

444

This game is written by Ben Wright.

http://stores.lulu.com/chthonic_games

<http://chthonic.150m.com>

Released under the Creative Commons Attribution-Non-Commercial-Share Alike 2.0 UK: England & Wales Licence.

Images not drawn by the author are available under Creative Commons licenses, to find the original and its creator follow the link accompanying the image.

As the goal of the GM is to erode the sanity of the players, my goal in writing this game is to erode the sanity of GMs reading it.

Sweet dreams.

444

FOR ALL OF MY LIFE, SOMETIMES I HAVE THESE WEIRD DREAMS.

I CAN NEVER REMEMBER MUCH ABOUT THEM AT TIMES LIKE THIS, BUT IN THOSE MOMENT JUST AFTER I WAKE UP THEY ARE INCREDIBLY VIVID- MORE VIVID, IN FACT, THEN THE REAL WORLD.

I WILL LIE AWAKE, MY MIND A JUMBLE OF FRAGMENTS OF THE DREAM AND NORMAL MORNING CONCERNS. IT'S NOT JUST THAT BOTH ARE IN MY MIND; I SIMPLY CANNOT DISTINGUISH BETWEEN THE TWO.

PERFORMING NORMAL MORNING ABLUTIONS HELPS A LITTLE, BUT EVEN AS I BRUSH MY TEETH OR WASH MY FACE WHENEVER I TRY TO PLAN THE REST OF MY DAY, PRIORITIES AND FACTS FROM THE DREAM ENCROACH INTO MY THOUGHT PROCESSES.

IT'S NOT THAT I'M STILL SLEEPY. AS SOON AS THE COLD WATER HITS MY FACE I AM PROPERLY AWAKE AND COHERENT. IT'S JUST THAT THE DREAM ITSELF IS OVERLAID ON MY MIND. I FEEL AS IF I CAN ALMOST TAKE A STEP IN A CERTAIN DIRECTION AND BE BACK IN THAT DREAM WHERE I LEFT OFF.

IT PERSISTS, AFTER A FASHION, FOR MOST OF THE DAY. SPECIFICS MAY VANISH WITHIN THE FIRST FEW MOMENTS, BUT THE TASTE OF IT SOMEHOW STAYS WITH ME. WHENEVER I AM ABOUT TO SETTLE TO A NEW TASK, THERE WILL BE A NAGGING FEELING THAT THERE IS SOMETHING IMPORTANT I HAVE FORGOTTEN, AND THAT THE REAL WORLD I AM DEALING WITH ONLY A TEMPORARY DISTRACTION.

NEEDLESS TO SAY, SUCH DAYS RARELY GO WELL.

BUT SO VIVID ARE THESE DREAMS, AND SO SIGNIFICANT IS THEIR IMPACT, THAT I CANNOT SIMPLY DISMISS THEM FROM MY MIND WHEN THEY ARE INCONVENIENT. AND I WONDER IF, IN THAT OTHER WORLD, THE REAL ME IS CONFINED TO AN INSTITUTION, LOST IN A DELUSION THAT MATCHES THE WORLD I THINK I INHABIT.

ZHUANGZI'S BUTTERFLY, DRAWN IN BLOOD.