



NEVERMORE

**I ascended into a wordros realm,
Through waters dark and deep.
I came ashore where dreams do dwell,
And die...but I was not asleep.**

- Poesi, The Poet Prince

Nevermore is an ever-changing world where reason fades into the mists of slumber, and imagination emerges into a land of fanciful dreams and dreadful nightmares. It is a world where exotic and unpredictable encounters are as common as eddies swirling along a rocky shore. It is a realm of surreal landscapes awash with dramatic deeds and teeming with creatures both beautiful and bizarre.

Nevermore offers a plethora of possible and even improbable adventures for those who traverse its strange domains. It pushes its inhabitants and visitors beyond the mundane and into a fantastic realm of near boundless potential for both good and evil. Nevermore amplifies and accentuates, twists and skews and is a place where nothing remains the same for long.

NEVERMORE CAMPAIGNS

Nevermore assumes Narrators are using it as a fantasy campaign setting. However, the setting can be used for any genre or time period with a few tweaks of the background material. In light of this, the rules have been designed in such a way as to fit whatever genre and time period a Narrator sets his campaign in, whether it is Horror, Modern Fantasy, Future Fantasy or something else entirely.

Once a decision on genre and time period have been made, it is important to make the world live and breathe by developing the adventure hooks, story lines and subplots presented in this material into a unique vision of the dreamlands. Make sure from the moment the campaign starts that the players understand that this is not just another dream. Their actions have consequences for

the world around them as well as themselves. Nevermore should have real effects on those who adventure and invest themselves in it. Life and death should be just as genuine in the dreamlands as they are in the mortal world.

If using Nevermore in tandem with another setting, make sure the events within the dreamlands foreshadow those within the other world, grant hints to the main storyline or prove to be an integral part of foiling an adversary's plans. This is where the ingenuity of a Narrator is needed most; the occasional side-trek to Nevermore is all well and good, but it is of greater importance to find a way to incorporate these side-treks into the main plotline of a campaign and thereby create a tangible benefit to the players' successes within the world of Nevermore.

A SHORT HISTORY OF NEVERMORE

Nevermore was created for the fey as a refuge from the mortal world. Over untold years, it provided a place of rest and reverie for the fey, producing a golden age among them. However, envy entered the world with the sin of Queen Mab, and the seeds of discord she sowed thereafter fractured the fey into two conflicting courts. Open strife between the courts intensified as more and more fey shed their mortal coils, seeking a new life in lands unsullied by human hands. Nevermore's ground tasted blood for the first time during this Age of Rebirth, and what had been a sanctuary for the fey, now became a battlefield.

Centuries passed with neither side gaining advantage over the other, until humans and beasts fleeing a great flood in the mortal world entered Nevermore through the intercession of Poesi, Oberon's son. The advent of men created a clarion call among many of the fey for a war against the mortals. Seizing this opportunity, the Unseelie court convinced some of the Seelie court to join them and marched upon men. Angered by the infidelity of his children, Faehalig, the god of the fey, granted Poesi the power to summon forth the waters of forgetfulness. The waters released by the prince washed away the Unseelie army and lulled Nevermore into a long and wistful slumber.

No one knows how long this Forgotten Age lasted, but when the fogs of this era finally dissipated, the domain of the Wyrld surrounded the Heartlands of the fey, and within this new land,

mortals held power. Unable to destroy the humans through force of arms, the Unseelie sowed the seeds of strife in the hearts of men. They prepared the ground for war with subtle schemes and cunning intrigues, until one by one the mortals began to battle each other.

The world ignited in war and woe, forging the legends of the Age of Strife. During these centuries of struggle, many dreamlords rose and fell as vast armies were summoned from the mortal world. The age culminated in a terrible crucible of forty years, which brought the world to the verge of tearing itself apart. The revenge and madness marred the very essence of Nevermore, giving birth to the Dreadlands and the nightmares that torment the world. This era would have destroyed the mortals, and perhaps Nevermore itself, but as the dirge was nearing its last note, the sacrifice of Faehalig's son and the sound of a single child weeping for mercy amidst the cries for bloody revenge returned the land of dreams to its senses.

The blood of Menhalig and the tears of Mergia swept away the nightmares of the Age of Strife, and in their wake, two new domains were formed, the Hedge and the Eye. These places have become sanctuaries for the inhabitants of Nevermore in the new Age of Serenity. Unfortunately, the pool of peace has dried to its dregs, and enemies, both old and new, are preparing for a darker and more tumultuous age.

ARRIVAL

The dreaming is the most common way for mortals to enter Nevermore and can bring them just about anywhere in the world, from a quiet tavern in the Eye to the haunted mires of the Dreadlands. The dreaming can come as a daydream, a fainting spell or something else entirely. Consequently, there is a constant stream of mortals who flow into this wondrous world, and no two tales of their arrival are ever alike. Regardless of the pathway taken into this world, when the threshold is crossed, the awakened are filled with surreal energies and an innate knowledge that they are no longer in the mortal world.

Those who come to Nevermore via the summons have quite a different experience. Some summonses are peaceful affairs, while others are cold and cruel, but all reflect the nature of the dreamlord who makes them. Those who are summoned arrive at a place determined by the dreamlord and may be placed under the effects of a Suggestion to serve the summoner for up to seven cycles (Will save Difficulty 24 or power check Difficulty 36 to ignore for one cycle). Once these seven cycles have passed, the dreamlord decides whether to return the summoned back to the mortal world or allow them to remain in Nevermore. If the dreamlord chooses the former, the summoned immediately depart the dreamlands, but if the latter is chosen, the awakened mortals are free to remain in this world or leave it.

Nevermore may also be entered through dream doors. These are places where the veil between the mortal and dream worlds is the weakest. Dream doors can be anything from an old oak tree to a stone circle, but most are natural features. Some are unlocked under certain circumstances, while others are always open. Mortals

may pass through these portals without noticing and some of these dream doors only permit one way travel.

GYGLES

Due to the erratic nature of the heavenly bodies in this world, one cannot mark the passage of days with as much ease as can be done elsewhere. However, there is a stable unit of time within the ever-changing lands of Nevermore, and it is called the "cycle." Each cycle lasts for eight hours and has the following properties.

THE HOURS

The first hour of the cycle is called Burst and it is the most potent of all the hours of the cycle. Fresh dream energy flows freely, flooding into the realm and drenching all of its inhabitants with power. The first two hours, Burst (1st) and Gleam (2nd), are the most wondrous hours of the cycle and when Nevermore is most easily influenced. The hours of Shimmer (3rd), Flicker (4th), Pallor (5th) and Dim (6th), see an increased resistance to manipulation. During the last two hours, Murk (7th) and Gloom (8th), accidents and nightmarish creatures plague the land.

THE TURNING

The last minute of each cycle is known as the turning, and during this moment, the entire world of Nevermore undergoes an amazing transformation. The sky, the ground, even some of the inhabitants change, some slightly, others completely. Each domain is affected by the turning in its own way. In the Eye, the turning is hardly noticeable, whereas in the Wyrld it is a common

