LIBER SOMNIA - An RPG zine 25 years in the making!
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Dedicated with love to:
Mom & Dad, for always teaching me to follow my dreams

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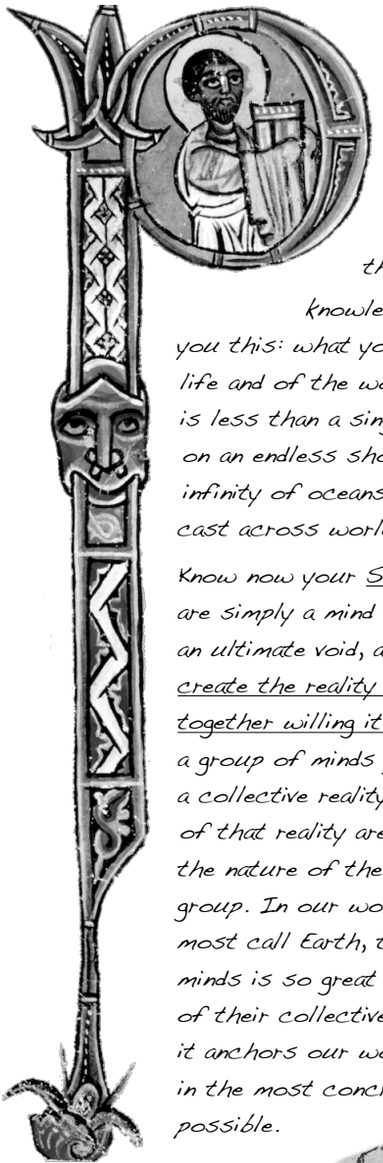
Special thanks to:
Diana Caprio
Jason Thompson

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Liber Somnia



A guide for every lucid dreamer who wishes to go further



In Dreams The True World

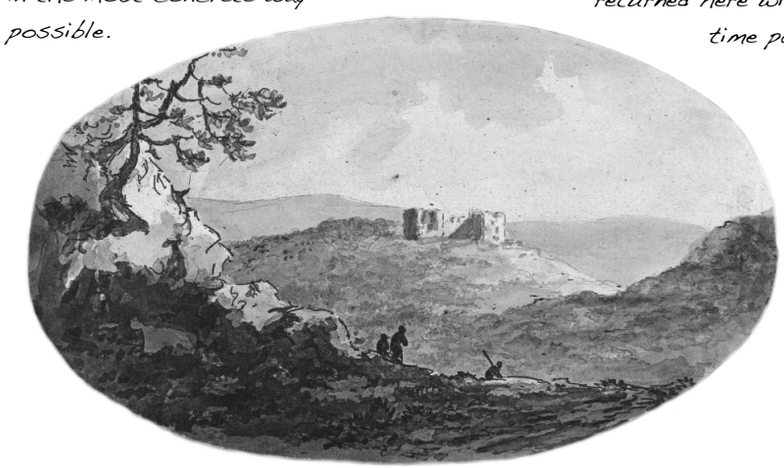
In this missive I pass unto you the truth of existence and the power that this knowledge brings. I tell you this: what you know of your life and of the world around you is less than a single grain of sand on an endless shore against an infinity of oceans upon oceans cast across worlds without end.

Know now your Self - that you are simply a mind drifting across an ultimate void, and that all minds create the reality we experience by together willing it into being. When a group of minds gathers it forms a collective reality, and the laws of that reality are determined by the nature of the minds in that group. In our world, the one that most call Earth, the number of minds is so great and the gravity of their collective so strong, that it anchors our world to its laws in the most concrete way possible.

But our minds abhor the false reality imposed upon them and prefer to create their own. Thus when we tire of the false world's bonds, we fall asleep to escape the Earth and flee into Dream.

Left to itself, every mind creates its own world, the Sphere of its desire. In Dream, there is no time, and in a Sphere there is no space; thus both space and time are infinite in dream spheres. In one's own sphere all things are possible and what one knows will shape all that is and all that will be.

As a lucid dreamer you may have experienced waking from a dream to feel that you have lived another life. This is likely so. In dream, your Sphere drifted up from the well of reality like a rising bubble until it escaped the pull of other minds and slipped into The Void Between Worlds. Your sphere then fell down to another world where you lived another life, then returned here with no time passing.



Dream Journal

Use this space to record the details of your dreams. You may need this information later.

Dream Persona

Write in base CON & SUB values; record actions taken with each & subtract costs to track balance

Conscious (CON) :			: (SUB) Subconscious

Describe your Self below, include as much detail as needed to determine SUB & CON costs

Archetype :

Describe your Sphere below, include as much detail as needed to determine SUB & CON costs

Sphere :

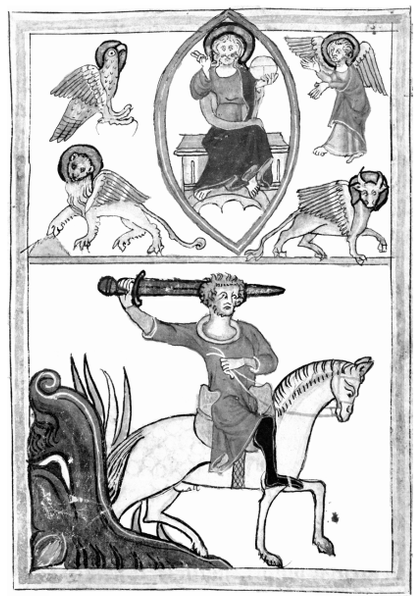
The Aspects Of The Mind

It can be said that everything which dreams has a mind - and that every mind finds its dreams. All minds have a dual nature, called the Conscious (CON) and Subconscious (SUB). The Conscious represents all your active thoughts and gives your mind direct control of its surroundings. The Subconscious contains the basest instincts of the mind, hides its deepest secrets, and provides it with defenses against attack. It can also be tapped as a source of inner strength in times of crisis.

The CON represents change and the SUB represents stasis, and a balance must be maintained between them - if one becomes too much weaker than the other the dream will end. When SUB is too weak, one will awaken on Earth; and if CON is depleted, one can no longer be lucid in the dream and will eventually forget all that happens.

Why is the mind this way? Perhaps it is the nature of mind to be at odds with itself, and this conflict is what creates dream. When CON is weak, SUB will try to take over for self-preservation, or to re-assert the reality the mind prefers to exist in, returning to its own Sphere.

A lucid dreamer uses their CON to create and control the dream - it is most powerful in its own Sphere, and it can also be used to travel into the Spheres of other minds or to other Realms or worlds that float in The Void Between Worlds. When events are not unfolding the way a dreamer desires they may change anything they wish in any manner they choose, but the greater the change, the more CON must be used. The exertion varies greatly but generally the more the change adheres to the inherent logic of a world, the easier it will be.



A dreamer uses CON to change their Self, influence a world or its events, or move to other Realms.

SUB resists all changes to the Self (including those you make with CON, though it is easier to change your Self than it is for others). SUB is inherent defense against any attack made against a dreamer - however, as with CON, if a certain type of attack will logically cause harm to your particular Self, your SUB will be much less effective at protecting you. SUB is a dreamer's defense and a source of inner strength that lies at the core of the Self.

On The Spheres Of Mind

Now that you understand the mind, you must next understand interaction of Spheres and the establishment of the Archetype of the Self.

When lucid dreamers gather in Dream, their Spheres join together and they determine by consensus how their collective reality operates. When one takes an action, the others determine how much their actions cost them (depending on others' interpretation of how Selves and Archetypes and Spheres interact).



The environment of a Sphere (a singular or collective one) is never fully formed. The dreamscape, the occupants, and the items in the world are mutable – but their interactions and existence will always follow the "rules" or dream logic of the Sphere. As the Sphere arises from the Self, so it can be said that each Self is the "Master" of the aspects of their Sphere and defines its logic. Each dreamer is responsible for describing their experiences and the events that occur in their Sphere and defining its logic for other dreamers.

One could consider an Archetype to be one's Self-image, or how one's mind believes its Self to be. Archetype is a description of the Self from physical and mental characteristics, to beliefs and motivations, to the inherent abilities a mind has – the things one's CON can accomplish most easily. While physical appearance can change greatly (especially if no one is watching and the Sphere permits the new form and the change) elements of the base Archetype are always present, and a mind will always revert to its base Archetype in the absence of other influences. The Archetype is truly the "essence" of the dreamer.

An Archetype can be said to mostly arise from the mind's CON, while the Sphere mostly arises from the mind's SUB, though aspects of CON and SUB run through both Archetype and Sphere.

An Archetype can change over a time as one gains experience in controlling and defining Spheres, or after learning new insights about one's Self. An Archetype could be forced to revert to an earlier version, if a large group of dreamers or a powerful dreamer remembers one's Archetype differently. It becomes very hard for a dreamer to maintain their persona while under a strong influence, be it from a Sphere or other dreamers.

A science fiction gunslinger will find it very difficult to "be" in a sword and sorcery world.

Recalling A Dream, Part Two

fantasy version of Japan where yo-kai and other legendary creatures are all real and commonplace.

DANNI: I'm going to play myself, but as a fugitive with psychic powers, and my Sphere is going to be an alternate Earth where there is a conspiracy between world governments to keep psychic powers secret and use them for their own ends.

ANNIE: Okay, so it sounds like me and Bob and Cin can combine our Spheres pretty easily, Danni, what do you think we should do to add yours into the mix?

DANNI: What if there are easy to use portals between the fantasy realm and the alternate Earth?

BOB: We could have the backstory be that Zardoz cast a forbidden spell that tore holes in realities and that broke open a portal to alt-Earth.

CIN: I like that idea; that way we can easily jump to Japan too.

ANNIE: All right! I'll kick things off… Luthien is riding his trusty steed and is heading towards a clearing in the forest, where he expects to meet his companions.

BOB: Zardoz arrived earliest, and awaits the group within a small henge of ancient stones, which he studies intently.

CIN: Stanley blinks in and says "Hello all!"

DANNI: Dream Danni is with Luthien, also riding a horse - Annie, would you agree that Luthien will protect me, since I'm a fish out of water in a mostly fantasy realm?

ANNIE: Absolutely, that makes perfect sense.

DANNI: Awesome. So I turn to Luthien and say "What is this place? Why did we come here?"

ANNIE: "This is a place of power. We can gather our strength here while we decide what our next move is."

BOB: "Well met Luthien and Danni. And you too, creature. Luthien is quite right, there is a power here, and ancient one. One that I can perhaps tap into."

CIN: Stanley blinks over to the top of a henge directly next to Zardoz. "Wizard, you may call me Stanley. I may walk on four legs most of the time instead of two, but I am just as stalwart a companion!"

BOB: "Harumph. Indeed. Though you ought to be careful where you step…" I want to use my CON to cause a small magical shock to emanate form the stone and zap Stanley.

CIN: Bob!

ANNIE: I'd say that's an Easy action for Zardoz.

DANNI: Yeah I agree, and kind of mean, as anticipated.

CIN: Ugh. Fine. Stanley lets out a yipe from the unexpected shock and blinks to the ground a few feet away. I'll take 1 point of SUB damage and lick my paws.

BOB: *chuckling*

ANNIE: "Enough of your foolishness wizard — look yonder! Some strange creature approaches with great speed!" Behind Zardoz, some kind of Monster is emerging from the treeline.

DANNI: "Oh no… it's the Agency!" It's a militarized black SUV bursting through the branches and knocking down small trees. "How did they get here? And how the heck did they get an SUV over from Earth??"

BOB: Zardoz grabs something from a pouch and begins to chant and gesture…

ANNIE: "Fear not Danni! Luthien The Bold will protect you!" Luthien spends CON to produce a magical lance that he can joust the SUV with.

CIN: That's going to have to be some lance and some skillful jousting. I'd say that's Hard.

DANNI: It might be Very Hard.

BOB: Zardoz's spell is one that will boost Luthien's strength and the speed of his mount.

ANNIE: Okay, so maybe both Zardoz and Luthien can perform a Hard CON action and share the cost?

DANNI: Works for me.

CIN: Ditto.

ANNIE: "To arms!!" Luthien charges forth at full tilt, his lance sparkling in the noonday sun, as the SUV races forward… his steed closes the distance, he levels the lance, thrusts it forward and his aim is true - it pierces the front of the SUV, crumpling the grill inwards and cracking the engine!

CIN: Agents spill out of the doors, tumble to the ground and draw guns. Stanley blinks onto the back of one of the agents and bites him, forcing him to drop his weapon.

DANNI: Average CON action.

BOB & ANNIE: Agreed!

TO BE CONTINUED…

Recalling A Dream

We Agreed To A Game

In a Dream, we agreed to a game. The game was to tell a story, and the rules of the story were that each of us would define one another with this structure:

"You have a NAME, you ARE this, and there's an AND"

One of the others defined me (I don't recall which) and I became the scientist and they gave my Self the calculator.

"Your name is Rivington, you are a cybernetically enhanced scientist from the future, and you have an atomic calculator"

I then defined The Second Person, but after I woke up I forgot everything about them.

"Your name is The Second Person, you are lost to all minds, and you aren't real"

Just as the third of us (who looked like a young television personality) was about to be defined, The Second Person informed him that the rules would be modified so that we would only define one aspect of the Self.

"Your name is Janesfield, you are a soldier, and you were shot an infinite number of times with a quantum bullet"

Janesfield tells us to ready ourselves as he passes out and falls away from a large military plane, while multiple versions of Janesfield's wounded body continued to fall out of the hole in the fuselage.

And then I woke up.

EXAMPLE OF PLAY -

Our players Alice, Bob, Cin, and Danni sit down to play, each with a copy of the DREAM PERSONA sheet. They first decide what length of game they would like to play by determining the strength of their dream selves, as reflected by the starting value of their base CON/SUB scores (which determines how much they can do in a dream), and the percentage of imbalance between CON/SUB they will allow. Players can agree upon any type of number system they like for these values and the costs of actions that can be taken with either score, but if you just want to get started quickly, you can use an exponential system as below:

Dreamer	Strength
Normal	25
Talented	50
Powerful	100
Legendary	200
-	-

Action	Cost
Simple	1
Average	2
Hard	4
Very hard	8
Epic	16

A group of Normal dreamers using this system and allowing for a CON/SUB imbalance of 50% would have a fairly short game, especially if they were not careful with the actions they take. After using CON for one Hard and one Very Hard action, a Normal dreamer would start having difficulty remaining lucid, and would potentially need to draw upon their inner strength by transferring their chosen number of points from SUB to CON. Usually this should only be done once per game session, and of course, it makes the dream persona more vulnerable.

ALICE: My dream persona's Archetype is a knight in glittering armor named Luthien, who defends the weak and innocent against evil. Luthien's Sphere is a land of sorcery with all the usual tropes.

BOB: I like fantasy, I'll make my persona a self-centered wizard named Zardoz, who's a seeker of forbidden knowledge. His Sphere is similar, but wizards are persecuted there.

CIN: I'll be playing a talking fox named Stanley, who also has extraordinarily good luck and the ability to "blink" (teleport quickly) around an area. My sphere is a

Traversing The Realms Of Dream



There are so many ways to move between Realms that it would be impossible to list them all in this finite document (unlike a dream document, which could list all things). You will surely discover many ways to traverse the Realms and the Void, but herein I will list the most common paths.

There are Sympathetic Pathways that you could take - for example, an encounter with a door of a particular size, or design, or color. Doorways and portals are the most common means of entry and exit between Realms, but they can be very difficult to find and sometimes very hard to open. A hole in the ground could lead to a place that resembles Hell. A ruined arch could transport you to a Realm that gathers the memories of a place that existed long ago yet is no more.

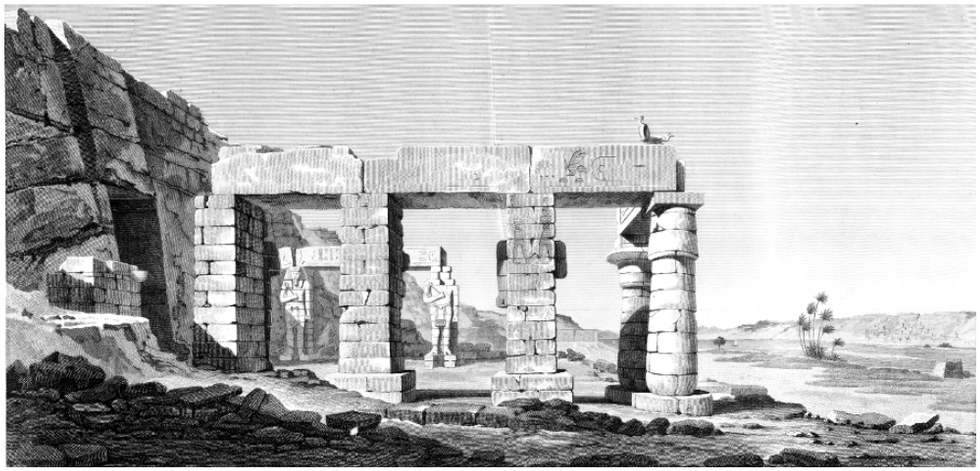
Another way to journey to another Realm is to encounter and employ a Guide. This method can unfortunately be more unreliable and troublesome, as a Guide may have their own agenda or may not truly want you to get to the place you seek. It is important to negotiate skillfully with a Guide prior to engaging their services, and to never give them their payment until you are certain you have reached the Realm you seek. As long as you have a thing the Guide wants, they will continue with you on your journey.

Cats tend to be excellent Guides, but they are, of course, cats... they can be fickle. Yet a friend to cats on Earth will find aid and succor from cats in Dream.

The most unknown Realms that lie deep within the furthest reaches of The Void Between Worlds can only be found by completing a Quest. A Quest is by far the hardest traversal to make, and could take many attempts over many lifetimes to complete. The worlds which can be found at the end of Quests are often very powerful Realms under the influence of an Ultimate Dreamer or some other entity or beings with powers beyond human comprehension. An ageless alien mind could create a Realm that exists solely to trap dreamers by drawing them in with the lure of completing a Quest and discovering a world undreamt of by other humans. It is impossible to know whether this could be true, as no one has returned from a Quest.



Somnia Imperii



You may ask yourself: does Xanadu exist? Can I reach unknown Kadath? The short answer is yes, all worlds that have ever been dreamt of exist somewhere in The Void Between Worlds. As with the Realm of Earth, other worlds that are dreamt of exist out there, and have varying degrees of "realness" based on the strength and number of dreamers that have ever or will ever dream of them. Many Empires Of Dream have risen and fallen since humanity first started to dream. The Void Between Worlds is littered with broken dreams.

The most active and most easily accessed Empires Of Dream are the collectives formed by the popular culture and mass media. These Realms are overflowing with superheroes, rogues and aliens from science fiction space operas, witches and wizards in magical worlds, spies and soldiers, fantasy heroes and the dungeon dwelling creatures they battle, and lost worlds of gigantic animals. Most who visit these Realms are not lucid dreamers, and it can be very difficult to change the dream logic of those worlds as they have established canon among many, but they can be fun to participate in.

The truly fascinating Empires Of Dream are the ones that can only be visited by lucid dreamers who pass the gates of deeper slumber. Usually these Realms have a ruler - most often an Ultimate Dreamer who has grown immensely powerful through their dreams and has succeeded in convincing other dreamers to join their Realm or otherwise visit it frequently.

If the ruler of an Empire Of Dream grows tired, or loses their strength in life or in Dream, their Realm will decay. The strength of an Empire Of Dream comes from the collective memory of those who recall it, and as those minds fade away so too does the glorious Realm. Rare is the Ultimate Dreamer who transcends life and death and rules their Empire Of Dream for eternity (as King Kuranes and Samuel have done).

Here There Be Dragons

It cannot be emphasized enough that you should use known pathways to move around as nakedly traversing The Void Between Worlds is not safe. The Void Between Worlds is an absolute infinite infinity which is outside of everything that dreamers have known or can ever know.

Look not into the abyss! For it is not empty, not truly. There are creatures that exist within... massive, bloated things that endlessly undulate, wading through the nothingness. Many of these things are utterly without form and cannot be compared to anything as they are like nothing else that has ever been known.

And they hunger. They strain dreamers through their teeth the way whales eat plankton. They digest minds. An encounter could easily drive one to total madness.

As terrifying as this is, it is unlikely that a dreamer will find themselves facing such things. A more common scenario would be to face one of the various Monsters that are native to Dream. These sorts of entities are more easily dealt with, though one must always take care if encountering such. Sometimes all you need to do to get rid of one is to answer a riddle.

Like dreamers, all Monsters have their own agendas and motivations, but obey a logic independent of Realm or Self.

They can take any form and hide their true nature. They can be parasites hoping to feed off of the ideas or thoughts or emotions dreamers generate. They could be dreamers from an alien world, hoping to unlock the secrets of those that are alien to them. A Monster could even be a former dreamer, twisted beyond all human recognition by horrible experiences that altered their nature. A Monster can even emerge from YOU, dear dreamer - from your Subconscious. SUB Monsters are the most difficult to face and defeat, but can be overcome with the aid of your companions.

