely recognizable and see how your players fare as children attending the local wizarding school, or going on vacation to Wally World with the Griswalds or battling minions of the Empire with their trusty lightsabers, but we don't want to get sued, so we won't. ☺

Historical characters, places and events are also a great source of ideas for Dreamworlds and denouements. Who would pass up a chance to safely prowl the foggy London streets in search of Jack the Ripper, walk across the Great Wall of China or set sail on the ill fated voyage of the legendary Titanic? As Dreamwalkers, characters can do all of these things and more and who cares if they manage to alter the normal course of historic events? After all, it's only a dream.

Psychological Evaluation Sheet

Psychological Evaluation Sheets are a useful and fun tool for both players and Game Masters alike. It is essentially a profile of the patient/Dreamer, which includes general information about his career, childhood, interests and hobbies as well as brief notes taken by past and current therapists. The profile

may have little or nothing to do with the Dreamworld's content or denouement but more often than not, it should either foreshadow or shed light on some of the things encountered within.

Dreamworld Sheet

Dreamworld Sheet is designed to help the Game Master outline the things that happen during the course of a Dreamwalk. It contains information on the Dreamworld, the dream's denouement, the Taenia and the Unreal. The Dreamworld Sheet is a Game Master resource and should not be viewed by the players.

Denouement

When designing a Dreamwalk, first, start with the denouement. This is the heart of the adventure and a good denouement can be adapted to almost any type of Dreamworld.

Dreamwalker has a distinct advantage over most other roleplaying games in that the players cannot just get bored with a scenario and decide to go home, thereby wrecking an adventure you spent hours of your precious time preparing. Each dream has a distinct goal and resolution of this goal is crucial to the overall success of the mission.

Denouements should be stated in one to three sentences. They can be as vague or specific as you desire and can even involve the completion of one to three interrelated events (although one is usually the norm). Keep in mind that the more vague the denouement is, the easier it may be for characters to circumvent the adventure you have planned (which is not necessarily a bad thing).

For instance, say the Dreamer has always wanted to own a 1967 Chevelle Super Sport. If the denouement was that generic, the characters could easily Create or Reshape the necessary car and quickly achieve the denouement. However, if the denouement was more precise, say that a particular car had to be purchased from a certain dealer in the Dreamer's hometown, the characters must work a bit harder to help him achieve his goal, even without Taeniid interference.

The following is a list of a few of the more common dream scenarios. When designing a denouement be careful not to limit yourself by only thinking in terms of people---remember that the Dreamer can take any form (animal, alien, monster, vehicle, etc.) and each of these scenarios are easily adapted to the new form.

Action-Adventure

An Action-Adventure scenario usually involves travel, mystery and the discovery or reclamation of some treasure or precious artifact. The Dreamer can be a pirate, a treasure hunting archaeologist or a space merchant exploring new galaxies.

Dream Fulfillment

This is the most common theme among passive denouements. It involves doing something the Dreamer has always wanted to do, whether it be skydiving, finding a cure for cancer or traveling to the moon.

Escape

The Dreamer (and usually the characters) begin the scenario trapped and must get free. Escape can take place in an alien prison, a bad marriage or aboard a sinking ship.

Guard

The Dreamer has been hired to guard someone or something important such as a priceless necklace, the President's daughter or a favorite pet. In order to achieve the denouement, the characters must help him watch over his charge for a set period of time.

Injustice

Sometimes a wrong has been committed against the Dreamer or someone he cares about. Injustice scenarios center around taking revenge, righting the wrong or making sure the injustice never takes place.

Investigation

You've all seen a movie or read a book in which the main character is a detective or private eye. In this scenario, the Dreamer assumes the role of the investigator intent on finding the killer, missing person, stolen object, etc.

Past Resolution

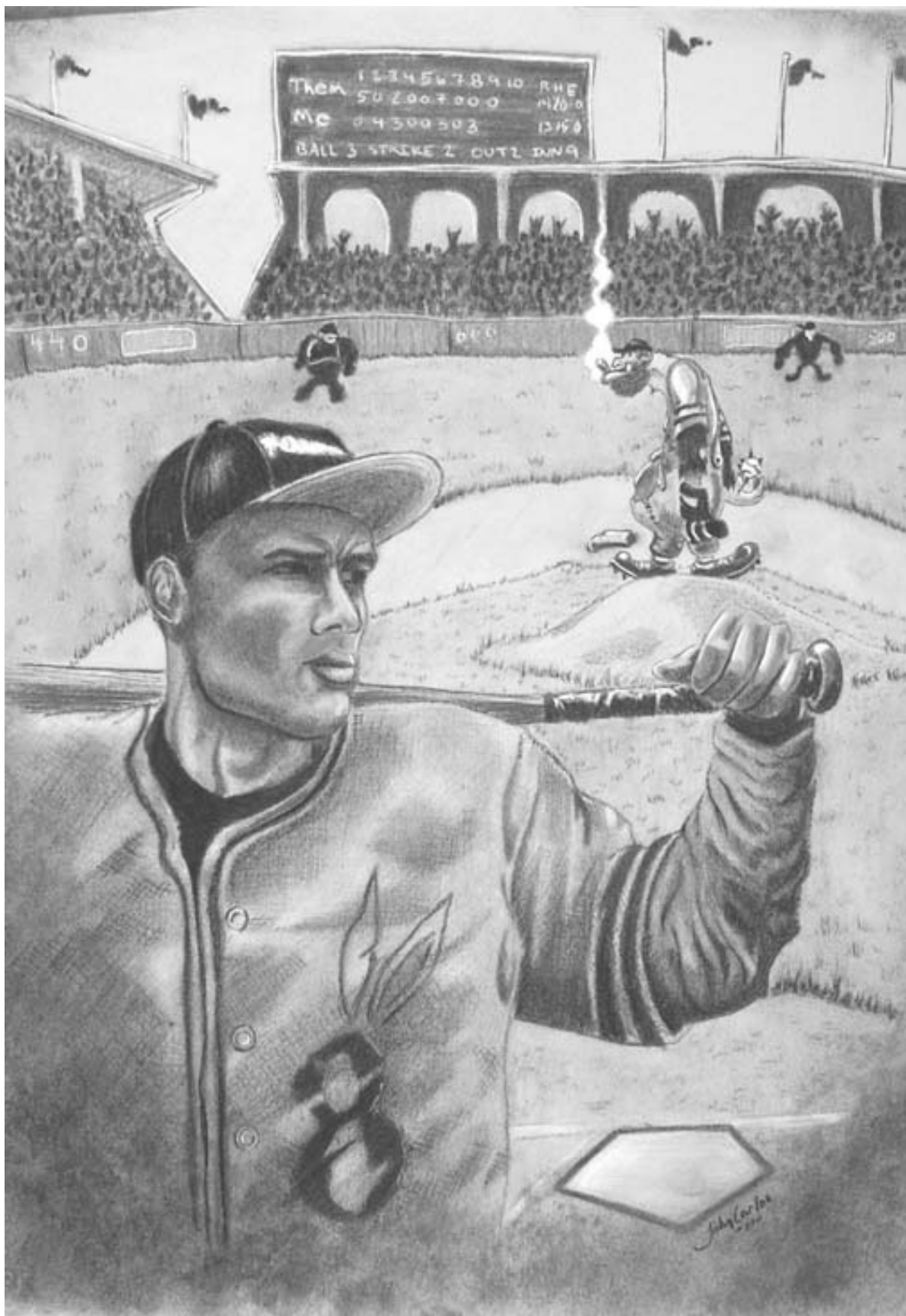
This is another common theme among passive denouements. The Dreamer either did or did not do something in his past and constantly regrets his decision. It is up to the characters to help him correct the mistake. Past Resolution can involve acts of betrayal, child-parent/husband-wife interaction, returning a stolen item or convincing the Dreamer's drunken friend not to leave the party.

Rescue

Someone or something needs rescuing---it could be a friend, a princess, or a monkey from an animal research facility.

Search and Destroy

Search and destroy is the universal theme of all active denouements. Search and destroy scenarios are fairly straightforward. The characters juice themselves up for battle and commence to kicking Taeniid tail.



Subdenouements and Incidental Achievements

Subdenouements and incidental achievements are so Dreamer and dream specific that it is hard to give set examples. The Game Master must decide when or if there are any of these in the dream, usually after some event or occurrence. As stated before, subdenouements are most useful for breaking up long Dreamwalks into smaller parts; incidental achievements are even more random and usually harder to spot. Completion of an incidental achievement should only be disclosed after the Dreamwalk is over.

Dreamworlds

After you have determined the dream's denouement, you must adapt it to the Dreamworld. Try to make each Dreamworld as unique or interesting as you can, or at least add some surreal elements of fluff to give it that effect. Dreamworlds sometimes reflect the denouement but this is not always the case. There is no rule against a Past Resolution scenario taking place in a sidewalk cafe on the surface of Mars or a Guard scenario where the Dreamer becomes a Praetorian charged with defending Ancient Rome from a barbarian horde.

Here are a few of the more common settings for Dreamworlds along with a few examples of each.

Alien Place

Alien settings are places not found on our earth. They can be real planets, something from a science fiction movie or a conglomeration of both. There may be four suns, no landmasses, less gravity or the planet may be made up entirely of machines. You don't have to wrack your brain too hard trying to explain why things don't make sense. After all, it is just a dream.

Childhood Place

This is someplace the Dreamer remembers from his childhood. It can be a bedroom, the place where he received his first kiss, a tree fort, a local park, a fishing pond or a school.

Different Time

The Dreamworld is set in an entirely different time period, whether past or future. Examples include the roaring 20's, the Old West, the Jurassic era, medieval France or colonial Virginia.

Familiar Place

This is similar to the Childhood Place but is more often associated with real places that the Dreamer has visited as an adult. It can be anywhere from the Dreamer's office, to a museum, a farm in Arkansas, to the Australian Outback.

Fantasy Place

These are mythical realms that exist only in fairy tales. Fantasy worlds are chock full of tall castles, brave knights and legendary creatures such as wizards, trolls, dragons and elves.

Horror

These are nightmare Dreamworlds set in some place that the Dreamer fears. A graveyard (human, animal, aircraft, etc.), a gothic castle inhabited by vampires, an insane asylum, a lonely moor, a forest cabin assailed by awakened demons or even an orphanage are all examples of Horror Dreamworlds. As you can guess, the Taenia thrive in Horror Dreamworlds.

Post Apocalyptic

Post Apocalyptic settings deal with the world as we know it turned upside down by some type of holocaust. The comet has struck earth, the bombs have been dropped or the virus has spread---whatever the case, survivors must eke out a living amongst the ruins of civilization.

Unfamiliar Place

This is similar to a Familiar Place except that it represents a real place that the Dreamer wishes (or once wished) to go. Unfamiliar Places include a local strip club, an opera house, a chic restaurant in Chicago, an amusement park or the Grand Canyon.

Conglomerate

Conglomerate Dreamworlds are a chaotic combination of several different types of Dreamworlds listed above. Time leaps (both forward and backward), location changes and randomly occurring anomalies (such as the temporary suspension of the laws of gravity) are all frequent occurrences. Conglomerate Dreamworlds are more common to creative Dreamers and/or those with high Infestation Levels.

Beyond the Dream

Although Dreamwalker is centered around adventuring in dreams, there are many opportunities for interaction with the real world. The following are just a few scenarios involving these types of adventures.

- A character is contacted by agents of the Clinic (or some other organization) and enticed to “switch sides.” Is the offer for real or is this a test of the character’s loyalty to the Project?
- An accomplished Dreamstalker with a grudge against the Project learns the location of the group’s chapter and begins following teams through the Periphery and harassing them in the Dreamworld. The characters may try to ambush him or they may try to learn his true identity so he can be located and dealt with in the real world.
- A visiting patient turns out to be a relative or old friend of one of the characters. Is there something in his past he doesn’t want revealed?
- A horror writer (or artist or poet) reaches a sort of symbiotic relationship with the Taeniid colony infesting his psyche, gaining inspiration from its presence. He may even take action against characters trying to destroy his livelihood. This can be particularly lethal if the writer is a lucid Dreamer.

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- As a child, the Dreamer witnessed a murder and the subsequent burial of the victim but was too young to understand what he saw. Within his dream, several nondescript related events expose the incident along with clues pointing to the real world location of the grave. The Dreamwalkers can inform the authorities or perhaps investigate and find the killer themselves.
- A Broodking has escaped the Empyrean. The characters may or may not be responsible but may decide to take action anyway.
- Almost everyone has seen a movie where the main character (usually a psychic) must delve into the mind of a Dreamer in order to extract some vital information about the real world. The most recent is *The Cell*, but there have been plenty of others.
- Another variation on this theme---a cowardly terrorist has been extradited from Afghanistan. He admits to planting bombs throughout a nearby city but refuses to say more. The characters must enter his dreams and discover the location of the bombs before they go off. This information may be impossible to extract through Joining so the characters must actively search the Dreamworld for the bombs and/or any hidden clues that point towards their location in the real world.
- Recurring dreams are common but similar dreams have been occurring in the minds of different people. Is it a coincidence or does this event have a deeper meaning?
- Trouble erupts with the locals when one of the characters visits a nearby town. The character is arrested and held until the judge sets bail. Although the Project will soon have him released (unless he did something truly foolish), one of his cellmates is criminally insane and playing host to a large Taeniid infestation. A wandering Broodking recognizes the nearby presence of a Dreamwalker and implants a murderous suggestion into the criminal's sleeping mind. Or, the character recognizes the man as a Clinic scientist and wonders why he is in jail. Or, one of the jailers might be a Broodspawn.
- The character's chapter admits only disturbed war veterans. These men have exchanged horror stories for so long that their dreams are set in similar locales and may even contain the same Unreal enemy.
- Several writers have been working together on a collective project based in a fantasy realm. One of the writers dies abruptly and the rest are too upset to continue the work. Their agent refers them all for therapy and the characters find that the Dreamworlds all take place in the fantasy work in project.
- The latest horror movie hits the box office and is a huge success. Unfortunately, it causes nightmares in hundreds of people. Their dreams are centered around the movie and the Dreamwalkers may get caught up in the plot. As an added twist, the movie was written by a writer, inspired by a Broodking. The Broodking travels through many of these nightmares, reveling in the fear and misery he has caused.
- An organization known as Department 7 (or whatever organization the PCs are currently associated with) has been outmatched in several violent encounters with creatures believed to be Broodspawn. In order to expand its areas of expertise, the Department begins cross training some of its members with those of Project Dreamwalker. This could be a good Dreamwalking hook for an existing campaign, especially if the Department PCs have encountered supernatural creatures in previous adventures.

Beyond the Project

This book assumes that characters are members of Project Dreamwalker. But what if the Game Master wants to run Dreamwalkers from other, perhaps less altruistic factions?

Dreamwalkers in the employ of the Clinic would encounter much darker themes as the Clinic has no limitations on the Dreamer's Infestation Levels. What ancient mysteries and lost mana feats does the Sword of Gaia possess? Who can say what the Dreamwalking goals and motivations of other countries are? Does the Vatican or some other religious group control a secret Dreamwalking task force? The possibilities are virtually endless.

Beyond Dreamwalker d20

Do your players have a powerful vampire or super hero or wizard character that they do not want to abandon for a new game? Dreamwalker can be easily adapted for use with other games (especially other d20 games) and an occasional foray into the Emyrean can add spice to an old campaign because the players can never be sure what to expect within a dream.

The rules for Dreamworld and denouement creation remain the same and you can decide whether or not to include the Taeniid presence. Task resolution should defer to the game you are currently running. That way, the players would continue to play their own characters, with their own statistics and abilities although they would have to decide on Archetypes and roll for Mana Points.

Characters could be Natural Dreamwalkers whose mana feat suddenly manifests, they could be recruited by Project Dreamwalker and administered Black25, or granted the ability to Dreamwalk for a short period of time or in some cases, they can even be forced (or drawn) into the Emyrean by a more powerful being. You can send them on spiritual missions, to islands or dreams. Since they are new to Dreamwalking, you could even have them learn the common mana powers as they go although more spiritual characters should be given a slight advantage.

Inspiration

Included is a short bibliography of books and films that we believe give the feel of Dreamwalker.

Films

Dreamscape (1984), directed by Joseph Ruben. A psychic recruited by the government, and taught to travel into other people's dreams. We would love to see a remake of this movie with modern day special effects. Dreamscape was one of the key inspirations for Dreamwalker, Roleplaying in the Land of Dreams. Buy it or rent it if you can.

The Matrix (1999), directed by Andy and Larry Wachowski. What can be said about this movie that hasn't been said already? Awesome special effects coupled with strong acting and directing, great dialogue and plot easily makes the Matrix one of the best action (and perhaps even best overall) movies of the last few decades. An excellent example of the physical advantages Dreamwalkers have over the Unreal.

The Cell (2000), directed by Tarsem Singh. What this movie lacked in plot, acting and dialogue, it more than made up for in stunning visual effects and a creepy antagonist. A great example of what's to be expected in the dreams of the criminally insane.

What Dreams May Come (1998), directed by Vincent Ward. Like the Cell, this movie made up for similar shortcomings with an array of unbelievable visual effects.

Dark City (1998), directed by Alex Proyas. A surprisingly good movie that unfortunately did not get the credit it deserved. In Dreamwalker terms, think of John Murdoch as a lucid Dreamer trapped within his own Taeniid infested Dreamworld.

A Nightmare on Elm Street 3: Dream Warriors (1987), Directed by Chuck Russell. You must know by now that Freddie was one of the inspirations for the Taeniid Broodking. This movie deals with normal people becoming lucid Dreamers and manifesting Mana feats in their own Dreamworlds. Great stuff, especially because this was before Freddie really became a comical, one line spouting hack. Oh well.

Honorable Mention: Vanilla Sky, Aliens, The Crow, The Prophecy, The Serpent and the Rainbow, Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon, Time Bandits, Sliders, Quantum Leap, The Adventures of Baron Munchausen and even Killer Clowns from Outer Space (think hive-minded Taeniid manifestation).

Books and Music

The Dark Tower Series, by Stephen King. This entire series reads like a dream and if it doesn't spark some part of your imagination, nothing will.

It, by Stephen King. A great example of what happens when a Broodking escapes into the real world. This book is suggested for some of the imagery and dream sequences alone. In fact, nearly all of Stephen King's books contain this type of surreal elements and he is a master of foreshadowing and/or relating dreams to later, real world events.

The Death Gate Cycle, by Margaret Weis and Tracy Hickman. An excellent series and a good example of the problems powerful wizards face when trying to blend in and interact with the Unreal...err, mensch.

Imajica, by Clive Barker. You'll just have to read it.

White Wolf. While not really Dreamwalker-related, Mark Rein*Hagen's Vampire: The Masquerade revolutionized the way we played roleplaying games and for that we are grateful. We're not sure if we're supposed to mention other companies in our book but since it is our book, what the hell.

Bob Dylan. Not the man, actually but his lyrics. Mr. Dylan's "singing voice" is an acquired taste. If you can focus on his lyrics you'll be amazed at the amount of imagery and story he manages to fit into a single song. We were tempted to include some choice lyrics in this book but in the end decided against it. We did not have time to obtain proper permission and as we understand it, Bobby D. is very litigious.

Other Sources of Inspiration

Please visit our website for links to other inspirational and dream related sites:

DreamwalkerRPG.home.att.net

Dreamwalker GM Tips

Guidelines

Being a good Game Master takes an eye for detail, extensive preparations and having a feel for the likes and dislikes of your players. Unfortunately, most of these things can only be achieved through experience. Still, there are a few guidelines that will help you as you learn. A few of the following suggestions are Dreamwalker-specific but most all should be familiar to more experienced gamers.

Know the Rules

We can't stress this enough. You don't have to be able to quote this book by chapter and page, but you do have to know where to look when unforeseen situations arise. The faster you can do this, the better. Dreamwalker requires the players to immerse themselves in an imaginary world of your own design. Nothing breaks that illusion more than waiting around for the Game Master to locate some obscure rule or system.

We've tried our best to lay out each section of this book with that in mind. If necessary, bookmark pages you think will be relevant to the upcoming Dreamwalk. Oh, and if you can't find something right away, don't be afraid to wing it. Just remember that what's good for you should also be good for the players. You can always find the correct information and inform everyone of the change later.

Know Your Players

Dreamwalker is a game about healing the human psyche, not always about randomly blasting away at anything in sight. That said, to make an omelet, sometimes you have to break a few eggs.

As a Game Master, your job is to make each session interesting and fun. Some players like adventures that challenge their wits (passive denouements), others like adventures that challenge their guns (active denouements). After a few gaming sessions, you should begin to have a better idea of which denouements your players enjoy the most. Try to tailor future denouements with this in mind.

One of our playtesting groups actually took a novel approach by excluding combat with the Taeniid Queen. The Game Master focused his game on completion of the actual denouement adventure and just assumed the Dreamwalkers would be able to handle the infestation once the denouement was achieved.

Pay Attention

The Game Master has to listen to the players, keep track of their actions, determine how said actions affect the Taenia and the other inhabitants of the Dreamworld and do a host of other things too numerous to mention. It's easy to forget which character talked to what person and what information was gained during the discussion. Don't be afraid to jot down notes during the course of a game to help keep track of everything that's going on.

Know the Dreamwalk

It's your adventure, you created it, you should have a good idea of what happens over the course of the dream. The sheer range of powers available to all characters makes it very likely that the players will come up with ideas that you never even considered. The Dreamworld sheet is a handy overall outline but be flexible enough to adapt the scenario to fit the character's actions or to get the group back on track if they miss a clue, overlook a vital piece of information, accidentally kill a contact necessary to advance the denouement or do something else even more unexpected. But don't be too obvious about it. If the characters really screw up or are just being stupid, throw some drones at them, have them be unable to resolve the denouement or have the Dreamer wake up. Next time maybe they will think before they act.

Know the Unreal

Jot down the names or professions of all of the major and some of the minor Unreal the characters might encounter. You might also want to include short backgrounds and motivations of the major characters as well.

Try to think of the Unreal in terms of real people and encourage your players to do the same. The Unreal react to situations as would their counterparts in the real world. This includes the actions of police, military, etc. This also includes the actions of Unreal animals and monsters. Most animals will avoid human contact if possible and only fight in self-defense, to defend their territory or to protect their young.

Getting players to respect the rights of the Unreal is perhaps one of the hardest things to do. Therefore, characters who treat the Unreal as real people should receive extra Experience Points for their actions.

Know the Taenia

Just because characters routinely encounter the Taenia each night, doesn't mean they should know what to expect. Taeniid manifestations change from dream to dream and so should their behavior, especially that of the Queen. The Taeniid Queen commands the power of alteration and uses it to full effect. In combat, her tactics should reflect her manifestation and sometimes the content of the Dreamworld itself as she uses everything at her disposal to defend the sanctity of her nest.

Some examples of how different Queens react are included in the sample Dreamwalks at the end of this book. Be sure to make each encounter as unique and interesting as possible. Never let the characters say "Ho-hum. O.K., let's go get another Queen." They should be on pins and needles the whole time.

Keep Combat Simple

Dreamwalkers enter combat on a fairly routine basis. You should have their enemy's statistics and the Defense for each character written down ahead of time. To keep things simple, don't make separate initiative rolls each round for every lowly security guard or drone the characters face. A single roll for all works just as well and minimizes headaches although you might want to make a separate roll for special enemies, such as Taeniid Queens or Broodkings. You may wish to write this number down, especially in the case of creatures who take multiple actions in the same round.

Visual Aids

Description is nice but as they say, a picture is worth a thousand words. Do you have a photograph or drawing of something you want to include in (or make the focus of) the next Dreamwalk? Cut it out or photocopy it so you can show it to your players.

Maps are also a useful tool, especially in combat. They alleviate confusion by helping the players visualize exactly where their characters are in relation to their opponents. Some people use miniatures for this as well.

Write it Down

When the session is over, write down the stopping point and the key events that took place in an adventure journal. The journal can be as detailed or as sparse as the Game Master likes. Writing things down is especially helpful for groups that can't meet regularly. A lot can be forgotten, even over the course of a week. A recap of the last session, read straight from the journal often gets the players back into the flow of the game.

Rewards

Awarding Experience Points

Dreamwalker has a few optional experience point rewards in place of the standard experience awards characters get for adventuring. Unless otherwise noted, these are all individual rather than group awards. The GM should feel free to disregard these rewards if he feels they do not fit within the structure of his game and use standard Encounter Levels instead. The reward for achieving a dream denouement should be at least double the normal EL.

Session Awards

25 points: Showing up. Hey, without players, you don't have a game.

Acting/Roleplaying

25 points: The player exhibited good dialogue and interaction with the Unreal (treated them as he would real people) for the majority of the dream.

Denouement-related Awards

5 Points: Per 1 Mana Points the character still has when the denouement is achieved.

50 Points: The character successfully Joined with the Dreamer (only the first character per Dreamwalk).

15 Points: Resolution of an incidental achievement. Only characters who played a significant role in the incidental achievement should get this award.

35 Points: Resolution of a subdenouement. Only characters who played a significant role in achieving the subdenouement should get this award.

100 Points: Resolution of the denouement (each character). Every character should be rewarded for achieving the dream's denouement.

Acting/Roleplaying

50 points: The player role-played his Dementia.

50 points: The player role-played his Phobia.

The Midtown Chapter

A Setting for Dreamwalker d20

The Midtown Chapter is an experimental chapter house founded on the theory that Dreamwalkers might be more effective as a part of the community they are trying to help rather than isolated from it at a secluded retreat.

The Midtown Chapter is based in the downtown area of a city of the GM's choice. The team is housed together in a studio loft apartment that is outfitted for the team's Dreamwalking needs and equipped with hidden cameras, recorders and medical monitoring devices. A local grocer delivery keeps the apartment supplied with food and household amenities and a cleaning service stops by every Wednesday.

The Midtown Chapter is headed by the director, Dr. Cheryl Woodson. Her assistant, Carla Rodriguez handles day-to-day planning and operations. Dr. James Lansky is responsible for the physical and mental health and well being of the Dreamwalkers, with the help of his assistant, Brent Sadler, RN. The Game Master should develop personalities and statistics for these NPCs as needed.

This staff monitors Dreamwalking activity from a secure operations van, parked on a nearby street. The characters are scheduled to conduct weekly Dreamwalks on the building's other tenants. Once the residents are free of infestation, they are to expand their activities into the surrounding neighborhood. Dreamwalkers are instructed to proceed with extreme caution as it is impossible to pre-gauge the Dreamer's Infestation Level---these Dreamwalks are technically being performed without "patient" knowledge or consent and extensive psychological evaluations are difficult if not impossible to obtain. Most patient information is limited to knowledge found in the public domain (employers, relatives, previous addresses, etc.).

The characters are under only nominal supervision in between Dreamwalks and are free to come and go as they please. To aid in future Dreamwalks, and to familiarize themselves with potential patients, the characters are encouraged them to makes friends in the area and become part of the community.

Adventure Note

The following adventures were designed for beginning characters. In order to limit file size, no maps were provided since the scenarios are relatively short and the locations self-explanatory. In addition, stat blocks for Ordinary NPCs were left out although statistics for the Taenia and some potential Unreal adversaries were still included.

Invest in the Future

Troy Hamby, age 58 **Tire Plant Foreman**

Dedicated Hero Level 5: hp 28; Mas 13; Init +3(+3 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; Defense 13 (+3 Dex); BAB +3; by weapon; FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +2; Str 11, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 11, Wis 9, Cha 11.

Skills: Computer Use +1, Concentration +2 ½, Craft (mechanical) +4, Drive +4, Knowledge (technology) +5, Profession +8, Repair +2

Feats: Trustworthy

Troy is a foreman at the Booker Tires tire factory where he has worked most of his life. He is happily married with several children, grandchildren and one great grandchild.

Troy is a practical man who is nearing retirement age. Over the years he invested a tidy sum into his company's retirement package. Not long ago he was contacted by a stockbroker who claimed to have an "inside line" on some stock that was sure to go through the roof. Troy was hesitant at first, but the broker laid out the facts and figures in such a sensible manner that by the time he was finished, Troy felt he was on to something big.

Still fearful of being taken, he went to the man's office in the city to verify he worked for a real brokerage. Then, satisfied, he withdrew all the money he could from his retirement plan (\$775,000) and invested it with the broker. Needless to say, the whole thing was a scam. The broker took the money and immediately skipped town.

Troy is devastated. He has become surly and withdrawn, afraid to admit to his wife that he lost their entire retirement money. Troy has taken to drinking of late and one day his supervisor caught him drunk on the job. The supervisor realized the cause of Troy's depression and sent him to seek counseling. Troy and his family live on the first floor.

Dreamworld Information

Dreamworld:	Realistic
Key Locations/Events:	The hotel, getting upstairs, the bank, robbing the bank, the getaway, the hideout
Denouement:	Passive
Details:	Rob the bank's main vault and take the money back to the hideout.
Unreal:	Inert

Taenia

Infestation Level:	1
Theme:	Menacing trees/forest

Number	Molt	Manifestation
13	Larva	Leaves in hair, bark-like skin, green clothes, acorn jewelry
2	Drone	Dead and withered trees
	Queen	Dead and withered tree

Underworld

Setting	#Drones	Size of Mana Pocket
Troy's Basement	1	24 (model train set)
A 747 airplane en route to California	2	13 (black box)
Woodstock	1	9 (microphone)

Entering the Dreamworld

Upon entering the Dreamworld, the characters find themselves on a busy sidewalk in the downtown area of a large city (arbitrarily determined by the Game Master). The city appears normal except that the sky is dark with smog and the smell of burning rubber fills the air.

Fluff: The air pollution is a dream representation of the conditions Troy has worked under at the plant for most of his life. This information is available to a Joined character who makes a DC 15 Wisdom check.

The characters materialize in front of nice hotel. The Dreamer is inside the hotel and the characters can see him in a second story window, staring out at the bank directly across the street.

The Hotel

The hotel is five stories tall. Entrance can be easily gained through the front door. On the roof of the building is a locked door that leads to a stairwell. An employee entrance and an emergency exit are located in the alley around back although both of these doors are also locked.

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The first floor of the hotel contains a lobby, check-in counter and elevators to the upper floors. An unobtrusive door provides access to a stairwell but the door cannot be opened from this side. Two front desk employees stand behind the counter and a doorman stands near the elevators.

The only other thing out of place here is the decor---several fake potted trees have been arranged around the lobby. These trees are twisted and gnarled, with leafless, claw-like branches. The characters should immediately sense a deeper meaning behind this although at this point they are unable to determine what.

Fluff: This little effect represents the Taeniid manifestation. A Joined character can make a DC 15 Wisdom check to learn more about it. For more information on the source of the fear, see [The Hideout](#), below.

The Dreamer has checked into the hotel using his real name and is currently in Room #775,000, which is actually on the second floor. There are several ways for the characters to learn the exact room number, the least inventive being a door to door search from the ground floor up.

The simplest thing for the characters to do is to Possess one of the clerks and look up Troy's name on the computer registry. However, a note should be made here about the nature of the Unreal---the Dreamer views them as real people, at least for the course of the dream. With that in mind, Possessing someone in plain sight of other Unreal causes a ripple of unease to travel over the entire Dreamworld. This should be a warning to the characters that the Dreamer has become agitated and is threatening to rebel. If the characters do something like this again, the Dreamer will attempt to wake up (see [Violence and Rebellion](#), [pg. 57](#)).

Remind the players that characters are rewarded for pacifying the Dreamer by interacting with the Unreal and treating them as they would people in the real world. A smooth talking character may be able to convince one of the desk clerks to give up the Dreamer's room number.

Alternately, the character's can have the clerk ring Troy's room and talk to him on the telephone. Regardless of what the characters have to say, Troy immediately panics and leaves the hotel via the stairwell, exiting into the alley around back. Depending on what the characters do next, they might spot him a few minutes later, hurrying across the street. In this case, he tries to rob the bank on his own and unless the characters act quickly, they might find themselves on the outside looking in when things start to go bad (see [The Robbery](#), below).

Assuming this does not happen, the characters must still get to the second floor where the Dreamer is. If they try to use the elevators, the doorman politely informs them that only hotel guests are allowed upstairs.

The characters can gain access to the upper floors by various means, including the alternate hotel entrances mentioned above. The doorman is a likable fellow that is just doing his job. If the characters show some courtesy and can come up with a plausible lie (such as "We're surprising a friend"), he may let them pass without the need of a Bluff check (Game Master's discretion).

This is another instance where Possession might come in handy, although with similar results as above. Alternately, a character who has Possessed one of the desk clerks may tell the doorman to let them pass without a fuss.

Another simple way to bypass the doorman would be to use mana to alter up some cash, and maybe some personal identification and then check in to the hotel as a paying guest.

Room #775,000

Room #775,000 is clean but otherwise unremarkable. Its only window faces out onto the street and looks down on the bank. A ski mask, a long trench coat, a hastily drawn map of the inside of the bank and an unloaded sawed-off, double barrel shotgun are on the bed. A box of 12 shells sits on a nearby nightstand.

Fluff: 775,000 is the amount in US dollars, that the Dreamer lost in the investment scam. If the characters do not realize this right away, the Joined character may learn the significance of the number via a standard DC 15 Wisdom check.

The Dreamer

In this dream, Troy is a younger version of himself (about 30 years old). He spends most of his time watching the bank and pondering the robbery. His plan is to walk into the bank with the shotgun hidden beneath his trenchcoat, then don the ski mask and get the bank manager to open the vault. His getaway car is parked on the street in front of the bank.

Troy is very suspicious of anyone who comes to the room, and refuses to open the door. The lock may be picked with a successful DC 20 Disable Device check or it may be kicked in with a successful DC 10 Strength check. The characters may also use alteration mana to simply dissolve (Reshape) the handle and lock (4 MP) or the entire door (10 MP). In any case, Troy dives for the shotgun and attacks the characters, using it as a club. The characters may try to subdue or Join with Troy as normal.

The Denouement

The dream's denouement involves robbing the bank vault and getting back to Troy's hideout with the loot. The Dreamer has only a vague idea of where the hideout is but he is certain he can get there safely once he gets away from the bank. (For more information, see The Hideout, below).

The Bank

The name of the bank, Lifelong Trust and Investment Banking, is boldly written across the front of the building.

Fluff: Lifelong Trust and Investment is the name of the bogus company that Troy invested his retirement money in. This information can be extracted with a successful DC 15 Wisdom check.

The bank itself is two stories tall. Large glass doors provide entry to the front and there is a locked security door on the loading dock around back.

The first floor contains an open lobby, teller windows and the bank's main vault. Once again, several fake twisted and gnarled trees are arranged around the first floor lobby.

The second floor contains a security monitoring room, public offices for loan and mortgage consultation and private offices for senior bank employees including the manager.

The characters may wish to scout the place out before commencing the robbery.

The Main Vault

The main vault is actually an armored Cadillac. Its contents are locked in the trunk. The rear license plate is a digital combination lock that opens the trunk. A keyboard is fastened to the car's rear bumper and wired to the plate and the correct combination is: C5L2VR New York

Once this combination is entered, the trunk pops open revealing stacks of cash inside totaling \$775,000.

Fluff: The Cadillac vault is a replica of the car owned by the man who swindled Troy out of his money.

After Troy withdrew his retirement funds, he went to the Lifelong Trust and Investment office to drop off the money. The Cadillac was parked on the street outside and although Troy's conscious mind dismissed it as irrelevant, his subconscious remembered seeing a picture of both the man and the car on his desk inside. The Joined character may learn all of this information, including the license plate number, with a successful DC 15 Wisdom check.

Alternately, the lock may be bypassed with a successful DC 40 Disable Device check although the characters must have an electronic tool kit. Once again, alteration may be used to simply dissolve the trunk (8 MP) although doing so in plain sight of the Unreal is not recommended.

Blowing the trunk open without damaging its contents requires not only the explosives themselves, but a successful DC 20 Demolitions check to place. If the money in the trunk is destroyed, the Dreamer realizes the denouement cannot be achieved. The world turns gray and lifeless, the Unreal disappear and the characters and the Dreamer are instantly transported to the Hideout (see below). The Dreamer curls up into a corner of the hideout and spends the rest of the dream in misery. The characters are immediately attacked by the Taeniid drones.

Subdenouement: Opening the trunk via the combination lock. This causes a minor outpouring of mana (1d6 points) that all characters can benefit from although only the character who actually opens the trunk should get the story awards at the end of the adventure.

Employees

There are twelve tellers, three loan officers, three security guards and the bank manager at the bank during the course of this dream.

The bank manager is infested with a Taeniid larva. She is the only one who knows the combination to the main vault and has chosen to be away from the bank for the duration of the dream in order to prevent the denouement from being achieved. If the GM wishes to foreshadow this event, the characters may spot her leaving the bank soon after they arrive in the dream (see Entering the Dreamworld, above).

Two of the three security guards wear uniforms. One is plainly visible in the first floor lobby. The other is in a room upstairs, monitoring the security cameras. The third security guard is dressed in plain clothes and acts as a bank patron. A successful Spot check, resisted by the guard's Disguise check is needed to recognize him for what he is.

One of the twelve bank tellers is infested with a larva. He becomes very agitated upon seeing Dreamwalkers and does everything in his power to stay away from them, even going so far as to leave the bank. He immediately alerts the uniformed guard in the lobby, citing "something suspicious" about one of the characters.

The guard makes it obvious that he is watching the character and radios for backup if the character does indeed do something suspicious.

The Patrons

There are 3d6 patrons in the bank at any given time. Only three of them are noteworthy for purposes of this adventure.

1. One of the bank patrons is a blind man. His seeing eye dog is a filthy golden retriever in a severely advanced stage of rabies (foaming at the mouth, shaking and twitching, etc.). No one else seems aware or concerned about the dog's condition. Upon seeing the Dreamer, the dog begins to growl. If the Dreamer does not leave the bank, it attacks. This may severely hinder any attempt to discretely scout out the bank.

Fluff: Many years ago, Troy was unexplainably bitten by his own family dog and has never trusted dogs since. This information is available to the Joined character with a quick scan of the Dreamer's memories (no check necessary).

Rabid Dog ("Sparky")

Medium-Size Dog: CR 1; Medium-size animal; HD 2d8+4; hp 7; Mas 15; Init +2; Spd 40 ft.; Defense 8 (+2 Dex, +1 natural, -5 Unreal); BAB +1; Grap +3; Atk +3 melee (1d6+3, bite); Full Atk +3 melee (1d6+3, bite); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SQ scent; AL none or owner; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +1; AP 0; Rep +0; Str 15, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills: Jump +4, Listen +5, Spot +5, Survival +1 (+5 when tracking by scent), Swim +5.

2. One patron is an elderly man named Mr. Harris. Mr. Harris has a history of heart problems. During the robbery, the stress of the hold up proves too much for him and he has a heart attack. A doctor's "black bag" (6 MP) and a successful DC 15 Treat Injury check is needed to stabilize his condition, although Mr. Harris eventually needs hospital attention. If the characters do not help him, the Dreamer becomes highly agitated; the Dreamworld ripples and he threatens to rebel and wake up.

Fluff: Troy had a minor heart attack while at home several years ago. Luckily, he had been talking with his neighbor at the time, and his neighbor immediately called an ambulance but Troy has spent many troubled nights wondering what would have happened had he been alone. A search for this agitates the Dreamer and requires a DC 25 Wisdom check, rather than the normal DC 15.

3. One patron is a pregnant woman named Molly Cranston. Sometime during the robbery, her water breaks and she goes into labor. If a character goes to her aid, several other patrons attempt to help. A DC 15 Treat Injury check is needed to stabilize her condition. If the characters find themselves in a standoff with the police (see The Standoff, below), they may actually have to help her give birth. Again, if the characters do nothing, the Dreamer becomes highly agitated.

Fluff: Troy's granddaughter just had her first child, making him a proud great grandfather. This information is available without the need for a check.

The Robbery

The various powers available to Dreamwalkers combined with the general inventiveness and creativity of most players makes the details of the robbery almost impossible to predict. Therefore, the Game Master is largely on his own during this portion of the adventure and the following text might need to be amended.

If the characters decide to follow Troy's original plan and walk in, flashing guns and barking orders, a silent alarm is immediately triggered. After the initial outbreak of panic, disbelief and confusion, the terrified bank employees and patrons comply with anything the characters want.

If the uniformed security guards are obviously outnumbered and/or outgunned they will surrender their weapons. They much rather comply so long as the characters seem relatively reasonable and are not killing patrons at random. However, the plain clothes guard is trigger happy and attacks the characters as soon as they are distracted.

The Stand Off

The characters have only a few minutes to open the vault and make good their escape before the IRSPD police arrive and seal off the building. This could turn into a long, drawn out standoff.

A police negotiator named Jean Newton sets up a telephone dialogue with whatever character is perceived to be the leader of the group. If the characters have taken employees or patrons hostage she tries to negotiate their release. Jean meets any reasonable demands, including requests for medical attention, and even goes so far as to allow the characters to leave the bank in their getaway car, provided they do not take hostages with them.

Note: Although this is quite unlikely to happen in the real world, the Dreamer's subconscious mind actually **wants** him to achieve the denouement and often does little things to help him along.

If the characters do something rash, like shooting a hostage, the police assault the bank with tear gas canisters and then storm the building. The characters may still be able to escape in all the confusion.

The Getaway

As with the robbery itself, the characters have many ways to go about fleeing the scene.

As mentioned above, if negotiations go well, they might be allowed to drive off on their own. The characters may use mana to tunnel down into the sewer system and make their escape that way (14 MP). They may Possess some patrons and try to slip out unnoticed, although this might be difficult to do while toting \$775,000 cash. They may even decide to use the vault itself to smash through the bank's front doors and break through the police barricade.

The Cadillac is armored and reinforced (like a real vault) making it virtually bulletproof and escape is almost assured however, the driver must make a DC 15 Drive check. Failure means he haphazardly bounces off police vehicles, parked cars, sign posts, telephone poles and possibly even pedestrians, causing 1d6 points of damage to everyone within the car (or 1 pt if the characters are wearing seatbelts). In this case, the police open fire on the car, to no effect, but the GM should feel free to describe the action.

Fluff: As soon as the characters leave the area of the bank, the Dreamworld ripples and shifts and the characters abruptly find themselves in the dirt driveway of an old abandoned farmhouse. This is Troy's hideout.

The Hideout

The hideout is located out in "the country" where the air is fresh and clean and the water tastes like wine.

Fluff: The water here literally tastes like wine.

The hideout is surrounded on all sides by large, untended crop fields and there is nothing of interest for miles around.

Once inside the hideout, the Joined character can feel the Dreamer's desire to examine the stolen money. This is a good time for the character to disengage from the Dreamer. Upon doing so, the Dreamer immediately sits down and begins to tally up the loot. As he does this, both the Dreamer and the money start to glow brighter and brighter until at last a multicolored wave of pure mana radiates out from him and washes over the Dreamworld. The characters may absorb some of this mana (3d6 points each) to replenish their supply.

The Dreamer continues counting and is now oblivious and impervious to anything that happens for the remainder of the dream. Give the characters a few moments to revel in his/their triumph before one of them notices that another change has come over the Dreamworld.

At some point, a thick forest has sprung up around the farmhouse. The trees are tall, dark and menacing, many of them are dead. The characters sense something even more unpleasant emanating from deeper in the woods---this feeling comes from the Taeniid nest and can be used to home in on the it and the Queen.

However, not long after the forest arrives, the characters are attacked by two Taeniid drones.

2 Dead Tree Drones

CR 3; Huge Outsider/Plant; HD 4d8+8; hp 30, 25; Mas N/A; Init -; Spd 10 ft.; Defense 20 (-2 size, +12 natural); BAB +12; Atk 2 slams (1d8+9); FS 10 ft. by 10 ft.; Reach 15 ft.; SQ Plant, Outsider, immune to mind-affecting effects, fire vulnerability (Ex); SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +4; Str 29, Dex 10, Con 20, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Skills: Listen +9, Spot +9

These drones manifest as large, dead oak trees. They are slow and lumbering and act last every round (no initiative roll needed), lashing out at the characters with gnarled, fist-like branches.

Fire Vulnerability (Ex): Being composed of wood, the drones are extremely susceptible to fire, taking double damage from fire-based attacks if they fail a saving throw or normal damage if they succeed.

If the characters take refuge within the farmhouse, the drones are strong enough to tear it down bit by bit. The Dreamer is still caught up in the euphoria of his success (or the misery of his failure, depending on what happened), and is unaffected by any of this.

Once the drones are destroyed, the characters may proceed on to the nest.

The Nest

The nest is located in a low-lying, boggy depression filled with stagnant water. The Queen manifests here as a huge, dead oak tree and is almost indistinguishable from the surrounding forest.

The Queen remains still until the characters venture within striking distance. The lead character entering the bog must make a resisted Spot check vs. the Queen's Hide check to see her. If the character fails the roll, the Queen attacks with surprise.

Dead Tree Queen

CR 4; Huge Outsider/Plant; HD 6d8; hp 36; Mas 20; Init -; Spd 10 ft.; Defense 20 (-2 size, +12 natural); BAB +12; Atk 2 slams (1d8+9), ; FS 10 ft. by 10 ft.; Reach 15 ft.; SQ Plant, Outsider, immune to mind-affecting effects, fire vulnerability (Ex); SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +4; Str 29, Dex 10, Con 20, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Skills: Hide +15, Listen +9, Spot +9

Mana Feats: Marksman

Mana Points: 36

Like the drones, the Queen is mobile but slow, attacking last in each round. She attacks characters with her gnarled fists, or hurls spear-like limbs at them if they remain at a distance. In either case, she Channels Damage through her attacks and Heals herself as needed. The Taeniid Queen never leaves the vicinity of her nest.

Fire Vulnerability (Ex): Being composed of wood, the Queen is extremely susceptible to fire, taking double damage from fire-based attacks if she fails a saving throw or normal damage if she succeeds.

Once the Queen is destroyed, the characters may also destroy her eggs. In this dream, the eggs are scattered throughout her branches having taken on the shape of worm-riddled acorns.

Aftermath

Once the Queen is destroyed, the colony can no longer reproduce and Troy's mind can begin the long process of healing. The characters are free to leave the dream and wake up.

Back in the lab, the Project staff encourages the characters to talk about their experiences within the dream as discussion often helps with dream recall. This is a good time for the characters to talk about the Cadillac vault. This information is very important in as the license plate number and the type of car can be used to help track down the swindler. In this event, Troy gets most of his money back and the characters can feel good about having helped out.

The End

Making the Band

Theodore McElroy, age 40 Sporting Goods Store Manager

Smart Hero Level 5: hp 24; Mas 12; Init +2(+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; Defense 12 (+2 Dex); BAB +2; by weapon; FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 13, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 15.

Skills: Bluff +2, Computer Use +3, Concentration +2, Diplomacy +4, Drive +2, Gather Information +4, Knowledge (business) +5, Knowledge (current events) +4, Knowledge (pop culture) +2, Listen +1, Perform (sing) +4, Perform (stringed instruments) +2, Profession (business) +8, Research +4, Swim +2

Feats: Creative

Theodore (Ted) McElroy is the manager of a local sporting goods store. He lives in the building with his wife, Doris and their two children.

Unknown to his family, he has recently been suffering the effects of a mild mid life crisis. When he was younger, he wrote poetry, painted and played a little guitar. He dreamed of becoming an artist or a musician but things never quite worked out the way Theodore intended. He hates his job but is unable to quit it because his family depends on his income. Theodore and his family live on the second floor.

Dreamworld Information

Dreamworld:	Surreal
Key Locations/Events:	Getting out of the cereal bowl, avoiding the roaches, the mug, practicing with the band, the cereal box, the concert, the blackout
Denouement:	Passive
Details:	To play the concert.
Unreal:	Inert

Taenia

Infestation Level:	2
Theme:	Gangsta Rap

Number	Molt	Manifestation
24	Larva	Cornrows, gold teeth, dew rags, jumpsuits, beepers
3	Drone	Gangsta rappers
	Queen	Gangsta rapper

Underworld

Setting	#Drones	Size of Mana Pocket
The sporting goods store	1	16 (a paperweight given to him by his daughter)
A hockey rink	3	25 (the puck)
Museum	1	24 (the Mona Lisa)

The Dreamworld

Ted's Dreamworld is centered around his youthful ambition to do something creative with his life. In the dream this manifests as making it big in the music industry by becoming a rock star. The Dreamworld reflects his vision of how a starving musician lives right before he hits it big.

On this particular night, Ted has just watched the movie Honey I Shrank the Kids with his own children. The movie was fresh on his mind when he went to sleep and the Dreamworld also reflects some of this.

Game Information: The characters retain their own statistics during the course of the adventure. The statistics for oversized creatures have been adjusted with this in mind.

Entering the Dreamworld

Upon entering the Dreamworld, the characters discover they have been reduced in size to approximately one inch tall. They are dressed in fashionably torn blue jeans, spiked wrist bands and Underwhelmed concert T-shirts (see Underwhelmed, below).

Strangely, they find themselves stranded inside a giant bowl, atop a mound of cornflakes that is surrounded by a moat of milk. An enormous spoon leans against one side of the bowl, its scoop end disappearing into the milk. A box of cereal looms up over the rim of the bowl to the east. The top of a mug is seen to the west. There is no sign of the Dreamer, but the pull of his presence is felt outside the bowl, in the direction of the mug.

Give the players a few moments to take in their surroundings and adjust to the shock of their manifestation. The characters must exit the bowl of cereal before they can begin the search for the Dreamer.

There are several ways to escape the bowl. The handle of the spoon is the most obvious. The characters can tromp across the corn flake hills to reach it. Once there, a successful DC 10 Balance check is needed to walk up the handle to the edge of the bowl. From there the characters can survey the table. It is the equivalent of a 20' drop from the side of the bowl to the table below.

Creative use of alteration mana may also be used to escape the bowl, including but not limited to, Creating something like a jetpack or hot air balloon to lift them out, Reshaping the milk and corn flakes into something more navigable or dissolving one side of the bowl entirely.

The Table

The table is a small, wooden, two-person breakfast table. It is dingy, chipped and scarred and stained with old foodstuffs. The impression of a grungy apartment flickers across a Barrier that surrounds the entire table.

A bowl of cereal rests in the center of the table on top of a dirty placemat. To the left of the bowl is a mug of coffee (see The Mug, below). To the right of the bowl is a box of corn flakes (see The Cereal Box, below). An ordinary appearing door is etched into the side of the mug and a set of double doors is cut into the side of the box.

Several pony-sized (in relation to the characters, at least) cockroaches scurry across the table, along the side of the mug and into and out of the top of the cereal box. One of these roaches is infested with a larva. In keeping with its manifestation (see, The Nest, below), the roach wears a red bandana wrapped around

its head, its mandibles are made of gold and the word “Fresh” has been air brushed in graffiti across one of its wings.

Once the characters exit the bowl, or if they otherwise draw attention to themselves while on the table, they are attacked by a 1d4 roaches. There is a 50% chance one of the roaches is infested with a larva.

Larval Roach

Medium-Size Roach: CR 2; Medium-size Vermin; HD 2d8+2; hp 11; Mas 13; Init +0; Spd 50 ft., climb 50 ft.; Defense 17 (+7 Natural); Bite +3 melee (2d4+3); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SQ vermin; AL neutral-evil; SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 10, Con 13, Int -, Wis 13, Cha 11.

Skills: Climb +10, Listen +6, Spot +6, Survival +1

1d4 Unreal Roaches

Medium-Size Roach: CR 2; Medium-size Vermin; HD 2d8+2; hp 6; Mas 13; Init +0; Spd 50 ft., climb 50 ft.; Defense 12 (+7 Natural, -5 Unreal); Bite +3 melee (2d4+3); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SQ vermin; AL neutral-evil; SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 10, Con 13, Int -, Wis 13, Cha 11.

Skills: Climb +10, Listen +6, Spot +6, Survival +1

The Mug (Mug Street garage)

The mug door is unlocked. Inside is a stereotypical car garage, littered with patched up musical equipment. A strong smell of marijuana permeates the room. The Dreamer and two band members are present, lounging on a beat up couch. They look upset.

The Dreamer

The Dreamer manifests here as Ted Hendrix, the lead singer for the imaginary garage band, Underwhelmed (see Underwhelmed, below).

The Denouement

The dream’s denouement is for the Dreamer and his band to headline tonight’s concert at C-Box Hall (see the Cereal Box, below).

Underwhelmed

Underwhelmed is a classic rock band molded from the 70’s and 80’s. The band is comprised of five musicians: Ted Osbourne (the Dreamer), lead singer; Dylan Griff, lead guitar; Derry Lamar, drums; Ben Parson, bass; Chad Tracks, keyboards

Trouble

The Dreamer welcomes the PCs into the band room and treats them as loyal fans if they are still wearing Underwhelmed shirts. He asks the PCs if they have seen the lead guitarist, Dylan Griff or the drummer, Derry Lamar.

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The explains that the band was supposed to meet here at the Mug Street garage for one last practice, before going on to the concert. Ted, Ben and Chad arrived a short time ago (at the start of the dream) but Derry and Dylan are nowhere to be found.

Soon after a PC Joins with the Dreamer and the learns the dream's denouement, Derry calls and states that he and Dylan are stuck in traffic and will must the practice but promises to meet them at the concert tonight. Unknown to the Dreamer, Derry and Dylan were infested with Taeniid larvae and have hidden themselves in the basement of C-Box Hall to await the end of the dream. Throughout the course of the dream, they plan to call Ted on his cell phone and have him postpone the concert until they arrive, thereby hindering the Dreamer from achieving his denouement while prolonging the length of the dream. Of course, when devising thrice plan they failed to account for the presence of the Dreamwalkers.

Practice

The Dreamer and the other band members present want to have one last practice before going live at the concert. The Dreamer states this and asks the characters if any of them know how to play guitar and/or drums. If they do not, this might be a good time to use the Gain New Skill mana power to learn how.

PC band members must make a DC 15 Play Instrument check in order to have a good practice. A roll of a natural 1 results in automatic chance for Dreamer rebellion that the PCs must try to suppress.

Note: If the PC remains Joined with the Dreamer, he must rely on his own singing skills.

Subdenouement: Having a good practice.

Incidental Achievement: Practicing with the band, regardless of the outcome.

Incidental Achievement: A critical success on the Play Instrument check (the character who scored it).

The Drive

Once the band is finished practicing, a limousine driven by an Unreal chauffeur arrives at the mug and drives the band and the PCs to the Cereal Box, stopping only once to let a giant cockroach scurry across the car's path. In typical dream fashion, neither the Dreamer nor any of the Unreal find this out of the ordinary.

The Cereal Box (C-Box Hall)

The entrance to the Cereal Box is a set of double doors. Before the band practices, these doors are locked and the concert hall is empty except for the Taeniid Nest (below). After practice, the doors are opened but guarded by Unreal bouncers and ticket takers. A red carpet has been roped off and a mob of reporters and excited fans sporting Underwhelmed paraphernalia have gathered outside the ropes. The giant roaches continue to scurry about the table but do not harm anyone in the vicinity of the cereal box.

The chauffeur parks at the edge of the carpet and the limo is immediately mobbed by screaming fans. The door opens and the band's manager, Joe Torres ushers them out of the vehicle under the tight security. Joe is dressed in a New York Yankees baseball uniform. He is a dream manifestation of the manager of Theodore's favorite baseball team, the Yankees.

Flash bulbs light up the entire table and the crowd goes wild as Underwhelmed walks down the red carpet and enters the Cereal Box. The characters glimpse several larvae mixed in among the Unreal but these hastily retreat if confronted.

Inside the Cereal Box, C-Box Hall is a large, dimly lit, multilevel concert hall with hardwood floors, balconies and several bars and concession stands.

The band (along with any accompanying PCs) is immediately caught up in a confusing wave of producers, music executives, sound technicians and wardrobe designers and makeup personnel. They are brought directly backstage and allowed to tune their instruments. Joe Torres explains that there is no opening band and Underwhelmed is scheduled to perform in less than thirty minutes. There is still no sign of Derry and Dylan.

The closer it gets to show time, the more agitated the Dreamer grows. Joe Torres eventually resigns to the fact that Dylan and Derry are not coming and says they have to find substitute band members. If the characters do not volunteer, he finds replacements in his own and the characters are free to observe the concert from backstage.

Incidental Achievement: Playing with the band.

The Concert

The concert begins roughly thirty minutes after the Dreamer arrives at C-Box Hall. The band opens with their more popular numbers, then break into some new songs. The crowd goes crazy. PC band members must make a DC 10 Play instrument check with results the same as at the practice, above.

Blackout

About halfway through the concert, the power goes out, casting the whole place into darkness. A few seconds later, the backup generator kicks in and red emergency lights produce just enough light to see by, but there is not enough electricity to power the instruments or special effects.

The crowd mills around in confusion and even the stage hands and technicians do not seem to know what to do. It should be obvious after a few minutes that the lights are not coming back on. If the PCs take no action, the crowd gets restless and starts to boo. The Joined character (if any) can feel the Dreamer threatening to rebel as his dream of becoming a rock star begins to dwindle.

Someone eventually suggests checking the fuse box downstairs but any Unreal who go down to the basement do not return. If the PCs take no action, the Dreamer realizes the dream's denouement cannot be achieved. He falls to his knees crying as the crowd boos him off stage. The Dreamworld ripples and changes. The Unreal disappear, most of the larvae melt away while 1d4 molt into drones who immediately attack. The characters may either battle the drones and then hunt for the Nest or exit the dream.

The Fuse Box

The fuse box is located beneath the concert hall, in what appears to be a replica of the dark and cluttered basement of the Dreamer's childhood home. The fuse box is open and the main breaker has been turned off.

Three drones are hiding amongst the boxes and clutter and attack anyone who enter the basement.

3 Gangsta Rapper Drones

Level 5 Tough Heroes: CR 3; HD 4d8+8; hp 26, 22, 15; Mas N/A; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; Defense 15 (+2 Dex); BAB +3; by weapon; FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SQ Outsider, immune to mind-affecting effects; AL neutral; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 3, Wis 11, Cha 15.

Skills: Intimidate +2, Profession (criminal) +4, Spot +1

Feats: Personal firearms proficiency

Gear: 9mm pistols

Achieving the Denouement

Once the power returns, Underwhelmed may finish the concert. The fans shout for an encore after the last song and end the night cheering in ecstasy. A wave of joy washes over the Dreamer and colorful mana radiates from him as he takes a final bow. Taeniid larvae wither and die from his success while any remaining drones make their way back to the Nest. The Dreamer and the Unreal become inert for the remainder of the dream as the Dreamer basks in the glory of being a rock star.

The characters are now free to search out the Taeniid Queen. They can feel an ominous pull from somewhere up above and can follow this feeling of dread up a staircase, right to the Nest.

The Nest

The Nest is located in a locked side room upstairs. A “Keep Out” sign is nailed to the door and the characters can feel a sense of dread emanating from within.

Inside, the room opens up into a large office. Posters of hip-hop artists and gold and platinum rap records hang on the wall.

Ted subconsciously feels that the coming of rap brought about the decline of rock music and the Taenia in his dream manifest as elements of gangsta rap. The Queen manifests as a gangsta rap-recording artists of the GM’s choice. She takes up position behind a huge oak desk in the center of the room and opens fire on anyone who enters. She attacks non-Joined characters first, then the Dreamer.

Taeniid Queen (Gangsta Rapper)

Level 7 Tough Hero: CR 5; HD 7d8; hp 40; Mas 16; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; Defense 12 (+2 Dex); BAB +5; by weapon; FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SQ Outsider, immune to mind-affecting effects; AL neutral; SV Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +2; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 3, Wis 11, Cha 15.

Skills: Intimidate +2, Pick Pocket +1, Perform (sing) +2, Profession (criminal) +4, Speak Language +8, Spot +1

Feats: Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Personal firearms proficiency, Robust

Mana Feats: Combat Focus

Gear: TEC-9 machine pistol

Mana Points: 40

Once the PCs have defeated the Queen, they may destroy her current crop of eggs which manifest as the platinum and gold records lining the walls.

The End

Lieutenant David Jensen

An NPC/Adventure Seed for *Dreamwalker d20: Modern Day Roleplaying in the Land of Dreams*

Lieutenant David Jensen, 100ish (looks 28)

Natural

Level 18 (2 Dedicated/3 Fast/3 Smart/8 Tough): hp 175; Mas 20; Init +6; Spd 35 ft.; Defense 28; BAB +11/+6/+1; by weapon; FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SV Fort +15, Ref +13, Will +9; Str 19, Dex 22, Con 20, Int 18, Wis 14, Cha 13.

Skills: Demolitions +2, Disable Device +5, Disguise +4, Drive +5, Escape Artist +2, Forgery +1 ½, Hide +5 ½, Intimidate +4, Investigate +2, Knowledge +2 ½, Knowledge (tactics) +5, Move Silently +2, Profession (military) +10

Feats: Alertness, Brawl, Toughness, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Simple Weapon Proficiency, Weapon Focus (M4 Carbine), Weapon Specialization (club), Vehicle Expert, Endurance, Increased Speed

Talent: Evasion, Plan, Savant (Disable Device)

Mana Feats: Peripheral Vitality, Combat Focus, Marksman, Leap of the Grasshopper, Spiritual Balance, Heart of the Beast, Long Arm, Mana Control, Chameleon Skin

Mana Points: 139

Lieutenant David Jensen was a member of the British Special Forces who served near the start of World War II. In 1940, after Britain had officially declared war on Germany but before any major engagements had occurred, his unit was deployed into the forests of northern Germany.

During a heated skirmish with enemy troops, Jensen was wounded and left for dead. His body went into shock and his still form was passed over by the German force. The cold and the snow kept him hovering at the brink of death for some time but though his body was numb, his mind continued to function, cycling through memories of his childhood, images of his wife and children back home, and mostly dread at the thought of what would happen to his family and to all of England should the madman that was Hitler be allowed to continue his expansionist ways.

Eventually Jensen's heartbeat started to fade. He began to feel light-headed, and then as if he were weightless and he knew his life was near its end. He was not afraid to die but he was filled with great sense of sadness and remorse at having failed in his duty to his family and country. It was this sense of patriotism and devotion to those he loved, combined with his latent Dreamwalking ability, which somehow enabled him to "cross over" into the land of dreams and become a creature of pure spirit.

David Jensen wandered the ocean of dreams for several days after his "death", not fully understanding what had happened at first. Eventually he became aware of the varied emotions floating up to him from beneath the "waves" and upon investigating realized he was actually entering dreams that were not his own. What's more he quickly discovered that he could learn much about the Dreamer just by observing the natural course of the dream. At that point he realized he had been given a great gift; that somehow he had been given a second chance to protect those he loved.

For the next few years he did his part to help the Allies win the war. He routinely sought out sleeping Germans and then attempted to convey what he had learned from their dreams into the dreams of those who could use the knowledge best.

Several important military and strategic victories can be attributed to Jensen's subtle guidance--- nothing so great as Normandy, but important nonetheless. He was not always successful---at the time very few people took great stock in the content of dreams---but those who did choose to act upon his warnings were often rewarded with victory and success. Much later, many of them were credited as being men capable of remarkable flashes of insight and intuition.

It was during this time that Jensen first encountered the Taenia---hive-minded, spiritual parasites who feed off the negative vibes and emotions they produce in people during sleep; creatures whose very presence eventually turns the host insane. The Taenia are instinctively able to adapt to and appear as the Dreamer's greatest fear within the dream and since Hitler and his SS were so widely feared during this time, even among his own armies, nearly all the Taeniid manifestations Jensen encountered bore some token of the Nazi regime.

Because of this, he came to the erroneous conclusion that the Taenia were actually created by Hitler who was a known practitioner of the occult. Jensen once entered the mind of Hitler himself in order to find out more and was nearly overwhelmed by the horror of the Fuhrer's mind. Never before and never since has he encountered so great a Taeniid manifestation and he was lucky to escape with his life.

After the war, Jensen returned to England and tried to make contact with his wife and family through their dreams. Unfortunately, he never could convince her that he was anything more than a dream and his repeated attempts to do so only seemed to heighten her grief. He was saddened by this and eventually stopped making his presence known although he continued to visit her dreams to make sure she was well.

Plot Hooks. . .

Jensen has since dedicated his existence to combating tyranny, whether in the dream world or real. He often visits the dreams of war veterans in order to help them overcome problems facing them in the real world, deal with severe psychoses or to rid them of Taeniid manifestations. He occasionally enters the dreams of his descendants to do the same.

Jensen may be encountered anywhere in the Empyrean, but most often where there is some sort of ongoing, large scale conflict, be it in the dream world or the real.

Only once in the past has Jensen actually sought dream world help from anyone else, recruiting the Sword of Gaia to help him rid a war torn dream "island" of a tyrannical Broodking. However, he may subtly help PCs who are obviously in league with the Dreamer. In a conventional war-based dream for instance, he may provide timely artillery or air support, in a dream-based war on terrorists he may provide hints to the whereabouts of cell leaders or planted bombs, or he may otherwise help the PCs when things seem darkest. In this case, the GM should give the characters a glimpse of a being of great power and then let them wonder what he was and why he chose to help.

Another interesting way Jensen may be encountered is by drawing the PCs into a shared dream in a setting that closely mirrors the world around them. In this case, the PCs should be unaware that they are dreaming. Have Jensen pose as someone with crucial information about a dangerous real world mission. Then conduct the dream mission as a standard adventure, perhaps throwing in a few subtle clues over the course of play (a dragon, the appearance of a fictional character, a purple tank, etc.) to suggest that things might not be all they seem. As an added bonus, the GM can be as brutal as he wants since characters "killed" over the course of the dream eventually wake up.

Success in the dream adventure should result in success in the real world and the GM can automatically "fast forward" to the end of the mission. However, failure in the dream means the characters still have to go on the mission (if they wish) and may be in for some nasty surprises if the GM decides to alter some of the upcoming encounters.

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If Jensen does make direct contact with the PCs it is usually to ask them to investigate a real world problem that is affecting a particular Dreamer. In modern times, Jensen can be used to convey information about the current whereabouts and doings of skinhead or other neo-Nazi organizations, ongoing acts of corporate intimidation, terrorist plots, government conspiracies, the actions of modern day oppressive/dictatorial (in his eyes, anyway) regimes, or the whereabouts of any true Nazis who survived the war by fleeing Europe. Afterward, he may become a valuable ally but like all those who “cross over” Jensen has lost touch with the demands of the physical world. Time means little to a creature of spirit---in the land of dreams, a day in the real world may seem like no more than an hour, a month, a year or even more, making prolonged contact with the living is near impossible. PCs who encounter him may become confused when he agrees to meet them in a week and then shows up a month or two later.

End

Appendix I: Redefining The Nature of Fluff

Expanded Rules for *Dreamwalker d20: Modern Day Roleplaying in the Land of Dreams*

Fluff are extraneous touches and details that can be used to reinforce the impression that the characters are in a dream. Fluff usually has no bearing on the denouement and most often manifests as things that have left a mark on the Dreamer's subconscious mind. Put more simply, fluff are those confusing little things that seem both natural and out of place during your dream but whose meaning sometimes becomes clear once you wake up and have time to think about it ("Oh! So, that's where that came from.")

That is the definition of fluff as described in the *Dreamwalker d20: Modern Day Roleplaying in the Land of Dreams* core rules. In retrospect we feel that it did not adequately emphasize the limitless possibilities and/or significance of fluff. To better understand fluff, let's first talk a little bit about memory.

The human brain is a vast repository of knowledge, much like a computer, that routinely stores sensory information in the form of memories. The most accepted theory states that there are three stages of memory storage---sensory, short-term, and long-term.

Sensory memory retains sensory images for only a small part of a second---just long enough for us to develop a perception. You see someone and recognize him as male. You smell something and recognize it as baking bread. You hear a noise you recognize as a car horn. These are all examples of sensory memory.

Short-term memory persists for about 20 to 30 seconds, without rehearsal of the information. The color of someone's shirt or dress, the lyrics to a new song, brief conversations, unfamiliar telephone numbers, names and dates are all examples of short term memory. These memories do not immediately disappear, but slowly fade into what is known as our long-term memory.

Long-term memory is believed to be permanent---that nothing is forgotten and that only the means of retrieving it is lost over a period of time. This information is not lost however and is in fact quite accessible in the place few people think to look---in our dreams.

In *Dreamwalker*, fluff represents the pseudophysical manifestation of the Dreamer's long-term memory. This means it can be anything the Dreamer has ever seen, felt, heard, smelled, tasted or even thought about over the course of his entire life.

Types of Fluff

For game purposes, fluff is divided into three main categories---humorous, insignificant and dangerous. These categories are entirely dependent upon what tone the Game Master wishes to set for the Dreamwalk. A light-hearted adventure with lots of potential for laughter should stick with humorous or insignificant fluff. A more serious or lethal Dreamwalk should obviously contain dangerous fluff.

Listed below is a brief explanation of the three different categories of fluff. Keep in mind that fluff is generally extraneous to the dream's denouement although its effects might hinder the characters from completing their task, especially where dangerous fluff is concerned.

Humorous

Humorous fluff manifests as something funny to the Dreamer. This humor might have a darker or even unfunny edge to it, say for example if the Dreamer finds dead baby jokes funny. Humorous fluff is seldom dangerous to Dreamwalkers.

Insignificant

Insignificant fluff is the most common type of fluff. It manifests as either something the Dreamer has thought about or something he has actually encountered in the real world. While not inherently dangerous, insignificant fluff can be lethal. For example, take a Dreamer who was once awed by the sight of a dam opening up. In his dreams, a simple water faucet might release a torrent of water that slams into the unsuspecting characters, threatening to drown them in an unexpected flood.

Dangerous

Dangerous fluff manifests as, well, something dangerous. It can be something the Dreamer is actually afraid of or just something he knows to be dangerous. For instance, take a Dreamer who was once injured in a fire. In his dreams, the building he is in might spontaneously combust, trapping everyone inside. This event might even happen more than once.

Personalizing Fluff

A few examples of fluff are listed in the Dreamwalker core rulebook, however it is much better to personalize fluff to the Dreamer in question. Giving it a reason for being there, even if no one ever discerns what that reason is, not only adds flavor to the setting but also helps the Game Master to better visualize the Dreamer.

Personalizing fluff is very easy to do. Ideas for fluff often pop up naturally as the Game Master develops the Dreamer's background. Game Masters who are interested in dream symbols and interpretations (as posited by the many dream interpretation books on the market) are encouraged to use these to flesh out the Dreamer's fluff. For those who are not, the following guidelines should be of use.

For each category listed below, jot down at least one thing appropriate to the Dreamer. After that, determine exactly how many items of fluff are to appear over the course of the dream (usually 1d3). Then roll percentile dice for each item of fluff, consult the list and write down the results.

Roll	Nature of Fluff
01-05	Best thing that happened to the Dreamer
06-10	Favorite actor or actress
11-15	Favorite person
16-20	Favorite movie or television show
21-25	Favorite animal
26-30	Favorite song or type of music
31-35	Favorite story, magazine or novel
36-40	Favorite color
41-45	Favorite place
46-50	Favorite job, hobby or interest
51-55	Least favorite job, hobby or interest
56-60	Least favorite place
61-65	Least favorite color
66-70	Least favorite story, magazine or novel
71-75	Least favorite song or type of music
76-80	Least favorite animal
81-85	Favorite movie or television show
86-90	Least favorite person
91-95	Least favorite actor or actress
96-00	Worst thing that happened to the Dreamer

Putting the “Sur” in Surreal

Once this is done, look closely at the results and determine what aspects of each item are the most memorable. Try to go beyond the obvious. With movies and books for instance, think of what images immediately come to mind. With a person, ask yourself what that person is best known for, or what he does for a living, or even which of his facial characteristics are the most prominent. Now decide the type of fluff (humorous, insignificant, dangerous) and try to assimilate these things into the Dreamworld.

Here are some examples:

Benny’s fluff is humorous. The Game Master rolled three times on the table above and got Benny’s favorite animal (pigeons), his favorite movie (The Godfather) and his least favorite music (Rap). Benny’s dream takes place in a medieval fantasy kingdom. The dream’s denouement is for Benny to win a pie-eating contest at the annual festival. The name of the kingdom is Pigeonia and of course their crest and coat-of-arms is a fearsome looking pigeon. Before the contest, the Dreamer is approached by a trio of hard looking Italian men who say it would be in his best interests to win the contest. At the festival itself, the medieval musicians play rap music as a court jester sings rap tunes.

Rita’s fluff is insignificant. For fluff rolls she gets her least favorite person (her dentist), her least favorite hobby (boxing) and the best thing that ever happened to her (she once won a short story writing contest). Her Dreamworld is set in a 1920’s city and the denouement is to go on a date with her wealthy fiancée later that evening. The characters enter the dream with toothaches that cause a -5 to all DC’s until they either visit a dentist or use mana to Heal themselves. Bare-knuckled boxing matches are held in the street. The onlookers are drunk and brawls frequently erupt, possibly drawing the characters into the conflict if they are not careful. The Dreamer is a writer and her novel a bestseller. She is often stopped and congratulated by the other Unreal in the dream.

Tom’s dream contains dangerous fluff. The fluff rolls turn out to be his favorite color (green), his favorite place (San Francisco) and his favorite actor (Mel Gibson). The Dreamworld is set on a large spaceship and the denouement is to safely return to earth. During the course of the dream, an alien warship attacks the Dreamer’s vessels---its laser bolts are colored bright green. A small replica of the Golden Gate Bridge connects one part of the ship to the other. Characters must don space suits, leave the ship and risk walking across it unless they do some serious Reshaping. Lastly, a feral little boy lives in the ventilation system of the ship and occasionally comes out to steal food and shiny things. He hurls a sharp metal boomerang at anyone who accosts him (the boy is from the movie “The Road Warrior”, starring Mel Gibson).

Now, you should have a better idea of how to use the table above. I find it interesting to note that in all likelihood you probably could have taken the same dreams, denouements and fluff listed above and come up with a completely different manifestation. In that respect, fluff is even more diverse than the dreams in which they occur.

Recognizing Fluff

Due to their generally odd manifestations, Dreamwalkers often recognize fluff on sight. The Joined character can attempt to discern the nature of this fluff (i.e. what it represents to the Dreamer) by scrolling through the Dreamer's memories and/or making an occasional DC 15 Wisdom check (GM's discretion). This roll might suffer negative penalties if the nature of the fluff is particularly personal or obscure and the roll might be subject to resistance by the Dreamer's own Wisdom check if the information is potentially traumatic or damaging to the Dreamer's overall peace of mind.

Other Types of Fluff

Listed below are several other common types of fluff, many of which can be combined for even greater effect. These occurrences always center around the Dreamer---the characters (and the Taenia) are swept along without any choice in the matter.

For game purposes, these effects should always be pre-planned by the Game Master as they could potentially have an adverse effect on achieving the dream's denouement. For instance, if the goal was to take a plane to New York City, a Location Shift to Planet X might make achieving the denouement nearly impossible.

Note that while these events can be quite interesting, it is recommended that only a few take place during the course of a single dream as the effects can be somewhat disorienting and/or aggravating for the players.

Abrupt Changes

Abrupt Changes are relatively random occurrences where a part of the Dreamworld transforms into something else. Thus a building might melt into a runway or a road might turn into a stream.

Time Shift

Time Shifts send the characters backwards or forwards in time. This can be a shift of a few minutes, hours, days or even years. In extreme cases, the shift can span eras or centuries as in a Time Shift from colonial America to modern day.

Location Shift

Similar to a Time Shift, a Location Shift abruptly transports the characters to a new location. This might be just a different floor of the same building, a different part of the city or even a different country or planet.

Futility

Futility is a common occurrence in many dreams. It manifests as a complete inability to accomplish something within the dream, be it fire a gun, punch someone with any real effect, drive a car, remember something important or give a speech without embarrassing yourself. Futility rarely affects anyone other than the Dreamer---the Joined character is susceptible to its effects as long as he remains Joined.

Unfortunately, futility often manifests during stressful times and can therefore be quite dangerous to the characters.

Problem Solving

Probably the most important and underused aspect of fluff is its ability to provide clues or answers to questions that are troubling the Dreamer in the real world. These clues are sometimes obvious but more often they are not. Take for instance a Dreamer who has lost his wedding ring down his bathroom sink. In the dream, any time a character approaches a drain he hears a clinking sound. If he investigates he finds the ring, which should point him in the right direction when he awakens.

Or, take a Dreamer who was out walking her dog one night. Without realizing it at a conscious level, she saw a man lurking in the shadows of a nearby house. The next day she learned that someone had broken in and killed the occupants of that house. Unbeknownst to her, a detailed image of the man has been burned into her long term memory and he occasionally manifests in her dreams and commits murder. If the characters can discern the true nature of this memory, they can provide his description to the police in the real world in order to aid in his capture.

End

Appendix II: Bridges

Throughout the world there are places where the lines between dream and reality occasionally become blurred. These “bridges” between the two realms most often result from high concentrations of residual psychic and/or emotional energy. Each bridge varies in size and appearance but its general nature usually conforms with the type of energy that caused it to form.

Bridges are classified into two main categories---permanent and temporary.

Permanent bridges are bound to certain locations although in rare cases, a bridge may be bound to an item or artifact. The location, if not the true nature, of a permanent bridge is often well known and sometimes even incorporated into local mythology and folklore. The home of a beloved politician, that section of subway where weird things always seem to happen, Area 51, a child’s treehouse, an Indian burial ground and haunted houses or castles are all examples of permanent bridges.

Temporary bridges are brief and generally random manifestations that can occur almost anywhere. Bleeding idols and other stigmata, unexplained shifts from one location to another, UFO abductions, crop circles and cattle mutilations are all examples of temporary bridges.

Additionally, bridges of both types may be governed by triggers---that is, the bridge may lie dormant until activated by some event or occurrence (which may or may not be random). For instance, a rain of frogs may be triggered by some obscure planetary alignment or for no particular reason at all, a ghost ship might only appear on the anniversary of its sinking, pressing a certain gem on an ancient Egyptian scepter may cause a bridge to form, or the bridge at Stonehenge may only manifest at certain times of the day, month, year, etc.

Some bridges have been known to produce Unreal manifestations which may explain such varied phenomena as angel, mermaid, leprechaun, dinosaur, fairy, ghost, Bigfoot and even Elvis sightings. These Unreal usually conform to the nature of the bridge in question---the amorous denizens of “Makeout Point” will appear and react vastly different than those manifesting around Auschwitz or Chernobyl.

In the dream world, a bridge may be accessed via the Periphery where it usually appears (and functions) as a normal Dreamworld, sans Dreamer. In this case, the bridge’s area of effect in the real world acts as a Barrier which cannot be crossed by creatures or items of spirit (including creatures such as Broodkings who stumble across the bridge in this manner).

In the real world, a bridge creates a spiritual disturbance within its area of effect, similar to that created by the presence of a Taeniid Broodking. Non-Dreamwalkers who enter this area are affected in a variety of ways. Some retain complete control over their actions while others slip into a waking, dream-like state and may behave or act erratically. For game purposes, they become Unreal as long as they remain within the affected area. Upon leaving, memories of the time spent within the bridge are cloudy and disjointed. Normal people often attempt to rationalize, downplay or even repress the memories of their experiences within the bridge in order to avoid ridicule and/or maintain a grasp on their own sanity.

A Dreamwalker who enters a bridge through the real world may manipulate mana as if he were in a dream although he may not cross the Barrier into the Periphery. The character’s mana supply may be restored in one of two ways---by slipping into REM sleep (or the Dreamwalker’s equivalent) or by leaving the area of the bridge and returning later. In the latter case, the mana supply replenishes itself at the rate of 1d6 MP per hour (or completely if the character later enters REM sleep).

Dreamwalkers can always sense when a temporary bridge or one governed by a trigger is about to close. When a bridge closes, creatures who accessed the bridge through the dream world are usually expelled into the Periphery unharmed. It is up to the Game Master to decide what effect a closed bridge has on any real creatures caught inside. Most bridges fade away peacefully leaving the real world

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unaffected but occasionally some manifest special effects. For instance, the bridge located in the Bermuda Triangle has been known to carry real things off to places unknown.

Characters (and normal people) who enter a bridge via the real world must be extremely careful when engaging in combat. Injuries sustained affect the character's physical form (although they may be Healed with mana while in the vicinity of the bridge) and death is permanent, more often than not. Altered items (or people) sometimes continue to exist (or remain changed) outside the boundaries of a bridge but these effects eventually wear off at the Game Master's discretion.

From a campaign standpoint, bridges (especially those bound into an object) should be extremely rare occurrences. Game Masters should resist the temptation to include a bridge in every real world adventure just so the characters can manipulate mana. It is often much more rewarding for the players when they can solve problems as "normal", mundane people.

It is certainly more amusing for the GM. ☺

End

Dreamwalker d20

Character Scratch Sheet

STR ___ CON ___ DEX ___

STR ___ CON ___ DEX ___

TEMPORARY SKILLS RNK TOT

TEMPORARY SKILLS RNK TOT

_____	___	___
_____	___	___
_____	___	___
_____	___	___
_____	___	___
_____	___	___
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TEMPORARY FEATS

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TEMPORARY SKILLS RNK TOT

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Dreamwalker d20

Dreamworld Sheet

Dreamer's Name: _____

Dreamworld

_____ Realistic _____ Surreal

Key Locations/Events

Denouement

_____ Passive _____ Active

Details

Unreal

_____ Active _____ Inert

Taenia

_____ Infestation Level

Theme

Number

Manifestations

_____ Larvae _____
_____ Drones _____
_____ Queen _____

Underworlds

Setting

Drones

Size of Mana Pocket

Dreamwalker d20

Psychological Evaluation Sheet

Patient Information

Patient Name, Age: _____
Sex: _____ Ethnicity: _____
Occupation: _____ Income Level: LC MC UC
Address (City/State): _____
Education Level: _____
Hobbies/Areas of Interest: _____
Favorite Books/Magazines: _____
Favorite Movies: _____

Family Information

Marital Status: S D W
Spouse, Age: _____ Occupation: _____
Children
Sex, Age: _____ Sex, Age: _____ Sex, Age: _____

Physician's Notes and Observations:

Childhood Information

Income Level: LC MC UC
Address (City/State): _____
Father, Age: _____
Occupation: _____
Mother, Age: _____
Occupation: _____
Siblings
Sex, Age: _____ Sex, Age: _____ Sex, Age: _____

Physician's Notes and Observations:

Psychoses

Phobia: _____
Dementia: _____

Simpler Times

by Peter C. Spahn

*“There are no great things, only small things with great love.
Happy are those.”*

---Mother Theresa

“Yom no ho ren gay keo, yom no ho ren gay keo, yom no ho ren gay keo...” *

As the drug, Black25, takes effect, the lab, the technicians and even the incessant drone of Billy Chun’s Buddhist chanting slowly fade away.

Entering the dream state is always a pleasant and peaceful experience---a gentle transition from the physical world to that of the spirit. For me, the trip is almost instantaneous. One minute there is only the darkening haze of semiconsciousness; the next, I float beneath a roiling purple “sky” along the iridescent waters of the Periphery.

This is the crossroads of the Empyrean, land of spirit, land of dreams. Some believe this to be the true afterlife; the place where all people go when they die. As a Christian, I have my doubts on this. Still, the peace and beauty of this place is undeniable.

I drift along the spiritual waters, waiting for the others to arrive. Each wave brings snatches of the dreams emanating from the Dreamworlds below. Some are just beginning, others are nearly at an end. They range the gamut of emotions from love to hate, joy to pain. I soak them all in, reveling in the depth of the human heart and soul.

The pleasantness of the Periphery is deceiving however, and I dare not relax too much. Even here I sense the underlying, yet tangible presence of the Taenia---the evil that is slowly turning the Empyrean into a land of nightmares. They are out there. Watching. Waiting. Tainting each Dreamworld with feelings of anger, hatred and fear. They are a plague upon humanity and the sworn enemy of all Dreamwalkers. They fear us and hate us as well for we alone know how to fight them. What’s more, we help others to do the same.

I feel the approach of the rest of my team, Team Circles. I am their leader although I hardly feel deserving of the title. Still, my mentor, Jinx, believes that the best leaders are seldom those who ask to be chosen.

Linda Cobbles appears first, her spirit floating gently along the Peripheral waves. She is like me, only able to Dreamwalk with the aid of Black25, a drug especially designed by the founder of our employer, Project Dreamwalker. I grasp her hand to steady her. It is like grasping a feather. We are weak here, creatures of smoke and spirit and that makes the potential danger even greater.

Billy Chun arrives next. His spirit pulses with vitality and grace. Through intense meditation and a strict Buddhist regimen of mind and body, he has mastered the art of Dreamwalking without the use of drugs---something few could ever hope to accomplish. I envy his discipline. He is almost a part of this world and the dangers of Dreamwalking are less for him than for us.

Paul Canty is the final member of our team and as usual, the last to arrive. His spirit is ragged and unstable. It knifes through the Periphery in a herky-jerky manner that is almost repulsive to watch---a result of his own method of Dreamwalking, his addiction to psychotropic drugs. The drugs are strong, in some ways they make him more powerful than the rest of us, but he is prone to loss of control and lapses

in judgment. Eventually his mind will become too unbalanced to work with the team and to be honest, for that I am glad. More than once Paul's recklessness and penchant for violence has endangered our mission. And our lives.

Together now, we surf the ocean of dreams for our objective. Somewhere out here is the Dreamworld of Henry Geller---a forty-eight year old advertising executive who has fallen into a deep state of depression. In cases like these, more often than not, the Taenia are involved. More often than not, the source of many of life's problems can be found within ourselves, within our dreams. More often than not, they can be fixed with the help of a Dreamwalker.

Henry Geller's Dreamworld isn't hard to find. Another specially designed drug, Dreamtracer, makes it stand out to us like a beacon. As one, Team Circles passes through the spiritual Barrier surrounding the Dreamworld of Henry Geller.

One never really knows what to expect upon entering a Dreamworld. The extensive psychological evaluation each patient is subjected to usually prepares us for some of the things we encounter but each Dreamer is different and therefore, so is each Dreamworld. In general, the less creative and more stable the Dreamer, the more grounded in reality the Dreamworld. Geller is a simple man with simple tastes. In all likelihood, his Dreamworld will be bounded in some type of reality.

The descent from the Periphery into the Dreamworld is instantaneous and once inside, it takes only a moment for our spirits to adjust to their new forms. This is always a moment of great anticipation. Dreamwalkers have no control over our initial manifestation and the results are sometimes. . .strange.

Not this time, though. Here, we manifest as replicas of our physical selves although our style of dress is somewhat curious. I am dressed casually in shorts, T-shirt and sandals with a necklace and bracelet of friendship beads. Linda's pretty Latin features are accentuated by a halter top and bellbottom pants. Billy Chun maintains his customary bald head and long braid but a distinctly non-Asian leather vest and form fitting pants cling to his lithe and muscular frame. Only Paul looks somewhat normal, his lanky frame sporting a tie-dyed shirt with a peace symbol emblazoned on the front.

From the clothes, I place the time period somewhere around the 1960's. Once the when is determined we have only to figure out the where so we take a few minutes to look around.

We are standing in a coastal amusement park, surrounded by crowds of Unreal---the spiritual inhabitants of the Dreamworld that for all intents and purposes are real, at least for the duration of the dream. The sky is gray and overcast. A city skyline looms in the distance, its shape and pattern vaguely familiar.

Unreal seagulls circle high above, filling the air with raucous caws. The taste of salt is sharp and pungent on the cool sea breeze. The sweet smells of cotton candy and popcorn just barely override the smell of rotting garbage. Calliope music dominates the park. The organ is badly out of tune and sounds as if it is missing a few pipes.

"Coney Island," Linda says and we all look at her. "I can't remember the name of the park." She shrugs. "At least I think that's what it's supposed to be."

I nod. It makes sense. Geller's file stated that he grew up in New York City. Very few people who live there have never been to Coney Island at least once.

Turning back to the park I see that Geller's depression is deep and there is a strong Taeniid presence. No drones, thankfully, but many of the Unreal park-goers have become hosts for Taeniid larvae. These particular larvae manifest as bloated, tick like insects in response to some underlying fear of the Dreamer, and have attached themselves to the backs and necks of the Unreal.

Even the Unreal who are not infested are listless and apathetic, a side effect of the overpowering presence of the Taenia. Like sheep, they shuffle along through the park. Some stop to buy moldering food from seedy looking vendors while others stand in line for a number of thrill rides and roller coasters.

These rides look unstable at best---most of the paint and decorations are replaced by large, flowery blossoms of rust and the metal supports of most rides are twisted and warped. Ratchety mechanical noises precede the weary, almost programmed screams of the riders.

This is bad. All signs point to a Dreamer who is nearing the edge of sanity. Project rules are strict and unyielding when it comes to severe Taeniid infestations such as these---if things look too bad, get out. Staying risks not only the health of the Dreamer's psyche but also our own lives. If we die in someone else's Dreamworld, we could very well die in the real world. I understand the Project's concerns on the matter but I am loathe to leave Geller's dream without at least trying to help. A quick poll finds the others in agreement.

We search the park for the Dreamer. His presence is undeniable making him easy to find despite the drastic change in his appearance. Gone is the defeated, middle-aged man we met in the lab. Here, Henry Geller is still a tawny haired, freckle faced boy of eight. He stands out from the dismal crowd, bathed in a rippling aura of his own spiritual mana---a shining patch of light and color in an otherwise drab and dreary setting.

We watch him buy a cone of cotton candy from a vendor's tray. The candy fluff is an ugly yellowish brown until it touches the Dreamer's hand, then it turns a bright, vibrant pink. Geller tears off a piece and stuffs it into his mouth. We follow him as he wanders through the park. Like everyone else, he appears oblivious to the rot and decay around him. Here, he is just a young boy spending a happy day at Coney Island. A trail of sparkling mana streams out behind him as he walks, giving life and color to everything it touches but after he passes, it too is soon swallowed up by the pervading gloom.

"Hey Tim," Paul says, "We ain't gettin' any younger."

I nod and take a deep breath, then step forward and tap Geller on the shoulder. "Excuse me," I say.

Slowly, reluctantly, the boy turns around. Fear is evident on his face. Little boy fears---fear of talking to strangers, fear of things that go bump in the night, and beneath it all, fear of the Taenia. This close, I can see the scared eyes of the man he has become in the real world. On a deeper level than this, he is aware of the presence of the Taenia, but unwilling to admit the truth even to himself.

"I'm here to help you," I say. Of course he doesn't understand but I know that he believes me. That is good. Very few untrained Dreamers have the power to resist a Dreamwalker but it is always easier when they willingly accept your presence and aid.

I gently take the boy's hand. He looks up at me with trusting eyes. "I promise this won't hurt you," I say. The boy nods.

I call upon my spiritual energy, my mana, and will myself to Join with Henry Geller ignoring the way Paul impatiently clears his throat. He thinks I am being theatrical. I am not. It is true, I could have Joined with the boy without making my presence known but I find it best not to upset the Dreamer whenever possible.

To those watching, the Joining takes less than a heartbeat; to me it feels much longer. My spirit ebbs and flows, becoming one with that of the Dreamer. This is a spiritual moment for both of us---a period of great enlightenment and understanding. For a very brief time, our thoughts and memories mingle together. In effect, I am now Henry Geller and this is Coney Island as he remembers it, in the year 1966.

Looking through the Dreamer's eyes, I see the park as it is supposed to be, bright and vibrant, with no sign of the Taenia. The air is thick with music, laughter and excitement. The Unreal are happy and alive.

I stare stupidly at the cone of cotton candy in my hand. The sweet candy smell is almost overwhelming. I tear off a piece of fluff and put it on my tongue, reveling in its taste as it dissolves in a screaming burst of sugar.

Billy Chun clears his throat bringing me back to the present. I open my eyes to find the others staring at me with a mixture of envy and amusement.

“Sorry,” I say somewhat sheepishly. “I’m in.”

The others nod their understanding. The sensory laden world of the Dreamer is a difficult lure to resist. At one time or another, every Dreamwalker must fight the temptation to just sit back and enjoy the natural course of someone else’s dream. Still, we are here for a reason. I shift perceptions back to my own and once again see the decaying park for what it truly is.

“Nice duds,” Paul snorts. Linda giggles in response and even the normally stoic Billy offers up the ghost of a smile. I look down and can see the outline of the boy superimposed over my own form. I smile. The strange sight goes unnoticed by the passing Unreal---they still see the illusion of the boy. Only other Dreamwalkers---and the Taenia---can see the truth of what lies beneath.

“So, what are we supposed to do?” Linda asks.

That’s the heart of the matter. Despite what some people say, dreams are rarely just random occurrences---almost every single one has some sort of purpose or goal that the Dreamer desires to complete. We call these dream goals denouements. Denouements can be almost anything, from the fantastic to the mundane. Whatever it is, our job is to help the Dreamer complete it. Only after his mind is thus occupied do Dreamwalkers dare to assault the Taeniid infestation head on.

In the case of Henry Geller, the dream’s denouement is obvious. “The Ferris wheel,” I say, and we all turn to look at it. The Wonder Wheel, so named by the large gaudy red letters at its hub, dominates this section of the park. It is a monstrous, rusting structure well over a hundred feet tall. As a boy, Henry Geller had wanted very much to ride it but had been too afraid to do so. This dream’s denouement involves rectifying that lost opportunity. I explain the situation to the others.

“Sounds easy enough,” Paul says. I only hope he is right.

“Any sign of trouble?” I ask.

Billy shakes his head. “No drones yet, but they could just be waiting to strike.”

“The ride operator’s infested,” Linda says, indicating the thin, mustached man in the ridiculous striped suit and matching top hat.

“Got him,” I reply, having already noticed the tick like larva latched onto his back. Larvae are little more than a nuisance to Dreamwalkers---they usually avoid us if at all possible. They are cowardly creatures who would rather run than fight and are only dangerous when cornered or in great numbers.

“Spread out and mingle. Keep your eyes peeled. I’ll see if I can get this done.”

I/Geller walk up to the Ferris wheel and get in the queue line, keeping an eye on the operator who for now seems unaware of my presence. The rest of Team Circles disappear into the crowd. They will keep watch and remain close by until I am finished with the Dreamer. Or until there is any sign of trouble.

More out of boredom than necessity, I do a quick scan of my/Geller’s memories and discover the origin of the tick phobia. When Geller was five he spent the weekend with his grandparents upstate. After a long day in the woods, he returned home that night with several ticks latched onto his body. Despite his protests and tears, his parents burned the ticks off with a hot needle. He has been terrified of ticks ever since.

The Wonder Wheel fills up twice before I/Geller finally get to the gate. As the riders exit the bucket, the larval operator grins at me through a jagged mass of teeth.

“Sorry kid,” he says. “Ride’s broken. It’ll be running again in about an hour.”

A wave of disappointment and defeat spirals up from Geller’s subconscious mind, forcing me to fight down the feeling. Just in time. The ride operator takes an awkward swing at me/Geller with a rusty crowbar. I duck easily and reach for him but he turns his assault towards the ride operating device, giving the mechanism a few good whacks before I can stop him. Sparks fly up from the damaged controls. I shield my face from the flash and smoke.

“Now! Get him now!” the larval operator yells, then turns and runs, dropping the crowbar onto the platform with a clang. I curse, jump the gate and snatch up the weapon.

Shouts and screams erupt from the crowd of Unreal as half a dozen Taeniid drones clatter out of the shadows. Each manifests as a hideous crossbreed of man and tick---strikingly similar to their natural form. The drones clamber over buildings and through gaming stalls, killing any Unreal in their path as they converge on the Ferris wheel. On me.

Shouts. Screams. Chaos. The Unreal panic and stampede towards the exits. Those that fall are trampled beneath the press.

I call upon my mana, Reshaping the crowbar into a sword. A gun would probably be safer and more effective but complex devices are more difficult and draining to manufacture. Once again I call upon mana, this time honing my reflexes and fighting ability until I have the speed of an athlete and the skill of an expert swordsman, at least for the duration of this dream. Then, I sit back on the ride platform and wait for the drones to come.

Billy Chun leaps onto the platform beside me. He has picked up a wooden board and he too uses mana to Reshape, turning the wood into a long, slender staff. Unlike me, Billy needs no mana to bolster his fighting ability---he is an accomplished martial artist in the real world. What’s more his mystical mana feat turns him into a whirlwind of destruction. He gives the staff an expert twirl and braces himself to meet the charging drones.

The first of the drones reaches the Ferris wheel platform and clambers over the railing with snapping claws. I dodge its deadly assault and strike out with my blade. The sword shatters through the creature’s carapace and penetrates deep into the soft tissues beneath. The drone dies with a ragged hiss and collapses into a pile. A second drone scrambles over the railing, forcing me to give ground as I parry its attacks.

Billy wades into the battle moving faster than the eye can follow. He becomes a furious blur, leaping, dodging and lashing out with deadly effect. In seconds, two more drones lie broken, battered and dead on the platform.

Just then, something small and hard slams into the back of my skull. A burst of white light scatters my vision. Dazed, I drop my sword, staggering away from the advancing drone and clutching at my bloody scalp. The larval ride operator grins at me from a safe distance away, already hefting another rock to throw. I stumble and fall to one knee.

The tick-drone clambers eagerly towards me. Then gunfire erupts and its head disappears in a cloud of black ichor. The creature collapses heavily on top of me and I have the momentary satisfaction of seeing surprise on the ride operator’s face before several bullets slam into his chest, knocking him from my view.

Not surprisingly, Linda and Paul are the source of the gunfire. Each has Possessed a park police officer, their forms superimposed over the Unreal’s much like mine is over that of the Dreamer. They continue to fire at the remaining drones. The noise is almost deafening. Linda’s face is a mask of concentration as she aims and fires. Paul wears an expression of pure glee. His gun is the same size as Linda’s, but boosted by his drug tainted mana, it sounds more like a cannon. The bullets it releases have much the same effect.

The tick-drones squeal in pain as his slugs rip through them steadily dissolving their bodies into a mass of shattered carapaces, dark meat and black ichor. So much violence is not only terrible, but also dangerous before the dream’s denouement has been achieved.

As I extricate myself from beneath the drone’s bulk, I feel the Dreamer’s fear as he struggles to end the dream. The Dreamworld ripples. If he awakens we will all be in danger. With a pulse of my own mana, I help him to calm down.

The battle is over in seconds. With a shot and a final squeal the last drone collapses into a steaming putrid mass.

“Goddamn!” Paul says. His eyes are wide with excitement. “Did you see that! Just like Bonnie and Clyde! Goddamn!”

Linda turns on him unexpectedly. “What the hell are you doing! You can’t just kill like that, Paul! Not before the goal is complete.”

“What?” He says, his face darkening into a frown. “Lighten up. Those scumbags had to die anyway and the sooner we waste them the better, right? Right? Now we can get this part over with and get on to the Queen!”

His logic is flawed. He views the battle with the Queen as the ultimate goal but there is so much more to what we do. I would like to argue but right now my head hurts too bad. My mana flows over me, Healing the wound and instantly making me feel better.

Meanwhile Linda and Billy exchange worried looks. Neither are pleased that Paul is still on the team. When we get back to the lab I am going to request he take some time off. Perhaps permanently.

But now is not the time. We have to move fast. The Unreal have fled for the moment and there were none in sight, but the police will be here soon.

“We have a problem,” I say.

“What is it?” Billy asks.

I show them. The damage to the ride mechanism looks bad. It can be fixed with mana but since it is both a mechanical and electronic device, the cost will be great. We still have to be strong enough to find and kill the Taeniid Queen.

Linda kneels down to take a look at the device. She is better with mechanical things than any of us. She closes her eyes and focuses her mana, manifesting the desired repair skill in much the same way I bolstered my combat ability.

“There,” she says, opening her eyes. “I can fix it, but it would be easier if I had the right tools.”

“Give me a minute,” Billy says and trots off into the park.

“I’ll stand guard,” Paul says, twirling his pistol like an old west gunslinger. Linda frowns but I shake my head. Now is not the time.

“Don’t shoot anyone if you don’t have to,” she says anyway which only irritates him even more. She’s right though. It is hard enough to keep the Dreamer asleep as it is. More random death and destruction is a sure way to awaken him.

We wait. For now, there is little fear of the Taenia, any remaining drones are scuttling back to protect their Queen, but in many ways, the Dreamworld is similar to the real world. The battle has caused quite a stir and Unreal policemen will soon be on hand to investigate. While they represent very little danger to us, once again, the danger to the Dreamer’s psyche is more important.

In the distance, we hear the wail of police sirens.

Billy returns having Possessed a park maintenance man. A tool belt and a ring of about a thousand keys dangle from his waist. Linda takes the tools, opens the ride panel and sets to work. In minutes, the ride is operational again. Linda works the controls as I/Geller climb into one of the buckets. Geller’s emotions are a tangled mixture of fear and excitement.

I gently disengage my spirit from his and reform on the seat facing him. He blinks as if awakening from a dream.

“Have a nice trip,” I say, getting up.

“You’re not going to ride with me?”

I shake my head and rest a comforting hand on his shoulder. “No. There are some things you need to do by yourself.”

He nods and I know that some part of him, the adult part of Henry Geller, understands. I climb out of the bucket and close the door, then stand and watch with the others.

Dreamwalker d20: Modern Day Roleplaying in the Land of Dreams

Linda presses the operating button. Like some great dinosaur, the ride begins to move. We watch the bucket slowly go up, crest the top, then come back down again. Although the boy inside maintains a white knuckled grip on the safety rails the entire time, his mouth is open in a wide grin and his expression is that of pure joy.

On the second time up, the bucket begins to glow with an iridescent light. We watch as the light spreads outward from the bucket, bathing us in a wash of pure spirit mana. Its touch revitalizes us, restoring some of the precious mana we had used. It melts away the park's decay and brings color back to Henry Geller's Dreamworld. The remains of the Taeniid drones sizzle and dissolve under its glare. The light spreads out from the wheel and continues on to envelope the entire amusement park in its shimmering glow. The wail of police sirens dies away and the Unreal begin to return to the park in droves as if nothing untoward had happened.

Somewhere, deep in Henry Geller's Dreamworld, the monstrous Queen of the Taenia vents her fury. She senses our presence, and our victory, and she is afraid. If we can find her while the Dreamer's mind is thus occupied, before the dream ends, we can destroy her. Only then can Henry Geller begin the long process of repairing his psyche from the damage done by the Taenia.

For now, we watch Henry Geller revel in the fulfillment of his childhood dream. It is a small victory in the grand scheme of things but that doesn't make it any less important.

After a while, it is time for us to go. Time for the real work to begin.

The End