

## THE GUARDIAN OF THE GATE

An Everway scenario for 3-5 characters

### Basic Plot

The heroes follow the path out of the realm of Skylight. Perhaps Flame consults her book of maps and finds an old philosophy on the Lion fortune card. From his base at Leominster, he conquered the Greenfield valley and quite a few of the lands beyond. The empire has lasted 2000 years, though now is declining through benign neglect. No one follows the old martial ways very much except in Leominster and the state religion is widely ignored.

Names:

Male: Roar, Braveheart, Hunter, Sunheart, Leaper, Runner, Claw

Female: Stalker, Cubmother, Pouncer, Quickfeet, Goldenhair, Huntress

### The Plot

Prologue: The heroes d  
THE GUARDIAN OF THE GATE

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### Basic Plot

The heroes follow the path out of the realm of Skylight. Perhaps Flame consults her book of maps and finds another Gate (perhaps not - we don't want to make it too easy to find where the gate they destroyed leads to, and it would be implausible for one gate to be on the map when the other isn't). Alternatively, in a local town, they find a wise person who can point them towards a local gate. It leads to a realm called Stonedeep, but has been cut off for 100 years by a creature that has chosen to make its lair right on top of the gate. The players, aided by local townsfolk and any materials that come to hand, must come up with a way of killing or dislodging the creature to travel onwards.

## Plot Logistics

Walker - how to get him plausibly involved?

For this to work, heroes must have only one way out. Therefore, he must have arrived in one of three ways:

1. From the source of the Mist
2. From Bonekeep
3. Kidnapped by the Mist

1 and 2 are unsatisfactory, so 3 is the only option. Possibilities: character appeared in Old Worship Place just before the heroes shut off the gate. Or character appears somewhere else (NB magical) and wanders about in the dark for a bit. Depends on personality.

## Plot Holes/Leads

What is the creature?

Why has it chosen to live on top of a Gate?

What effect has the darkness had on it?

Why has no one been able to move it in 100 years?

What can the Heroes do about it?

Required features of the creature:

1. Solitary
2. Deadly - can kill any one human who goes through. Either hates humans or uses them for food (or reproduction? or as objets d'art? or playthings? or sacrifices?).
3. Long-lived.

4. Wants to stick by the gate: a) a source of magic, b) waiting for something to come through, c) trying to get through itself, d) source of food, e) religious significance

Solution 1: The creature is a dragon. Relationship to Tempest?

Possibly most interesting - local wise person could turn out to be a sphere-walking(?) scholar who studies dragons (if so, he knows where the Shadow Gate leads to). Could explain about dragon families and habits. Could also create an interesting situation if Tempest is involved...

Possibility 1: Dragon is Tempest's father or elder sibling. Calls on Tempest to defend him/her if the heroes prove a nuisance.

Possibility 2: Dragon is from a tribe opposed to Tempest's, but is too big for Tempest to take on in one-to-one combat. Trickery and an attack from Tempest might win the day. Problem with this is that Tempest must be involved in the scenario.

Why is dragon lairing by gate? Answer: It's waiting for an enemy dragon to come through. Say the one that the Awakener turns into... That means it must be opposed to red, making it a blue dragon like Tempest. Or perhaps it's a white - white dragons could employ human agents, such as the one that killed Tempest's mother, and could also spell the humans into remaining nearby, thus providing a ready food supply (on the other hand, blues could do this as well by providing beautiful dreams).

NB: Dragon (call it Raging Water) arriving causes the degradation that eventually leads to the Awakener turning up. I rather like this, but it doesn't really make any sense. Unless Raging Water knew how her enemy would react... why did the Awakener want a bride anyway? Associated with Death and transformation, which is interesting in itself... linked to the split between Change and Stasis? Certainly symbolically - the Awakener is only complete when its dragon/human aspects are together. Suppose the dragon got split at the same time? The awakener has been looking for his human half ever since.

Why didn't Raging Water simply go through the gate herself? 1. She wanted to lay a trap. 2. She couldn't - Gate too small or something.

I think Raging Water is rather mad, and very unhappy. Anyone who attempts to share her mind is going to experience her feelings. Why? Because she once loved the Awakener before he got split? Yes - see the Dragons story.

So the situation... Raging Water is sitting on the gate, waiting for the Awakener to show up. Is it a

coincidence that he does so just as the heroes arrive? Surely not:

Possibilities:

1. Alurax has tipped the Awakener off. Why? Because Alurax wanted Tempest to meet the Awakener? Because Alurax wanted to create a show-down between the Awakener and Raging Water/Tempest?

2. The heroes act as a lode-stone, attracting the Awakener to Bonekeep. How? Alurax still involved - he put Tempest into the realm with Raging Water. A test of Tempest - is he the long sought-after red-blue hybrid who could father the perfect dragon? This would also explain why the Awakener was tipped off - another test. Alurax might also want to break up Raging Water's cosy relationship with the townsfolk of Sweet Dreams. Alurax will have no love for his half-brother (being, perhaps, consumed with jealousy that the Awakener escaped the curse that fell on him).

The Realm of Sweetwater

Virtue: The Lion (Body Prevails)

The people are strong and work hard. They can resist pain and suffering better than most. The lion is the symbol of the land (Leominster is the capital town).

Flaw: Peasant rev. (Lack of Vision)

The people lack the imagination to see a better way of living. Raging Water makes use of this, supplying the dreams that the people lack.

Fate: Striking the Dragon's Tail (Underestimating the Challenge/Recognising the Larger Problem)

If the people can be persuaded to act against Raging Water, will they underestimate her power, or will they be able to drive her away?

The Land: A valley of flowing rivers. Water is plentiful and always drinkable. The sea (5 days journey to the west) consists of fresh water, not salt. The Greenfield valley is, as its name suggests, extremely fertile. The weather is generally dry and sunny, but cold in winter. Wood is in short supply - dried cow dung is used for heating.

The People: A mixture of races, with deep brown/black people predominating. Both sexes wear long brown robes, cinched at the waist with leather belts, with leather caps for the men and veils for the women. The men have long uncut beards.

Craft: Tools are of stone or iron with the occasional wooden component. About half the people are

farmers (traditionally the women look after the cows, hence the veils to keep the flies off).

Tamed Animals: Chickens (mostly eaten), dogs, goats, cows. No horses.

Deities: There is a formal religion based around Leos, the Lion God, who embodies the aspects of the Lion fortune card. Most people do not take this very seriously, however, worshipping their own native gods. The Lion God represents the sun - the Silver Fish is his nemesis, and while it is not actively evil, it represents qualities - pliability, lurking in shadows - which are not to be admired.

Rule: Sweetwater is ruled by King Lionheart XXIVth, the descendent of the legendary Lionheart who founded the realm. The descent passes through the female line, with aspiring consorts having to undergo a trial of strength before admittance into the family (the same applies to those who would work for the civil service or the army). Sweet Dreams is governed by a council made up of the heads of the major families.

History: The realm was founded by Lionheart, a leader who based hecide what to do next; they can help the villagers rebuild their lives after the Darkness (they won't get much thanks), or perhaps they consult Flame's book of maps. If they hang around, Wrath will get bored and fly off. Simon's character turns up, having been kidnapped by the darkness just before the heroes managed to destroy the Gate. Ultimately, there's only one way out of the valley.

Progress: The heroes travel through the mountains for several days, following a disused trading route. There are milestones with a rampant lion on them and occasional abandoned buildings that may once have been inns. An eagle soars overhead - perhaps they see a figure in white watching them from a distant hilltop? I think so - s/he's using binoculars, though the heroes are unlikely to find this out. If Jason tries to send the eagle to investigate, the figure disappears, much to the bird's puzzlement.

Eventually, the heroes reach the Tumblefalls, a 600 foot cascade that descends the upper rim of a mountain valley. The road follows a steep and perilous switchback. A day later, they arrive at Mirror Lake, a perfect mountain tarn that reflects the mountains around it. They may be able to persuade a fisherman to take them to Laketown.

Interaction: The people of Laketown are reserved frontier types, but a few beers in the inn will loosen tongues. The oldest inhabitants will remember that in their grandfathers' time, there was trade with Stonedeep via a gate in the Spires, a group of rocks two days journey to the south west. The trade (ceramics and perfumes for furs and fish) stopped because a monster came to live in the spires which killed any who went there. Curiously, there is no clear description of the creature - some say it is a dragon, others that it is a serpent, others that it is a giant, others a gryphon. King Lionheart XXIst ("im as 'ad that fair-haired Esmerelda for a queen. Right beauty she was, so my grandpappy used to say") sent a group of his bravest knights out to deal with it, but they were never heard of again. The people of Sweet Dreams will know more, living right by the Spires as they do - "right bunch of nutters" is the general consensus about them.

If the heroes think to ask about the darkness, they will discover that none of the people round here experienced it. Curious...

Progress: The heroes journey to Sweet Dreams without incident. Sweet Dreams is a town that has clearly seen better days. Many of the buildings are ruined and no one has made any attempt to clear the rubble. Primitive shacks are built against what remains of the city walls.

Interaction: The heroes encounter Prydar Roar Runnerson, the local priest of the cult of Leos. He is appalled at the way the people casually accept their fate, which he naturally ascribes to lack of faith. If the heroes persist, they will find that Runnerson has amassed quite a dossier of information on the Guardian of the Gate. He knows it to be a blue dragon - it has poisonous venom and uses its imaging ability to paralyse its prey. He also knows the story of the foretelling of the coming of the dragon by a woman fleeing through the town calling herself the Awakener. She claimed that the dragon was after her and her husband (actual words: "other half"), though she didn't elaborate on why. She disappeared towards the Spires and was never seen again.

Action: That night, the heroes have beautiful dreams (get the players to describe them). If any of them manage to keep awake, they may get a first encounter with Raging Water.

Decisions: The heroes must decide what their priorities are. Help the townsfolk or just get through the gate? Also, what to do next? Investigate the Spires or seek more information in the town?

Interaction: If the heroes decide to stay in the town, they can meet Render Gateguard. He is the nearest thing that the town has to a mayor, and he longs to bring back the glory days when the town was prosperous. If the heroes can convince him that they can destroy or send the dragon away, he will eagerly help them with the meagre resources at his command.

Progress: If the heroes decide to investigate the Spires, they encounter Raging Water's sendings. If Raging Water has just eaten she is unlikely to attack them directly, but the heroes (especially Slight and Jason) are assailed by powerful turbulent images of wild storms, sisterly affection turned to hate, patricide, jealousy and aching love. All these images are seen in terms of the past histories of the characters. The images become overwhelming as the heroes approach the gate. They may encounter long-rusted bits of armour in one of the more toxic regions.

Decisions: How are the heroes going to deal with the Guardian? Do they try to lure it away and make a dash for the gate? Or tackle it head on, perhaps with the assistance of the townsfolk?

Climax and Resolution: Armed (hopefully) with a plan, the heroes return to the gate. Perhaps Slight creates an illusion of the woman who called herself the Awakener which Jason can send to Raging Water. Perhaps Rathgard and Flame organise a physical assault. Perhaps they try poisoned meat, or persuading the people to abandon Sweet Dreams. Perhaps they try to get Tempest involved... However they do it, the plan is unlikely to result in Raging Water's death. The most probable ending is a frantic dash for the gate, pursued by a vengeful and thoroughly enraged dragon...

The Town of Sweet Dreams

Virtue: Inspiration (Creativity)

Flaw: Priestess rev. (Impracticality)

Fate: Spring (New Life/Stagnation)

Land: Sweet Dreams stands slightly above the Greenfield Valley on a rocky plateau where the soil is relatively infertile. In addition, the dragon's venom has rendered patches of land unworkable.

The town is a mixture of styles. The older houses that still stand were once grand edifices of stone, as are the main street and the central square, where a long-dead fountain marks the town centre. There are some smaller wooden houses from about 150 years ago, and the most recent dwellings are shacks around the city wall. The town itself is full of rubble, rubbish and dirt that the people cannot be bothered to move. It stinks to high heaven, and is infested with vermin.

People: More of a mixture of types than in most towns in Sweetwater, but all share the common affliction of poverty. Clothes are ragged, bodies are wasted. The diseases that come with poverty - smallpox, boils, TB, rashes, gangrene, tooth decay - are much in evidence. Naked children play in the street.

Craft: A disproportionate number of people are artists and poets - they have come from all over the realm and beyond because of the dreams which help their work. Dream diviners are much in evidence. There are relatively few farmers as the surrounding land is too dangerous. The only notable indigenous trade is sweetmeat manufacture, including a particularly horrible form of toffee, which is the nearest that the locals can get to the sweets from the Land of the Fat People.

Tamed Animals: Chickens and pigs wander wild through the town, and mangy, semi-feral cats and dogs scrape a living on vermin and scraps.

Deities: As elsewhere, the official cult of Leos is widely ignored. A folk religion has arisen around "the Sender of Dreams", a sandman-like figure who supposedly rules the world of dreams and opens gates to allow people to enter it. When people disappear, they have crossed forever into the Land of Dreams.

Rule: Sweet Dreams is too anarchic a place to have a proper ruler - the heads of the Riverrunner, Gateguard and Potter families have the most authority.

History: Sweet Dreams (originally Sweet Water Crossing) was founded several centuries ago on what was then a thriving trade route to Stonedeep, as well as to the north via Mirrortown and Skylight to the mountain kingdoms beyond. The latter dried up a couple of centuries ago when the mountain tribes were wiped out by plague and the little trade that remains consists of furs and fish from Mirrortown. With the coming of the dragon, even this trade has tended to go downriver to Rushford, leaving Sweet Dreams with no visible means of support. Strangely, however, the people that remain seem very happy to live there...

Connections: The older inhabitants of the village remember the link with Stonedeep, and tales are still told of the time when a Bell-walker performed in the town. The Basahn are also remembered, though not with affection.

People:

Roar Runnerson

Appearance: First seen outside his church, standing on a stone and haranguing the passersby. Thick black curly hair, cut high over the ears and long at the back, thick black eyebrows, great beaky nose, thick curly beard that is not as cleanly as it could be. Lion-yellow robes with muddy stains where the local youths hit him with mudballs. Lion symbol on sleeves and on the strip of cloth that runs around his neck and down to his waist.

Character: Inclined to get a little rabid at times. Convinced that unless the people turn away from the "beast at the gate" and back to the reality of Leos, the town is doomed. Obviously he wants people to convert to the cult of Leos and he is a little unrealistic in this expectation, as the heroes may discover. Like most fanatics he has no sense of humour.

What he knows:

The Sender of Dreams is a monster that lives in the Spires close to the Gate to Stonedeep. It arrived about 100 years ago.

Just before it came, a woman arrived in the town. She was travel-stained and weary, and called herself the Awakener. She said that she and her husband were pursued by "the Raging Waters" and that she could not stay. Her husband was lost and she was looking for him. Why "the Raging Waters" was pursuing them she did not know, nor could she explain who her pursuer was, but she made it clear that it would have no interest in the town. After a brief rest in the inn she asked the way to the Spire Gate and set off for it, refusing all other offers of help. She was never seen again. Shortly after, the monster arrived.

No-one goes to the Spires any more. Those who have tried either do not come back at all or report that they suffered from disturbing and frightening visions.

Soon after the beast appeared, the people of Sweetwater Crossing (as it was known then) asked for protection from the Lion King. He sent a crack troop of 24 knights who rode to the Spires and were never seen again. No further attempt has been made to dislodge the creature by force since then.

At about the time that the creature arrived, the people of Sweetwater Crossing started to have pleasant dreams - of growing rich, of success in love, of fame and fortune. Many people, particularly those of a poetic temperament, have moved to the city because of them in the hope of inspiration.

People disappear regularly from Sweet Dreams and its surroundings - sometimes as many as two or three a month. Most of the outlying farms have been abandoned. People have been taken from within the city itself - the dreams when this happens are particularly intense. Holes have been knocked in the walls; Runnerson has measured them, and has concluded that the creature is at least as large as a house.

The creature is venomous, and the poison is long-lasting. Living things that come into contact with it blacken and die. There are a couple of patches in the city.

[This will only be revealed if the heroes insist. Rathgard will be able to spot a direct lie.] Roarson has done extensive research in the library of Leominster and the library in the town hall amongst books from other spheres, and has strongly suspects that the creature is a blue dragon. He knows the story of the dragons' rebellion - a Basahni storyteller called Dryskin related the tale and a townsman (Sweet Tooth Pastryman) wrote it down in an autobiography. The reference to blue dragons was in a book of spell ingredients, wherein it was stated that a blue dragon's blood made the most powerful love potion known, but that acquiring it was difficult as the creature put forth such powerful illusions that it was difficult of approach. The blood was also poisonous unless prepared very carefully. The book was by one Wormwood Crookstaff, of Everway. [If the heroes think to look in the library, they may well find this book and note that a page in the section on dragons has been torn out.]

### Render Gateguard

**Appearance:** One of the few people who still makes an attempt to attend to their personal appearance. His long white hair is tied back and his beard is combed. His clothing is faded and patched but of good quality cloth. He carries a metal-tipped spear and walks with aloof dignity, despite the jeers of the urchins in the street.

**Character:** Regarded as an eccentric by the rest of the town, Render continues to take the guardian duties of his family seriously, upholding what remains of the law. He is acutely aware of his family's great and glorious history and is proud of his town. He is, of course, dismayed by the ruin into which it has sunk. His chief goal in life is to restore the town to its former glory - he agrees with Runnerson that the creature at the Gate is the cause of the downfall and is highly frustrated that there is nothing he can do. He has an extensive family - his wife (Quickfeet Goldensdaughter) is as impressive as he is - and his ten sons and daughters (with one or two exceptions) can be bullied by him into doing things.

### What he knows:

Knows the history of Sweetwater Crossing and has a number of tales of its glory days - of the bell dancer Chime Number Three from the Glorious Empire who performed in the town square; of the lying, thieving Basahni who would trade what seemed like magical items which turned to dust and ashes as soon as they gone; of kuful, an exquisite ice cream from the Land of the Fat People in the realm beyond Stonedeep; of the cockatrice which once came through the Gate and which was

killed by his great-great grandfather; of the great mage Earthshaker, who passed through on his way to take over Everway but who mysteriously disappeared when he got there; and many others.

The Spire Gate led to a realm called Stonedeep, a valley kingdom famous for its pottery and ceramics. Across the sea was another Gate to the realm of the Fat People, from which it was said that Everway could be easily reached.

He has the key to the town armoury, wherein are a number of rusty swords, halberds, shields, bows, helmets, metal breastplates and even a small catapult. Other items may be there, depending on a draw from the Fortune pack.

He can direct the heroes to Roar Runnerson if they haven't met him yet. Roar hasn't told him what he thinks the creature is.

#### Other Characters:

**Madame Zoraster:** One of the most notable dream interpreters, she also does card readings for a small fee. A large woman with a handkerchief tied round her head, she is an archetypal gypsy. She claims to have Basahn blood (which is probably true) and that this makes all her predictions come true.

**Cloudreader:** A poet. Considers the Sender of Dreams to be the greatest gift ever bestowed on humanity, after his own talent of course. His poems are random collections of abstract words: "Loving in the dimensions of wonder... walking in the recesses of the transubstantial organum... an awakening mystery that burns, burns with azure beauty like the floating earth... and, in this moment of ecstasy, I see... the divine effluorescence of the eternal transmutation..." etc etc etc. Young, handsome in a pinched sort of way, and full of himself. Ungraciously offers the heroes a poem in return for food.

**Cubmother Swiftsdaughter:** She has recently lost her daughter, the comely Silentstalker, to the Sender of Dreams. The heroes may be surprised by how philosophically she has taken it - "if you are in the wrong place at the wrong time you're going to die, so why worry about it? There's nothing you can do." This is in fact a widespread attitude in the town. Silentstalker's boyfriend, Sunheart Maneson, has not responded so calmly and may beg the heroes to do something.

#### The Spires

The Spires are reached after a day-long trek over desolate, heath-like countryside. Near the town are a number of rotting farms, long abandoned, and the remains of an irrigation system. Beyond, the country becomes semi-arid thorn scrub and the tall grey spikes of the Spires appear on the horizon. Animal life is relatively sparse - any that Jason manages to make contact with tells him to keep away from the Spires, because a big carnivore lives there. The local wildlife thinks that it's a

giant lizard of some sort.

The Spires themselves are 400' high sheer spikes of granite, sticking improbably out of the flat plain. The country around them is utterly desolate and very quiet. Jason will start to detect the sendings from two to three miles away; the others detect them sooner or later depending on their Water scores.

The sendings consist of distracting images in the head [if Jason asks, they are similar to Tempest's images]. They in no way impede perception of one's surroundings, but they make it hard to concentrate on what's going on. The images have the disconnected quality of dreams; random bits of past experiences combined with new but infuriatingly vague visions. Jason cannot push past these to connect with their author.

As the heroes approach the Spires, the procession of images becomes more and more disturbing and more and more distracting:

Rathgard has images of his sea journey to Caer Gloria. Only this time he's following someone, someone he wants to meet very, very badly. He/she's in the ship ahead, and Rathgard is manipulating the weather so that his ship will catch up. The weather turns progressively nastier, the waves higher and more tumultuous. Rathgard tries to control them, but every attempt to calm the storm makes the waves rise higher, the rain come down faster. Ahead, the ship containing the man (yes, it's a man) streaks into a tunnel of water and vanishes out of sight. Around him, his companions are swept out out to sea one by one, their faces bulging as they drown, their eyes turned accusingly towards him. Then the ship starts to break up...

Jason is back in his home village, surveying the devastation wreaked by the scorpion tribe. He finds the burned body in his father's hut... and as he looks, it moves, gets up, and starts to speak in a whispery voice. It tells him that the leader of the scorpion people is in fact the wife of the king; she's the one responsible. She and all her offspring must be destroyed... Later, with his revenge in full swing, he catches sight of her across a battlefield full of sickening, dying soldiers, infested with lice and tapeworms, stung by bees, mauled by lions. He unleashes his forces on her, but she is strong; she throws off the lions, bats away the bees and finally pins him to the ground. Then he sees that she is staggeringly beautiful. He snarls his rage and defiance at her, repeating all the things his father said, and she answers with sweet reason, showing why his father must be wrong. Hatred starts to turn to love...

Slight is conjuring. He creates an image of himself, a brother, and together they go hunting. The quarry is cunning; a master of illusions, almost as good as Slight himself. Over several worlds the hunt continues; the illusions become grander and grander and more and more dangerous, cliffs disguised as flat ground, poison disguised as pure water, volcanoes masquerading as cool baths. Slight and his brother must use the natives like sheep on a minefield, tripping the illusions before they can harm. At length, they trap their quarry in a seven-fold illusion, and it tumbles to its doom. As they approach the smashed and bloody body, the final illusion is stripped away, and the quarry is revealed Slight's own father. And Slight realises that he knew this all along.

Flame is fighting with her sister. It's a vicious fight, over a boy in the Phoenix Caves. He's had to leave and they both want to follow him. But Flame knows that she's the one he really likes and that her sister is deluding herself, getting in her way, as she's done throughout her life. Recently they've done something together to help the boy, killing the one who drove him out of the cave, and now they are fighting for who gets to go after him. The fight gets extremely unpleasant - both hurl insults and balls of lava at one another - trees are set on fire, rocks are pulverised. Eventually Flame wins, forcing her to the ground and making her admit defeat. But something is irretrievably gone - a family tie is broken.

Walker sees his beloved brought back to life, as bright and beautiful as ever. He's on a soft padded boat, drifting with her down a slow-moving river. It's warm; the sun is shining, the sky is blue, willows are weeping into the river on either side, the grass is green, roses are blooming on the banks, birds are singing, butterflies are fluttering, pollen is drifting through the sunbeams. Then the sky darkens and the wind turns chill. From the river his father emerges, dripping wet and naked. He climbs into the boat, gibbering nonsense all the time, then draws a sword from nowhere and slices the beloved in two from top to bottom. The bifurcated halves slip and slide out of the boat and make for opposite banks, trailing clouds of blood.

## Raging Water

Air 2

Earth 7

Fire 7

Water 9

Powers:

Size (7)

30' long, of which one third is tail. 10' high at the shoulder. Her scales count as plate mail armour. Her only vulnerable point is her eyes - it is possible to reach down through the eye socket and pull out the Life Crystal that all dragons have embedded in their heads. This will kill her immediately.

Immunities (7)

Psychic intrusion (8), Poison

Venom (7)

This is a poisonous mist that RW breathes when threatened. There are patches of it all over the Spires (Strength 2-3). It covers a 30' cone in front of her. Earth vs RW's Fire score: Lose Fire - Earth (modified by Fortune card and distance) from Earth. If it falls below 1, the poison is deadly.

Bestow Visions (9)

Visions cause Distraction (Water vs Water + Fortune card - distance modifiers) - subtract difference from Water score. If it falls below 0, the character is completely within the vision and cannot see the real world. The visions can then start to have deadly effects.

The visions are in fact projections of Raging Waters' own crazed mind. These projections enter the minds of people and creatures at the subconscious level and are perceived consciously through the mind's normal reality filter. Thus RW's kin relationships are translated into the kin relationships of the players or their nearest equivalent. The link is to a certain extent two-way - strong emotional concerns of the characters are perceived by RW and reflected back.

Consequences:

1. The number of people in range has no effect on RW's powers, but it is perfectly possible to distract her by having large numbers of people thinking strong emotional thoughts at once.
2. People with similar emotional concerns could end up linked - RW perceives both and reflects one at the other.
3. The visions are not illusions. It is not possible to "disbelieve" them. Casting illusions against RW using Water-based magic is unlikely to work.
4. Meditation and concentration on foci may help to combat the visions but won't make it any easier to take on RW in combat.
5. RW can be talked to by creating images in which she is likely to take an interest. Only images of

solid, real things work - a dragon mind is too alien for abstract notions such as question, love etc to work.

6. The images are not as effective against animals, which have less imagination. Nonetheless, no animal will want to go near RW as it will find the sudden changes in its emotional state alarming. Entering the mind of an animal (especially if it is focussed on one primary object, such as food) would be an effective way of getting a look at RW.

Distance Modifiers:

Point blank (0-10')	None
Near (10-30')	-1
Medium (30-100')	-2
Far (100' +)	-2 -1 per 100'

Motive: Beauty

Virtue: The Fish (Soul Prevails)

Flaw: Dragon Rev. (Blind Fury)

Fate: War (Great Effort vs Effort Misspent)

Appearance: Raging Water is difficult to see because of the distracting effects of the visions. She appears sometimes as a classic wingless dragon with shiny cobalt blue scales, sometimes (to humans) as a tall elegant woman with long black hair and a blue dress. All views of her are shimmery and hazy as if seen underwater.

Personality: Imagine a god gone mad. RW's chief gift is also her curse - she experiences the subconscious wishes and dreams of everyone in a thirty mile radius, and this unending bombardment combined with her own dramatic back history and a dragon's alien mind give her actions and thoughts the appearance of madness. Her mind is a seething stew in which various ingredients bubble to the surface at various times. Amongst these ingredients are: memories, especially of the betrayal by and murder of her father and the fight with her sister; love and lust for the Awakener combined with hatred of the human woman that he seems besotted by; hunger and thirst; the counsel of patience suggested by Alurax; and existential despair at the cruelty and meaninglessness of existence.

## Defeating Raging Water

Basically, anything imaginative will work, at least to some extent. Tempest could be used as a Deus Ex Machina.

1. Physical Assault: This will take some ingenuity, as anyone with a low Water score will get lost in visions. Attack from a distance is the best approach - the catapult in Sweet Dreams could be used, but is unlikely to kill unless the wielder is very lucky. Help would be needed from the townsfolk.
2. Assault from above: Jason may try to make use of his vision to attack RW through her eye. This will work if he can get close enough - however, his low Water score makes this unlikely. The best chance is to jump on RW's back as she is passing down Spire Gorge.
3. Trickery: A deep hole in the ground would work as Raging Water cannot fly, but she would need to be lured into it (her eyesight is not very good). A highly effective strategy would be for Slight to create an illusion of the woman called the Awakener coming through the gate. Whilst RW would not be distracted for more than a few moments, an opportunity would be created.
4. Distraction: This is likely to be the most effective technique, but is obviously not a long-term solution. Again, assistance from the townsfolk would be useful.
5. The "Astral Plain": Since the astral plain is effectively a vision that Tempest generates for Wrath, action on the astral plain is likely to involve a battle between Tempest and Raging Water. Tempest is unlikely to win this on his own. RW's visions become disturbingly real and distinct.

What does Tempest think of his aunt? He will recognise her, of course, and she will recognise him. His mother hated her sister, so he will be inclined to move against her, particularly if she expresses contempt at her sister's choice of mate. On the other hand, he might feel sorry for her and decide to help. Tempest and RW doing a deal would be a Deus Ex Machina that could be used in an emergency. Tempest certainly isn't going to want to attack her physically.

## The Gate and the Aftermath

The Gate is a small triangular-shaped hole at the back of the cave in which RW habitually lairs. If RW is in residence, finding it will be almost impossible - the heroes will have to search the visions she gives them for a triangle of blackness. It will be in a different place for each hero.

Round the gate and outside the cave are signs of human habitation - torches in the walls, soot marks on the roof, the remains of barracks and guard posts, a mule corral (animals do not like to travel through gates).

RW cannot and will not follow them down the Gate if the heroes escape her that way - she will however eventually get to Bonekeep by other methods. Hopefully just in time to turn up for the finale...

Any hero looking behind them as they travel the Silver Path will see a huge dragon eye glaring balefully at them.

If by some chance the heroes do manage to kill RW, Sweet Dreams will wake up from its collective trance. The heroes should not expect thanks from most of the townsfolk, however. A few enterprising souls will suggest re-opening the trade route to Stonedeeep and guess who they'll ask to scout the way...

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