

On the Dream Realm

The dream realm is both very simple and very complex. Simply put, what can be dreamt exists in the dream realm: and thus the complexity. This treatise is meant as an introduction for those who are curious about the dream realm, as well as a primer for those people who wish to become dreamwalkers.

A couple of generalizations can be made about the dream realm:

While I would prefer not to disagree with my esteemed colleague, I must point out that Sleep spells in the dream realm will most assuredly kill you, and thus, the dream realm is 'real'.

- Nothing is real: it's all a reflection of people's dreams.
- Perspective/context is everything.
- Almost anything interesting you want to do in the dream realm requires a dream cord.
- The dream realm is dangerous.

Nothing is real: it's all a reflection of people's dreams.

Probably the hardest lesson to internalize is that the dream realm, while it may look like Areth, isn't. The dream realm is the collection of dreams of creatures of Areth, and thus is a reflection. What you may think is your friend in the dream realm may be your own dream, or your friend's dream, or a complete stranger's dream who also happens to know your friend.

Perspective is everything.

Because everything in the dream realm is the manifestation of someone's dream, then knowing who created the dream is probably the most important thing to know about a dream. Knowing this gives you a starting point to establish context, and from there, you can start making extrapolations. But given an incorrect starting point, all your subsequent conclusions will almost certainly be wrong.

Sometimes symbols can have multiple simultaneous meanings that are all valid.

Tygurclaw once gave a lecture called "when is a tree a tree?". If a follower of Kell dreams of a tree, then that tree may be Kell, or a Guardian, or a forest. But if someone who has no connection to Kell, knows no one who follows the path of Kell, etc, dreams of a tree, then it

might just be a literal tree. Given that, in the settlement of New Galen, there are many followers of Kell, it gets even more complicated: perhaps the tree is a follower of Kell, or perhaps it's just a tree, or perhaps it's a metaphor for something that grows. All of these are wildly different starting points, and there are more in-between.

Almost anything interesting you want to do in the dream realm requires a dream cord.

A dream cord represents almost nothing by itself: dream cords can be given to anyone. Similarly, a sword represents almost nothing: anyone can go out and buy a sword.

A dream cord is an anchor: since the dream realm is in constant flux, anyone not native to the dream realm would be swept away by the swirling nature of the realm. A dream cord anchors a person to Areth so that they are not lost. (Nightmares can use areth cords in a similar manner to walk the waking world.)

A properly-trained dreamwalker can exert their will on the dream realm and force a small bit of it to bend to their will. With further experience, they can do more and more complicated things: open a gate to the dream realm, freeze a bit of the dream realm into a room, create items out of dream stuff that will work in the waking world, etc.

To do so requires a substantial amount of mastery, and the first step in this mastery is attaining a dreamcord. Like in the mundane, anyone can train in becoming a weaponsmaster, and for many, the first step is mastering the sword. Merely being given a sword does not grant basic mastery of the sword, and so they are not well served by such in attaining their goal of becoming a weaponsmaster.

The dream realm is dangerous.

Not only what you can imagine is in the dream realm, but what you can imagine but cannot express is also in the dream realm. This, by itself, should be sufficient warning.

*Some nightmares throw
Sleep spells; others cast
them through weapons.
All nightmare weapons
will harm you.*

Hans Zim
Sondershausen Expedition
Alhadim

*Launce Islington,
dreamwalker.*