

WANDERING THE WAYS

AN UNOFFICIAL GUIDE TO THE INFINITE PATHS OF THE NEVERNEVER

FOREWORD

Welcome to **WANDERING THE WAYS: AN UNOFFICIAL GUIDE TO THE INFINITE PATHS OF THE NEVERNEVER**.

This short supplement aims to hopefully enrich your experience of the Dresden Files Roleplaying Game, specifically regarding travel in the Nevernever, at least as explained in The Paranet Papers.

The Nevernever is a place of endless possibilities and countless dangers, a realm where every thought, every dream, every nightmare takes form. It's a place where every location in our world has a counterpart, and these counterparts are connected by paths known as Ways. These Ways are the focus of this supplement, and the intent here is to provide a framework with which to put together a Way step-by-step, or even randomly generate a Way entirely to give a sense of depth and variety to travel in the Nevernever, which can sometimes be dull or awkward.

The Ways aren't just simple paths from point A to point B, though, or at least not always. In essence, they are a living, breathing entities of the Nevernever, each with its unique characteristics and challenges. Some Ways are straightforward, while others are abstract and challenging to navigate. Some are short and safe, others are long and fraught with danger. The Ways can take any form, from a serene forest path to a treacherous mountain pass, from a tranquil underwater tunnel to a chaotic vortex of swirling energy.

In the Paranet Papers, we were introduced to the concept of the Ways and given some examples. However, I felt the true potential of the Ways wasn't fully explored, or at least made readily available. Now, the style of the Dresden Files Roleplaying Game™ product line kind of prohibits this kind of game design, but I have no such limitation! That's where this supplement comes in. **WANDERING THE WAYS** provides a series of tables that allow you to pick from or generate random interesting Ways on the fly. These tables consider various aspects of the Ways, including their type, level abstractness, length, danger level, and more.

This supplement is not just a tool for Game Masters. Players can also use it to better understand the Nevernever and to plan their journeys through it. The random nature of the tables also ensures that every journey through the Ways can be a unique experience, adding an element of unpredictability that can make the game more exciting and engaging.

WANDERING THE WAYS isn't meant to replace the information in the Paranet Papers. Instead, I've designed it to complement that information with a bit of structure to more easily add depth and detail to the idea of the Ways. By using this supplement, you can bring the Nevernever to life in your games and create a rich and immersive world for your players to explore.

Whether you're a seasoned Game Master looking for new ways to challenge your players, or a player eager to delve deeper into the mysteries of the Nevernever, I hope **WANDERING THE WAYS** will be a valuable resource for your table.

Without further ado, it's time to step on through and begin this journey!

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PART 1

MAPPING THE NEVERNEVER

Bad news first: It isn't actually possible to map the Nevernever, despite our best efforts. Since we all have a brain, eyes, a limited number of senses, but more importantly, a tragic lack of any kind of omniscience, it isn't really possible for any of us to really wrap our heads around the impossible strangeness of it all.

Still, that doesn't mean the Nevernever can't be understood, if only a little. If we can't see where or how the puzzle pieces fit together, the least we can do is make a list and figure out the rest later. And so we have, and this is what this section is dedicated to: collating all the various pieces of lore and keeping them all in one place where they can do the most harm open your minds to the possibilities!

And if you won't take my word for it, maybe you'll take the **Word of Jim**. Wink wink, nudge nudge.

BASICS OF WAYFINDING

Best practices when it comes to mapping out the Nevernever, or at least charting your progress through it, is about as simple as sketching out landmarks and taking note of your best guesses for what activates a particular Way and how it works. Observations are excellent, knowledge of arcane lore is even better, but common sense is king.

If at first you can't understand it, you'd best stay far, far away and find a better path. This is the golden rule when it comes to walking the Ways between Realms, but failing that, you'll find included a rundown of the basics.

MASTER THE LINGO

The first step in making sense of this Otherworldly mess is to master the lingo. You don't want to pick up some ancient Wizard's journal and get started on your journey only to find out a week in that you've gotten ways and paths twisted. For instance.

Hypothetically. Ahem. Starting from the top, then...

The **Material** or **Mortal World** is self-explanatory. It's home.

The **Nevernever** is a thoughtform, another plane of existence. If the material world is Earth, the Nevernever is the Solar System and perhaps beyond. The boundaries of the Nevernever are ineffable by nature. It's also known as the Otherworld, the Spirit World, the Astral World, Imaginarium, Shambhala, and Dream-time. The last two are wrong, by the by, but more on that in a bit.

Simply speaking, a **Way** is a portal that connects one place to another. A Way can lead to the material world or the Nevernever, but otherwise all doors or portals to and from there is called a Way. For our purposes, though, we'll be talking about them in more general terms.

The **Ways** are an umbrella term for all paths used to traverse from one point in the Nevernever to another. Traveling the Ways is the act of entering a Way, traversing a Path, and coming out the other side.

If a Way is a door, then **Triggers** are the locking mechanism. They can be as simple as an open, unguarded gate, but some of them are extremely obscure and hard to discern.

Guardians are entities whose purpose is to guard a Path. Not all are violent, sentient, or even apparent—you can't hope for a much better Guardian than an active volcano, after all.

Conversely, **Lurkers** are entities who roam the Ways and prey on Travelers. They're probably the most dangerous you can expect to run into, and they're always there by design. If you're especially unlucky, they were sent there to wait for *you*.

Travelers are mortals, demi-mortals and quasi-mortals who wander the Ways for one reason or another. Treat them with caution and always be respectful.

Wayfinding is the act of traveling the Ways.

A **Region** is an inter-connected network of Realms, Demesnes and Ways. Not all Ways found in a Region open to other locations in the same region, but most do. Examples include Shambhala and the Dreaming. See? Throwback.

A **Realm** is the second largest division of space in the Nevernever and can have several masters or rulers. A **Demesne** is the smallest, usually only has one master. Rulers and masters wield the land, the energies and all their demesne contains with tremendous force as an extension of them.

Native is a term for natural citizens of the Nevernever. Again, treat them with caution and always be respectful.

God and gods is an important distinction to make, but not a particularly relevant one. Ideally, stay away from either one. On that note, if it ever feels like something or someone is playing dice with the universe, I chalk it up to the **Powers-that-Be**. Yeah, that means you and your table. Stop messing up a good thing!

A **Nexus** is a rare, strategic place in the Nevernever that contains an exceptionally high concentration of Ways. There isn't a standard to inform how many Ways make a Nexus, but there can be dozens, hundreds or even thousands of them. Naturally, the location of a Nexus is a valuable secret.

Transitioning, **worldwalking**, and **transportation rituals** are the means by which everyone practices Wayfinding. Wizards, Sorcerers and Practitioners need to use transportation rituals to open a Way, a complicated process best left to the professionals. Natives can usually transition to and from the Nevernever in places that reflect their nature, and particularly powerful ones can open Ways, same as any practitioner.

TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

You won't be surprised to hear that most staple outdoor skills, gear and survival kits will serve you well out Wayfinding. A compass almost never points north, but there's a use for just about everything out there. The best place to start is to figure out a system of breadcrumbs that works for you, so you can always find your way *back*.

Funny enough, logging and scrapbooking are your friends here. If you're careful to write down every step you take, you can find your way back from just about anywhere.

Biggest danger to you is, well, danger. You have to toe the line between the bare minimum to keep yourself safe without carrying something that'll provoke a Native into attacking you outright. Iron is a great example: it's a powerful weapon in the Nevernever, but it'll make anything you might want to use it against immediately hostile when they might not have been.

How little can you get by with? Dealer's choice.

CHALLENGES OF WAYFINDING

Putting aside the latent threat to life and liberty posed by Guardians, Lurkers and other Travelers, Wayfinding isn't a piece of cake. Hell, it isn't even the first *step*.

FIND THE WAY

Before you even think about crossing a Way, you have to *find* one first. For most folk, that presents a challenge to Lore, but you'll read more on that later. The baseline there is useful, but only to set a baseline. If you want to go somewhere specific, that'll probably be harder. The easiest way in any case is a trustworthy source outright telling you where to cross (or, failing that, using a Wayfinder, but that's so unlikely I didn't even include it in Tools as a viable piece of kit, so more on that on page #).

Practitioners and minor talents with a useful kind of ESP (that's **Supernatural Senses**, by the way) can get by easier using Lore to assess the strength of the barrier between worlds. For people with the Sight, it's even easier *and* self-explanatory, so I won't bother you with stuff you already know.

For more on that, see Accessibility in **Part 4: Hidden Paths** on page #.

LOOK OUT FOR NUMBER ONE

Priority number one when you're out Wayfinding is survival. That's it. If you're neck deep in it and running away will save your life but cost you your fancy enchanted sword, then the sword's gotta go. For your everyday, run-of-the-mill trip on a relatively tame Region, **Survival** will do the trick. In a pinch, **Scholarship** can get you by trying to remember some decanted secondhand hearth wisdom from that occult book you picked up in third grade while you were still dead set on it wasn't just a phase.

Lore is king, though. Stay in school, buy some books, and read 'em. Most scenarios will have you testing against Good or better, but Lore is usually at least a step easier or quicker.

DON'T OVERSTAY YOUR WELCOME

By this point I'm sure you've heard not to accept food from faeries, and that's always good practice. Nevermind the implications of being in debt to one, the insidious danger of ingesting anything from the Nevernever is that it isn't *real*.

Short of some of the Natives, almost everything you'll see or touch is ectoplasm. The implications of that are insane enough when you stop to think about it, but it boils down to this: when you get back to the material world, it turns back into goo. If you've already digested it, you may be in for a bad time.

This is the same reason you shouldn't overstay your welcome in the Nevernever. Given enough time, your body will make up new cells all on its own to replace the old ones, and eventually you'll be all ectoplasm.

That means when you go back home, if you're not ready for it, *you* turn into goo. True story.

BEWARE THE OTHER

If you've been paying attention, then you'll know to watch out for the Other. When you're out Wayfinding, the Other is everyone who's not you and the people you know beyond the shadow of any doubt you can trust with your life, because it may come to that.

There's nothing to say about the Other that would help. Natives, Lurkers, Guardians, Travelers, there's just too many things out there that go bump in all sorts of different ways. At the end of the day it's up to you to be prepared, and make sure you've mastered all the tools and techniques at your disposal.

Remember: constant vigilance! If in doubt, assume everyone is out to get you.

READING THE SIGNS

So I think I've done a good job painting a gloomy picture up to this point, and with any luck that'll get the point across. Now don't get excited when I say this, but not *everything* in the Nevernever is out to get you. Not every Way, Realm or Region is a death trap, and doom doesn't lurk around every single corner.

Most, but not all. As you'll come to learn the longer you're out there, Wayfinding is a time-honored tradition perpetrated by people who should know better. Still, we know a thing or two and we're not often too shy about making a mark whenever we find a safe haven.

Living long enough to retire as a Traveler is all about knowing how to read the signs. There's no universal language for this stuff, so it has to be learned from experience. My advice? Find someone who cares about you enough to teach you. Not me, mind, but someone.

Looking for Traveler signs is usually a Great (+4) challenge to **Investigation**, though it can be higher or lower based on how frequently Travelers go through the Region. If a place *looks* outright deadly, it probably is, and it isn't likely to have any Traveler signs no matter how keen-eyed you are.

TRAVELER PRO-TIPS

Aside from knowing how to read the signs, there's a lot to keep yourself safe... well, safer, anyway. You pick up a lot of weird little skills out there. Every so often a group of us will get together and share stories, pointers. Hearth wisdom, that kind of stuff. I won't pretend I'm going to teach you all of my tricks, but I'll show you a few things.

JOURNALING

That's right, a diary is going to be your best friend out there. Doesn't matter what it is, even if it's actual breadcrumbs, so long as it works for you, and I mean *really works*, then you'll want to stick with it. Log everything, even if it seems unimportant.

In defense of the humble journal, though, here's a cautionary tale. If you do heed the advice of yours truly, devise some kind of a system to make sure you'll be able to tell if anyone else writes in your journal at a glance, even if it's in your own handwriting. If you see the signs, and there's something in your journal you don't remember writing, **always trust the journal**. You may be in mortal danger. Stay calm, take stock of your situation, and leave at the first opportunity.

THE TRAVELER'S KIT

Every Traveler has their own kit, even if they don't know it. It's the thing you fall back on in a pinch, the one thing you can always count on to get you out of a bind. A Traveler's kit is almost always the greatest hits: a firestriker, a good knife, their trusty journal, and most important of all, the almighty jerky.

There comes a time it's just baked in. Me, I can't get by without **My Trusty Kit**, it's just another Aspect of my character, and you should have one just like it.

NIGHT SCHOOL

Go to your local college and diversify. Learn useful skills like conflict mediation, negotiation, diplomacy. Sign up to a gym, join a dojo. Develop your basics, even if you're vanilla like me. It probably won't matter, but it might. Don't bet your life on a maybe.

More importantly, don't believe in clichés. Why does the resident Wizard have a high **Endurance**? Simple: because the ones who didn't checked out early, if you catch my drift.

Aletness and **Athletics**, they're classics for a reason. You won't go far with a glass jaw or an exposed back.

THE ART OF QUICK THINKING

This one may seem like a no-brainer, but I can't overstate how important it is to think on your feet. If you're a bit dull, there's no shame in that, but you might not make the best Traveler. In that case, any plan is better than no plan, but being able to adapt on the fly is key. Assess your surroundings, and if you can't find a single thing to your advantage, create one! When circumstances conspire against you, there's nothing like a clever declaration to give you a leg up.

TRUST YOUR GUT, OR: NO MEANS NO

The Nevernever isn't just home turf for the Natives, it's a place that can literally come alive when they call. They just have a few evolutionary advantages that we don't, so we've got to compensate in other ways. I've done my level best to teach you how so far, but I'm sure you've guessed there's more to it than that. Free will, that's another important thing. The good Lord's make-up gift to us. Some days, though, that don't feel like much.

If you get around long enough, you're bound to rub elbows with some of the Others. Once in a blue moon, one of Them will see fit to make you a deal right outta the goddness of its heart. You take that deal, you get to even out the playing field. Now that might seem nice at first, but let me tell you one thing: you've got more than your life to lose.

Like I've said, if something doesn't feel right, it probably isn't right. Those deals seem too good to be true because they are, so when temptation comes knocking, you'll be best served saying no. It might seem like a small thing, and some days the Otherworld'll run you ragged, and the temptation is gonna be real strong. Not ashamed to say I've thought about it once or twice over the years, and I've had my fair share of offers.

But that's all it is, is temptation. That's where free will comes in. Don't matter how much the creep might make you feel otherwise, you always have the power to say no. Now I've got no right to tell you what to do or who to associate with, but I've never met anything worth saying yes to in all the years I've been at it.

I don't reckon I ever will.



PART 2

FORGING A PATH

Now that we've covered the basics, it's time to tackle the meat and potatoes of this particular book: actual travel through the Nevernever. I've hinted at this a few times now, but we'll be using this part of the book to codify the cosmic mechanics behind Ways to make even ordinary travel sequences seem full of mystique and wonder.

Now, I'm not suggesting reality is a sham and Ways are about as random as can be, but if I were, and I was going to make a game out of it, I would make it so the **Powers-that-Be** can either pick and choose how their Ways work, or roll it on a table. So I did.

This section is laid out linearly. The intention isn't that all of these steps be used every single time, or even most of the time. For the sake of the people who have to deal with these, **most** Ways should be straightforward... but it's probably a good idea to go through the steps to select what you like and what you don't need right now. Don't be afraid to leave it to chance, either! Sometimes it's just more interesting to let the dice fall where they may.

WANDERING THE WILD WAYS

The idea behind constructing a framework to pull off interesting Ways on the fly is because there's so much to wrap your mind around. They can be anywhere, any **when**, as real as a yellow brick road or as arcane and mind-boggling as an actual walk down memory lane. Danger lurks at every turn, and almost never in the way you would expect—it's all just a lot. Like, a **lot** a lot.

Hence, the tables. All things being equal, I'd rather not have to think too hard when put on the spot, you know, for the sake of immersion. **Powers-that-Be** and all that. So if I can take a pause, look at a few tables, and confidently say that the way only appears at the crack of dawn, revealed by tracing a specific rune in the air that just so happens to tie-in to the death cult the would-be heroes are chasing, and declare that it is a river with a mighty current where boggarts and boogeymen from trauma past manifests to pick off travelers one by one until, an hour later, they finally reach the Way out? All that without so much as a scrap of effort?

You bet that could impress some folks.

LOCATING THE WAYS

The Location Type sets the stage for where you'll find the Way. Could be a bustling city, a remote mountaintop, or something just plain weirder. Every journey starts here, and this step is kind of hard to skip, seeing as you need a point of origin and all.

1D6 ... LOCATION TYPE

- 1 Natural Landscape (a forest, a river, a mountain)
- 2 Man-made Structure (a building, a bridge, a statue)
- 3 Temporal (a specific time, a specific date, a specific season)
- 4 Emotional (a place of joy, a place of sorrow, a place of fear)
- 5 Conceptual (a story, a paradox, a belief)
- 6 Roll twice

TRIGGERS AND CATALYSTS

Like the Location of a Way, knowing its Trigger is every bit as important, even if that's it doesn't have one. Some Ways just wait, wide open for someone brave enough or stupid enough to walk through. Me, I'd rather sit back and see what happens first, if that's all the same to you.

1D6 ... TRIGGER TYPE

- 1 Sensory (a sound, a scent, a taste)
- 2 Physical (a gesture, a dance, a knock)
- 3 Emotional (a feeling, a memory, a state of mind)
- 4 Temporal (a time, a date, a phase of the moon)
- 5 Environmental (a weather condition, nearby animal or plant)
- 6 Magical (a spell, a type of magical energy, a magical item)

PATHWAYS OF THE NEVERNEVER

Deciding the Path is probably the last hard requirement to creating a Way. Even if the journey happens in the blink of an eye, you still have to travel through *something*. This is where things can get a bit nebulous. If you're lucky, it'll be as simple as a hike through a forest. If you're not, though... well, let's just say I don't relish the thought of having to take a nap anywhere in the Nevernever, but *especially* not in the middle of a Way.

1D8 ... TYPE OF WAY

- 1 Physical Path (a tunnel, bridge, or stairway)
- 2 Natural Phenomenon (a river, jet stream, or ray of light)
- 3 Sensory Experience (a specific sound, scent, or texture)
- 4 Emotional Resonance (a feeling of joy, fear, or curiosity)
- 5 Temporal Shift (a place where time moves differently)
- 6 Spatial Warp (a place where distances are warped)
- 7 Memory Lane (a path through someone's memories)
- 8 Dream Walk (a journey through someone's dreams)

METAPHYSICAL MYSTERIES

Astonishing alliteration aside, Abstraction always aggravates authors and adventurers alike. Heh. To say this can gum up the works is kind of an understatement, though. Even a moderate degree of Abstraction can put you in serious danger. Personally, I wouldn't chance anything past a 3... which is why this table goes all the way to 10. This can take *any* form. Riddles? You bet. Unpacking complex emotions and buried trauma? Definitely.

A very abstract path can have you deal with complications on top of complications. In fact, an astute reader like you should notice that memory and emotions figure multiple times in these tables. As it turns out, sometimes Inception is the only answer.

1D10 ... ABSTRACTION OF THE WAY

- | | |
|----|--|
| 1 | Very Concrete (a physical path with clear landmarks) |
| 2 | Mostly Concrete (a physical path with abstract elements) |
| 3 | Balanced (a mix of physical and abstract elements) |
| 4 | Mostly Abstract (an abstract path with physical elements) |
| 5 | Very Abstract (a journey through emotions or memories) |
| 6 | Shifting (a path alternating between concrete and abstract) |
| 7 | Unpredictable (a path that changes in abstractness) |
| 8 | Illusory (a path that seems concrete but is actually abstract) |
| 9 | Metaphorical (a path that represents a concept or idea) |
| 10 | Paradoxical (a path that defies logic or understanding) |

TRAVELING THE WAYS

As things go, this is pretty straightforward. Time is kind of a loose concept in the Otherworld, and Wayfinding is no exception. If a Path goes on to infinity, well... this section is about creating problems, not solutions.

1D12 ... LENGTH OF THE WAY

- | | |
|----|---|
| 1 | Very Short (a few steps) |
| 2 | Short (a few minutes' walk) |
| 3 | Moderate (an hour's journey) |
| 4 | Long (a day's travel) |
| 5 | Very Long (a week's journey) |
| 6 | Variable (the length changes each time) |
| 7 | Unpredictable (the length seems to change randomly) |
| 8 | Infinite (the journey seems to go on forever) |
| 9 | Looping (the path loops back on itself) |
| 10 | Branching (the path splits into multiple routes) |
| 11 | Labyrinthine (the path is a complex maze) |
| 12 | Teleportation (the journey is instantaneous) |

HAZARDS OF THE WAYS

Obviously, Wayfinding isn't difficult enough without adding an element of danger. Weirdly, though? Good news! Since the Nevernever is pretty much infinitely vast, all the nasty nightmare buggers are spread out so far they become basically background noise. Deadly, deadly, background noise.

1D8 ... DANGER OF THE WAY

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 | Very Safe (no known dangers) |
| 2 | Mostly Safe (minor hazards) |
| 3 | Moderately Safe (some risks, but manageable) |
| 4 | Balanced (a mix of safe and dangerous areas) |
| 5 | Mostly Dangerous (many hazards, but survivable) |
| 6 | Very Dangerous (high risk of harm or death) |
| 7 | Unpredictable (the danger level changes randomly) |
| 8 | Unknown (the danger level is unclear or uncertain) |

UNIQUE FEATURES OF THE WAYS

Finally, you have "Unique" features. If you look upon your works so far and decide it could stand to be a bit *more* interesting... well, I pity anyone who crosses you. In any case, though, unique features make the way stand out from everything else around it. A unique feature can add on to any other aspect of a Way, but should represent a meaningful Aspect to be used as part of a story. When adding a unique feature, you should plan for a story beat where ~~your hapless victims~~ the heroes have some time to examine it to learn its significance, and justify all your hard work so far.

Once that's done, pat yourself on the back for a job well done!

1D6 ... SPECIFIC FEATURE

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | Underneath (under a bridge, a thundercloud) |
| 2 | Next to (a river, a shadow at sunrise) |
| 3 | On top of (a hill, a building) |
| 4 | Inside (a forest, a building) |
| 5 | Surrounded by (flowers, statues) |
| 6 | At the sight of (a rainbow, a specific event) |

PART 3

THE OTHERWORLD ATLAS

Lots of places to go to in the Nevernever, and I've seen my fair share. Not as much as some, but more than most, at least. I've worked out a system of keeping track, kind of codifying everything so it's nice and neat for you lot. There's a fair bit of minutia to it, though, so let me start by explaining a few things so you don't get confused.

Not that I'm saying you will, or anything. Just covering my bases. Anyway, before I forget: the name of a place matters a lot. Names have power, and if you haven't figured that out yet, I don't know how to help you.

OVERVIEW

At the top, we've got the where and the what. First things first, and the most important thing to know about a place in the Nevernever: how to get there, and how to get *out*. Aspects of the place, too, so you know what you're dealing with, and what Region you're in if this happens to be a Realm you're visiting. When it comes to navigating in the Nevernever, lower Accessibility means *easier*.

PLANAR CHARACTERISTICS

This is kind of a catch-all, I know, but it bears noting anyway. Try to be brief, because there can be a lot to say about a place. Geography is good to know especially, so as to let you plan ahead for the terrain you'll encounter. Danger and Hazard Index, well, I reckon you know all about those by now.

Resonance can be tricky, though. Figuring out the resonance of a place can be tough without the Sight. Basically, though, pay attention to the subtle details, like how a place makes you feel. A little introspection can go a long way.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Okay, weird name, I get it. Look, I'm not one of those word peoples, okay? You'll want to keep it to the who's who here, and what themes in culture or folklore might have birthed the place you're in—actually, that can tell you a lot about the natives who live there, even if you don't meet them face to face. Always keep track of the landmarks, though. They're kind of like a grocery list of places you shouldn't go to, but will anyway, because what the hell else did you go there for?

FEATURES

This one is kind of vague, but it's for everything you haven't managed to put in there first. The extra blank pages at the end of the book, the post-it notes of all the shit you saw and didn't know about before you got there.

If you ever pass on your journal to somebody else, make sure to fill this part out because they'll want to know too. Demesne you'll definitely want to include, so you know to stay away from them. Make not of anything and anyone you find in there, even if they're another Traveler. Could be important.

Actually, features can and usually do have a different Resonance to the rest of the place, I've found.

OTHERWORLD PROFILE

NAME

REALM OR REGION OVERVIEW

Accessibility	Mediocre (+0) Are there a lot of Ways that lead here?
Aspects	REALMS AND REGIONS HAVE NO MORE THAN THREE ASPECTS
Region	Not present for region profiles
Key Realms	Not present for realm profiles
Connections	Any connections to specific places

PLANAR CHARACTERISTICS

Geography	Barren wasteland, frigid mountain range, etc.
Danger	Mediocre (+0) What is the baseline danger?
Hazards	More details on what specific hazards
Traits	Time flows slowly, water freezes instantly, etc.
Resonance	Emotional baggage of a place. Light, dark, neutral, thriving, lifeless, empty, barren, etc.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Faces	The main players in the realm or region
Themes	Themes that inspired the realm or region
Natives	Orcs, goblins, dwarves, that kind of thing
Landmarks	Castles, mountains, etc

FEATURES

Type	Demesne, Fortress, Entity, Natural Formation, Nexus, Phenomenon, Way, Weather, etc.
Faces	Not present for entities
Aspects	FEATURES TYPICALLY HAVE FEWER THAN THREE ASPECTS
Resonance	See above, not present for entities
Connections	Any connections to specific places
Description	Any additional information belongs here.

Probably because they're different by nature, but us making notes of them probably isn't helping that any, not that that should stop you. Look, the point is, write everything down just in case, it might be on the test later. And I swear to God, if you even think to ask if there's a test...

Kids today, I tell you. Eesh. Anyway, up next: all the places you shouldn't go to but will anyway! This is a collection of all the information I was able to get from a whole bunch of people, so don't worry if it's in a different handwriting or style. This time.



PART 3A

FAERIE

Of all the places you'll find in the Nevernever, almost none are as easy to get into as Faerie. There's a whole host of reasons why, but the main two are simple: Faeries and the Fae are about as close to mortals and the mortal world as can be, so the barrier between the two realms is usually pretty thin unless someone is blocking the way. Just as important, though, is that Faerie covers the entire gamut of resonances, meaning it's very easy to find a place that connects Faerie to the mortal world.

Even though the Fae are well known for being whimsical little blighters, the actual place itself is fairly straightforward as far as level of abstraction goes. Now that doesn't mean it isn't dangerous, only that unless acted upon by a Native, wood is wood, stone is stone, and grass is grass. Usually, anyway.

That means the main point of interest here is the Natives. I'll leave specific warnings and cautionary tales for the lore profiles, but if you're thinking they're all wee little buggers with colorful wings, you're dead wrong. The main factor that differentiates Fae of the same type is allegiance. In the land of the Faerie Courts, closest to the Mortal World, you'll find the Seelie and Unseelie fae. Everywhere else, meaning beyond that, it's the Wyld Frontier and the Wyldfae. That means just because one ogre is Summer-aligned, that doesn't mean all ogres are, to list just one example.

As far as pecking order goes, Fae nobility is at the top of the food chain here. There are a lot of powerful Natives in Faerie, but none moreso than the Sidhe. Often tall, usually beautiful, and always powerful, being Sidhe isn't a birthright for the Fae. I don't know how or why they become that way, but it seems to be the last stage of their evolution. They often take on titles that reflect their standing in Fae culture, like Lord, Baron, Queen and the like, and they control the bits nearest to the Mortal World. In the Wyld Frontier, titles can also be a lot less straightforward, but no less important.

Too many Fae nobles to name, but here are a few that haven't been minding their own business lately: the six Faerie Queens and the Erlking. For more on that, read a book, I don't know what to tell ya.

TERRITORIES

The Region is divided into two main territories, called the Faerie Courts and the Wyld Frontier. While there are definitely Ways that lead to other Realms in Faeries, it's possible to simply walk from the lands of the Winter Court into the Wyld Frontier relatively unimpeded. Even stranger, Faerie is a kind of self-contained Nexus, since it contains Ways that lead *from itself to itself*, so you could walk from place to place without crossing into another Realm or Demesne. No idea why, it's just one of those things.

FAERIE IN A CAMPAIGN

The antagonistic force in Faerie is the Fae. Any travel through Faerie is likely to result at least one encounter. Not all Fae are hostile, but even the whims of the most playful pixie can exact a heavy toll on an unprepared Traveler. Maybe use this as an opportunity to give players a taste of Fae intrigue!

OTHERWORLD PROFILE

FAERIE

REGION OVERVIEW

Accessibility	Average (+1)
Aspects	CHAOS AND ORDER IN EQUAL MEASURE THE ORIGINAL OTHERWORLD MERCURIAL
Key Realms	The Faerie Courts, the Wyld Frontier

PLANAR CHARACTERISTICS

Geography	Variable, but usually mutable
Danger	Great (+4)
Hazards	Chaotic encounters with the Fae
Traits	Time can flow variably in Faerie
Resonance	Whimsical, balance, mysterious, dangerous beauty

DEMOGRAPHICS

Faces	Queen Mab and Queen Titania
Themes	Ancient Celtic myths and legends
Natives	The Fae and the Sidhe
Landmarks	The Land of the Faerie Courts, the Wyld Frontier

THE FAERIE COURTS

Type	Demesne, Territory
Faces	The Faerie Mothers, Queens and Ladies
Aspects	AT THE EDGE OF MORTAL ZEITGEIST SEAT OF POWER IN FAERIE The Land of the Faerie Courts is home to the Seelie and Unseelie Fae, and a reflection of the very aspects of existence they embody. Summer is warm, inviting and mercurial, while Winter is bitter, cold and relentless.
Description	

THE WYLD FRONTIER

Type	Demesne, Territory
Faces	The Erlking and many other Sidhe nobles
Aspects	WYLDFAE REIGN SUPREME THE UNTAMED REACHES OF FAERIE This territory is as untamed as the name implies. Many Realms and Demesne here are under the control of Sidhe wyldfae, and a good deal of their time is spent fighting for dominion over the entire region.
Description	

Exactly what is an Earl-King? Be an Earl or be a King. A wise man once said: Never half-ass two things, whole-ass one thing.



PART 3B

THE OUTER GATES

The Outer Gates stand at the frontier of Existence and Non-Existence, where reality and *the other thing* meet, locked in a never-ending war. The Outer Gates are purely theoretical, abstraction made manifest in the form of a passage to Something Else. It's not a place anyone should go to if they know better, so I'm gonna do my best to instruct you, because believe you me you do not want to see the Gates. Why you can even *walk* up to the damn things is anyone's guess.

I happen to have a theory, though, and since this is my book, you get to hear all about it. Me, I like to think that the reason the Outer Gates are in the Nevernever and not at the edge of the universe is *because* of what's there. I think that we dreamed up the old gods and all the things that go bump in the dark because if we didn't, there wouldn't be anything to stand between us and The Other. Better the Devil You Know (*or even* the one you don't) than those things, I'd say.

Who knows what you'll see if you're fool enough to ever go there. I'd tell you to be prepared because the Gates can take on any form, but the simple fact is they don't, at least not according to anyone I've talked to who went there. It's not so much that the Gates are mutable, as much as your experiences shape how your brain interprets them.

The theme is usually the same, though. Some kind of a portal, usually shut, surrounded by the bloodiest battlefield in existence.

I say again: **DO NOT GO TO THE OUTER GATES.**

Please. Odds are you'll just ruin things for everybody else, and we got a good thing going here in this reality shindig.

THE OUTER GATES IN A CAMPAIGN

The first step to using the Outer Gates in a campaign is to determine what they're going to look like. Once you have that, figure out what kind of Outsider will be there that day and go from there. The Gates are very abstract, but otherwise straightforward: it's just a battlefield where Outsiders try to invade reality, and all kinds of powerful things work hard and give their lives to stop them.

Aside from the usual suspects, any number of powerful and dangerous things will fight on the side of reality for any number of reasons either because they love carnage, or because fighting at the Gates is a relatively simple way to earn status and become more powerful or experienced. Simple, but insanely dangerous.

Adventures at the Gates should be black-and-white: one face for the side of Reality, one for the side of the Outside, and their respective armies.

It's important to note that the Gates can only be opened by the act of Free Will, and only from the inside.

There's Travelers working as mercenaries at the Gates sometimes, and I'd recommend avoiding them at all cost. Anyone crazy enough and powerful enough to do this for a living isn't somebody you want to know. Trust me.

DO NOT OPEN
THE OUTER
GATES!!!!

OTHERWORLD PROFILE

THE OUTER GATES

REALM OVERVIEW

Accessibility	Superb (+5)
Aspects	INVASION FROM OUTSIDE AT THE EDGE OF REALITY THERE'S ONLY ONE SIDE
Region	None
Connections	Faerie, the Lands of Winter

PLANAR CHARACTERISTICS

Geography	Mutable or abstract. Flat plane.
Danger	Legendary (+8)
Hazards	Deadly encounters with Outsiders and defenders of the Gates
Traits	Pockets of warped reality
Resonance	None

DEMOGRAPHICS

Faces	Unknown
Themes	Lovecraftian Horror
Natives	Outsiders
Landmarks	The battlefield and the Gates

THE GATES

Type	Unknown
Aspects	INCOMPREHENSIBLE THE FIRST LINE OF DEFENSE
Description	The Outer Gates stand at the edge of reality and guard it against what's beyond. They elude specific description because it simply isn't possible to imagine what exists outside of reality.

DO

NOT

OPEN

THE
GATES!!!!

PART 3C

THE UNDERWORLD

Not to be confused with Hell (or the **World Below**, as it's called), the Underworld is an important part of the Otherworld. For a lot of spirits, especially the ones who have Faith, it's their first step on the next leg of journey towards... something. Look, I don't know. I don't have the answers for what happens when you die, and I wish people would stop asking. I don't know! Okay?

Right, the Underworld. There's a lot to say about this place, but I'm not sure where the stories overlap because of abstraction, belief, and the general mechanics of power when it comes to the Nevernever and the immortal Things that live in it. I have it on good authority that Hades either lives here or visits often, maybe Hermes as well. The implications of that alone is enough to make me never go there. Never go back, I mean. I was young, once.

The Underworld in itself is a Nexus, but one of the bigger ones you'll find, if not in the number of Ways it opens to other Realms, then at least in the sheer vastness of the space between those Ways. I've met people who confirm it connects to Hades (the place), Mag Mell, Valhalla, but probably just to most or all realms in the **Isles of the Blessed** (again, more on that later).

It's also one of the more dangerous realms you can travel to, unsurprisingly. Not just because of the Natives and Lurkers who live there (nevermind the Travelers), but also because the Underworld has a strong tendency to keep what's in it, in it for as long as possible. Even spirits passing through to their eternal rewards often get lost here.

PSYCHOPOMPS

I make it a point here to dedicate an entire section to this, because it's important. The original natives of Underworld are called psychopomps. At the best of times, they're guides, but they can be a whole lot more than that. Valkyries, Anubis, Hades (the god), hell, even the Grim Reaper, those are all psychopomps. You'll note how they vary a lot as far as themes are concerned, so don't think you know how to handle a Shinigami just because you've gotten chummy with a Valkyrie.

The ruler of the Underworld is also a psychopomp, but on a whole different order of existence. It has a lot of names, and some of them I've just listed. Hades, Anubis, even Azrael, those are just examples. Whoever and whatever it is, be extremely careful—and again, very, **very** respectful.

THE UNDERWORLD IN A CAMPAIGN

The Underworld can hold a very important place in a campaign, or at the very least an arc. Since it's a prison by its very nature, it's a popular place for important things to be kept, lost, or guarded. Since the Underworld attracts many types of spirits, guardians or lurkers, it's not much of a stretch to place just about any combinations of item and guardian there, or even entire places secreted away from the real world to be jealously kept in the Underworld.

Building on top of that is easy since it's such a versatile place, and can lead to all kinds of fun hijinks. Be careful about using powerful Natives sparingly, though, especially when it comes to Hades himself.

OTHERWORLD PROFILE

THE UNDERWORLD

REALM OVERVIEW

Accessibility	Superb (+5)
Aspects	Labyrinth of Lost Souls Primordial Prison Not The Final Destination
Region	The Isles of the Blessed
Connections	Many, possibly all, afterlife realms

PLANAR CHARACTERISTICS

Geography	Mutable. Vastly different regions somehow merging seamlessly
Danger	Superb (+5)
Hazards	Confused or vengeful spirits, and the landscape is designed to keep people here.
Traits	Time and geography are highly mutable, especially by powerful Natives
Resonance	Transitory, isolated, mysterious, dark, spiritual, well-defended

DEMOGRAPHICS

Faces	Unclear
Themes	Mythologies throughout the ages around the world
Natives	Spirits and psychopomps
Landmarks	Hades' Palace, the Five Rivers

Powerful guardians like that can be useful to send a strong point across, but can also derail your story faster than you can say "roll for initiative!"

It's also important to mention that even though the Underworld is a Nexus to the afterlives, it isn't the *only* way to get there, or even the best one. There are probably safer alternatives to present a given group if they're less experienced or prone to vagabonding at the first opportunity, of which there will be many in the Underworld.

Otherwise, though, it can be a fun place to include in an adventure. You'll also find more specific lore profile and statistics for various Natives at the back of this book, including at least a few types of spirits and psychopomps.

For more on that, see **Part X: Title** on page #.



PART 3D

JÖTUNHEIM

BY FRANKTO VINNETI

Jötunheim is a place teeming with magic and mysteries, a massive Realm and one of the oldest sources of magic. In its heyday, wonders that would rock the world were commonplace here, and the jötnar remember it. Though it is no longer that, small glimpses of its former glory can still be found to this day, even though the sun has long set on the mortal belief in giants and monsters.

In spite of all of that, Jötunheim is a place of many secrets even today, and there are few better places in all of existence in which to hide them. Jötunheim is a kind of aggregate of what is possibly infinite, or nearly infinite, realities existing superimposed on top of each other, accessible by Ways with triggers that range from the obvious to the extremely arcane. In other words, it's possible to get lost going through this Realm simply by taking a wrong turn and stepping into an empty Demesne without ever realizing it, and therefore being unable to walk out again.

FROST GIANTS AND THE JÖTNAR

Known as Hrímbursar (anglicized *hrimthurs* or *hrimthursar*) in the Old Norse, Frost Giants are a race of jötun in Norse mythology who are associated with the cold and winter season. They are incredibly strong, and are said to be able to freeze water with only their breath. Like other Jötnar, they may have shapeshifting abilities, and their appearance can vary widely depending on the source.

The jötun, on the other hand, are altogether different. They are a class of beings, rather than a race, and can often exemplify concepts such as swiftness of thought or old age. Despite their name meaning *giant*, the jötnar aren't necessarily large in size, though they often are. In other words: all frost giants are jötun, but all jötun are not frost giants.

HRIMILDR

Frostfire is a tool of the frost giants of jötunheim. All giants are taught how to light it at a young age, because it is essential to life in jötunheim. Even though temperatures there are frigid on a hot day, nothing is as refreshing to them as being near a bonfire, or *hrimslogi*. Frostfire burns cold, but still not near absolute zero. The center of a *hrimslogi* is a bone-chilling -150 degrees Celsius, enough to give even frost giants frostbite. Otherwise, being near a *hrimslogi* is a chilling -40 degrees.

JÖTNABRAGR

Giant's mead is not for the faint of heart. It is made with water found in rare sources around Jotunheim which the ancient Norse called *eilífavatn*, but is now more commonly known as elemental water. Elemental water never freezes, not even in the presence of *hrimildr*, and isn't composed of ectoplasm, like many things in the Nevernever.

Honey is a rare commodity in Jotunheim, and the jötnar will happily trade for it, even in jötnabragr. Even though this mead is safe to consume, relatively speaking, it is often kept at such cold temperature near *hrimslogi* that it may threaten to completely freeze any mortal that drinks it from the inside out.

OTHERWORLD PROFILE

JÖTUNHEIM

REALM OVERVIEW

Accessibility	Good (+3) baseline, otherwise up to Epic (+7)
Aspects	A REALM OF HIDDEN TRUTHS IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF GIANTS WINDS OF FIMBULWINTER
Region	Isle of the Blessed, Yggdrasil
Connections	Jotunheimen, The Alps, other mountain ranges

PLANAR CHARACTERISTICS

Geography	Highly mutable, bordering on abstract. Frozen tundras, forests and mountains, subject to change based on location and perspective
Danger	Great (+4)
Hazards	Extreme cold, encounters with Natives, highly mutable landscape can change at any moment
Traits	Near-infinite numbers of Ways leading to Demesnes-like pocket Realms, many of them superimposed over existing geography
Resonance	Strength, the eternal struggle for survival

DEMOGRAPHICS

Faces	Utgard-Loki
Themes	Norse mythology
Natives	Hrimthursar, animal spirits, other entities associated with the jotnär
Landmarks	Utgard Keep, the Ironwood, Mimir's Well

JÖTUNHEIM IN A CAMPAIGN

Jötunheim was the source of countless hijinks and adventures in Norse mythology, and the same can be true in your campaign. Since it offers virtually unlimited possibilities, any number of adventure can take start, take place or end up in Jötunheim.

It's also important to remember that the jötnar aren't all the villains they're made out to be, and even though their relationships with the Aesir and Vanir gods and goddesses is contentious, a large number of their conflicts through the ages were resolved with good-natured contests. Even something as simple as a friendly frost giant tribe could add another layer of depth to your game. Perhaps there is a small chest of Iðunn's apples is to play for, jealously kept by the trollkona of the Ironwood. Or maybe something is up with Mimir's Well, bleeding through a crack in the barrier between the Otherworld and the Mortal World, causing all sorts of trouble and mischief!



PART 4

HIDDEN PATHS

This chapter is all about getting around, and helping you get from point A to B safely. Well, about as safe as can be, anyway. Did I mention Wayfinding isn't the safest, smartest hobby? 'Cause it ain't.

You've read all about the Ways and the Realms and the Regions, and all the weird and specific ways they can (and will) get you, but what does it all actually mean? Well, this is what that was all about. Why is the book written this way? Isn't it putting the cart before the horse?

Shaddup! I do what I want.

ACCESSIBILITY

Probably the most important metric you'll need when deciding whether to go somewhere or not is Accessibility. It's a useful generalization, you might say, and it represents how hard it is getting **to** a place, but also navigating it when you're actually in there.

Navigating a Realm, Region or Way is a function of your **Survival** skills. The higher-rated the Accessibility, the harder it is to actually get around. The baseline tasks you'll perform there, like traveling without getting lost, finding food (again, careful with that!) and whatnot all use this number as a **baseline** difficulty. Don't go thinking just because a Realm is Average, everything you do there will be too.

Finding a Way is also based on accessibility, but is a function of your knowledge of **Lore**. The sharper your mystic perception is, the easier of a time you'll have finding a Way to or out of a place. Again, this is a **baseline** difficulty. Some Ways are easier or harder to find than others, and there's no point checking if you remember where to find a Way you already know.

A **Nexus** also factors into Accessibility as a little quirk some places happen to have. Now, it doesn't make that place any easier or hard to navigate, but it does contain an abnormally high number of Ways to places you wouldn't think the Realm would connect to at first blush. In a sense, a Nexus is kind of like an broad-spectrum **assessment**, or even a **declaration** that a place just so happen to connect to somewhere useful. Might seem like a subtle distinction to you, but it's a useful one that isn't true in most other kinds of Realms.

More information about that in **Part 5: All About The Nexus** on page #.

THE HAZARD INDEX

Hazards are much more straightforward, and obviously much more of a problem. A place's Hazard Index tells you how much danger you'll be in when you're there. It's a check of **Survival** against this baseline, and it can be as simple as running into some kind of complication if you come up short.

Sometimes, though, it just won't make sense to check for the same thing twice. If navigation is already a factor, you can use a place's Hazard index to modify its Accessibility the same way you might combine skills.

There about as many things that can complicate a journey as there are grains of sand, but usually they'll fall under the general theme helpfully listed right under this entry in the Atlas.

TOOLS TO SEAL THE DEAL

Earlier, you've heard me allude to something called a Wayfinder. They're awfully useful little baubles, usually something like a compass, that help you navigate the Otherworld. I say you, because they're rare and I don't have one. Yet. If you happen to want to part with yours or know someone who does, you'll know where to find me!

Otherwise, tools you might find useful depend on your personal needs and abilities. I have **My Trusty Kit**, which to most people might look like just a collection of random stuff. Junk. Bent nails, shards from a mirror, knick-knacks from old wives' tales that have a subtle power or are just plain useful. Duct tape! Never forget duct tape.

Obviously, the best thing would be some kind of an item of power. Magic sword, ring of invisibility, you get the gist. The cream of the crop though is still the Wayfinder, just because it's so damned useful. Maybe.

Like I said, don't have one, never had one. Knew a guy once who won one in a game of cards, never been seen since.

For more on that, see **Appendix D** on page #.

WAYFINDER

For the most part, Wayfinders are the stuff of rumors. If they existed, they might look a little something like this:

WAYFINDER [-1] (ITEM OF POWER)

Description: You carry with you a Wayfinder, a precious compass to navigate not by true north but with the strange and ephemereal Ways of the Nevernever.

Musts: You must have an aspect reflecting your possession of a wayfinder.

Skills Affected: Lore, Survival, others.

Effects:

It's A Compass. Even when it isn't used to find a Way through the Nevernever, a wayfinder is still a compass that always points true.

Unbreakable. As an item of power, Wayfinders are sturdy and generally difficult to break outside of very specific circumstances.

Wayfinder. In the Nevernever, a Wayfinder acts as a supernatural sense that points towards the nearest Way, rather than to true north. Using a Wayfinder, you can make assessments with Lore to find Ways and get around hazards (see **Accesibility** and **Hazard Index**).

There are a lot of rumors floating around about Wayfinders, what they can and can't do, and the perils of actually using them. Some people have claimed that when they found a Wayfinder, it would only ever lead them back to Faerie, and others that it always lead them in the precise opposite direction they wanted to go.

The actual truth is probably stranger, so feel free to add on as much as you want to this item of power template. A simple Flaw aspect, or built-in failsafe to avoid hazards would be interesting additions to personalize your own Wayfinders.

RESONANCE, THE REALITY COMPASS

So now you can get around without getting yourself killed, and you can find Ways. That's a useful start, but it's only the start. Like I keep saying, Wayfinding is as much about understanding what you're getting into as it is getting through it, and resonance is a big part of that.

If you get the resonance of a place, and I mean *really* get it, then you can know just about everything there is to know before you even set foot in there. There's a lot that goes into resonance, so we'll approach it from the perspective of being in the material world. Basically, it's like cosmic feng shui. The history of a place, the people who live in it, how it's structured, and all the little things that happen there, they all contribute to its resonance. Resonance isn't universal, either. Just because one room has a lighthearted and happy resonance doesn't mean the next won't be dark and depressing.

There's two ways to find out. Well, really there's three, but since one of them is *guessing*, we won't count it.

First there's the vanilla way. There are a lot of approaches here, but as far as I'm concerned, your best bet is **Investigation** or even just having some **Empathy**. A solid read on the room and being sensitive to the world around you can get you a long way when it comes to making an **assessment** of a place's resonance. It's tricky, though, at least a Good (+3) challenge even at the simplest times, so tailor your approach to the situation you're in, instead of just sticking to the same trick.

The other one is having **The Sight**. Yeah, not really helpful, I know. If you don't have it, then you don't have it... but if you do, take a quick look and there it is, that's resonance. When you have the Sight, it's as simple as using it and being able to interpret what you see. My understanding is there are downsides, but I wouldn't know about that, so I'll leave that to somebody else.

Worth noting, though, just because a place hits one of the resonances of a Realm or Region your keen to visit doesn't mean you'll find a connection. You *might* but there's no guarantees, best to follow the rule of threes here. If it hits three or more resonances, your odds improve dramatically.

For more on that, see **Appendix A** on page #.

Notes from Wizard Falkland:

I must caution you against use of the Sight, for it is a dangerous Tool wielded by the Foolhardy and the Desolate. Swift harvest though it may bring, the potential consequences of confronting Sight's unknown may forever alter the course of your Life. I bid you take heed, and find enclosed, in standard notation, a rather safer course for any Individual of notable Talent.

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Type: Thaumaturgy, divination

Complexity: Varies; typically at least 4 to 6

Duration: A moment

Effect: This spell operates like an assessment action (UG 115), but reveals the resonance of the nearby area. The base complexity is 4, but complex locations may be up to 6.

Notes: The information this spell returns is specific, but not useful for much more than opening Ways.

GEOGRAPHY WITH MOOD SWINGS

People hear the expression "the whims of the Nevernever" and think it's just a fancy turn of phrase. Well, it's not. Shock! I know, Captain Killjoy is at it once again, darn. I'm here to tell you, if you ain't careful, the land can kill you too. Like the title says, the Nevernever has geography, but with mood swings. I guess technically, it'd be more correct to say it's highly mutable especially when acted on by the will of some Native, sure. But it's more fun to say "the land can kill you!" so here we are.

Now for the part about how that's useful. Most everything in the Otherworld is made up of ectoplasm, a kind of inert goo. Non-reactive to everything I've tried on its own, sublimates real quick when you take it away from the Nevernever or whatever is acting on it. But that's just its physical properties.

If you've got a strong mind, though, or a connection to the land you're in, you can make it do almost anything, because ectoplasm reacts to emotions and efforts of will the same way water does when you throw rocks in it. If that sounds neat, you'd be right, but it's also treacherous as hell, because anybody can do it (also because there always seems to be at least one Native around who can sense when you try and throws a fit about it).

If you're connected to where you are, in your own **Demesne (YS 170)**, or you're one of those **Easy Evocations (PP 253)** folks, then that'd be an effort of **Discipline**, simple as that. No muss, no fuss, no special effort, since you're not using your own energy as fuel, 'cause *everything* is energy out there. With that said, there's three kinds of geography in the Nevernever.

STATIC GEOGRAPHY

Geography is static when it won't start to change on account of someone feeling strongly nearby. Weirdly enough, static geography is maybe the least common kind in the Otherworld. You can still change it by hand, usually anyway, but I suppose the ectoplasm is a dud, or something, so it isn't as reactive. Usually you won't find many **Demesnes** in places with static geography, but when you do, the power it gives its Natives doesn't come from the land or objects that are in it. I've never heard of a convincing explanation why this even happens, but I think it's because whoever or whatever lived there that brought the place to life either moved on or died. I can't prove it of anything, but call it an educated guess.

Characteristics: Static geography is an uninterrupted contiguity, which in real people words means it a door is a door, a road is a road, and as a general rule, transitioning from one place to another is as simple as walking to it, as opposed to, say, evoking that memory of you kissing that person that one time in the rain. I said simple, mind, not *easy*.

Example: Brandon's character Donovan finally arrives in Jötunheimr. Sensing that the land underfoot is static, Donovan ventures into a nearby forest. Unbeknownst to Brandon, though, the forest is the Demesne of a group of hag-like creatures. Since the land of the forest is static, the cruel power of their Demesne manifests itself in stranger ways, affecting the senses directly rather than turning the very forest against Donovan.

When Donovan first encounters the hags, they seem supernaturally fast, seemingly manifesting from thin air. The hags are using their Demesne ability to seemingly defy the laws of physics, but are simply altering Donovan's perceptions. This leaves him with only one option: escape.

Now aware that the forest is static, Brandon knows that if Donovan ever returned, the scenery would be unchanged whether he encounters the hags or not.

MUTABLE GEOGRAPHY

Mutable geography is the most common in the Nevernever. The same way the Nevernever is shaped by people's thoughts and beliefs, most places in it are shaped by the Natives who live in them. That doesn't mean the ground is liable to change from one step to the next, although it can, but it does mean some really strange things can happen if there's somebody or something powerful nearby. Mutable geography responds to applications of will and/or power, meaning the environment itself can be turned against you, and almost always in ways you won't predict. People just aren't equipped to go on a hike and be mindful of that boulder over there turning liquid and washing them off a cliff.

Now I'm not saying that *will* happen, but it *can* happen, so you should be prepared. It's probably best practice to learn how to apply your raw intent, will or emotions the way a wizard can, even if you don't have any actual power to throw behind it. That's a function of **Discipline** so as you can properly **assess** what actually makes up the place you're in. Probably best to do it as soon as you land, too. Careful about disrespecting the Natives when you do, either, because some folks can be real particular about that sort of thing, especially if you happen to test your luck with some sacred objects of theirs. As always, **the Sight** can tell you all that instantly, but like Wizard Falkland said in her note before, it's probably best to save that trick as a last resort.

For the most part, you'll find mutable geography just about everywhere in the Otherworld, but in particular, pretty much every **Demesnes** that pops up is made up of either mutable or abstract geography. More on that other one in a bit.

Characteristics: Abilities like **Demesne** and **Easy Evocations** can make profound and immediate changes to a mutable environment, since the land itself is a sort of fuel. Mutable geography, like static, is *generally* contiguous, but sometimes it's contiguous the same way a labyrinth is: you can still walk from place to place, but the layout might not make any sense to you because you don't have perspective. That also means that just because you can walk from place to place doesn't mean the map isn't rearranging itself in random iterations without you ever noticing, either.

Example: *In a trip through the Celestial Grove, Donovan encountered an Arboretum, an area of the forest guarded by a Dryad. Donovan had never encountered a Dryad, however, and forgot the advice he had been given to always be respectful. The Dryad's anger, though, manifested itself when she turned the very trees against him.*

*First the guardian used her connection to the land to establish the scene aspect **FURY OF THE FOREST**. Things only go downhill from there, as Donovan must now flee from a forest where the very trees are coming alive to hurt or capture him... or worse.*

*As a measure of last resort, Donovan draws in the power of the Nevernever and unleashes it with his Evocation magic. Brandon's strategy is a gamble that getting the attention of whatever else is in the Grove can't be worse than his current predicament, and he's right. With the rules for Easy Evocations, Donovan is able to **overcome** the Scene Aspect and buy himself just enough time to escape.*

ABSTRACT GEOGRAPHY

Abstract geography is in flux, acted on by a force either unstable or volatile. Even at the best of time, abstraction is a reliable sign of danger, so be prepared for an extra helping of weird. It's illogical, like walking through somebody else's dream, and it might twist your brain in a knot if you think about it too hard.

Abstraction makes travel complicated by weakening spatial continuity. First, the landscape is nonlinear and non-contiguous, which is big words that mean that just because two rooms are connected with a door doesn't mean you can walk from one to the next. The actual form abstraction takes is different every time, since it depends completely on what force is acting on the environment, but it'll always be confusing as hell and hard to look at, so your brain will make sense of it the only way it can by dumbing it down in self-defense. Long and short of it is, Ways in abstraction aren't always found and traveled by looking and walking, sometimes you might have to live through something, feel something, or who knows what else.

Assessing the abstraction is step one. Assume it's a threat until proven otherwise, and get as much information as you can *before* going in. In highly emotive cases like some Fae, **Empathy** is an asset. Otherwise, **Lore** or **Scholarship** are good alternatives.

Confusing? Maybe, but that makes it predictable too. Abstraction doesn't just happen on its own even in Otherworld, so when you understand the cause, you'll understand the environment better too (usually a *who*, by the way). Then, you can start Wayfinding, but with a bonus: since abstraction has a source, you can learn a lot about it just by paying attention... and, if you're clever, you can even use **your own thoughts and feelings** to affect the environment yourself.

Just about anything you try has a good chance of getting you somewhere, or have some kind of result, even something as strange as creating a strong **Rapport** between you and the abstraction. Time usually gets weird around strong abstractions, so whatever you do, do it quick.

Use **the Sight** at your own peril here, because it removes your brain filter. Abstraction in its true form is a lot, or so I'm told, usually a Superb (or worse!) threat to your Sight. Plus, and this is rare, but there's a possibility that whatever you look at, looks back at you, like a Soul gaze. Consider yourself warned.

More about handling abstraction in **Appendix A** on page #.

Characteristics: Unlike mutable geography, abstraction isn't a feature, but rather the defining trait of a place. Volatile and nonlinear, traveling from place to place isn't as simple as walking through a door. The environment responds like mutable geography does to powers and abilities, but also frequently changes, completely unprompted and usually at random intervals, sometimes violently. It's possible to predict when and how an abstraction with change, however, and even use it against others, even Natives. In those cases, this is best handled with *invokes and compels*. Otherwise, the corresponding **Demesne** power or **Easy Evocations** are effective.

Example: *Donovan is wading through the cavernous Halls of Forgotten Dreams in search of a child. Brandon knows this is an abstract place, so he decides Donovan is going to enter the dreams himself and take the place of a protector. Initially disoriented, an assessment using Empathy reveals the way forward is helping the child conquer his repressed fears. The path is harduous, but Donovan's strong Rapport skill wins the day.*

With the child at his side, Donovan goes on to the Dreaming and finally request an audience with the Dream-Lord, a mountainous task in its own right...

TRAITS ARE THE SECRET SPICE

It's important to keep track of what outlandish traits a place has, because there's a strong chance they'll define how a Traveler's experience when they try to cross it. Fortunately, the *really* strange stuff is rare, but if anything, saying anything is possible is an **understatement**.

A trait could be anything: pockets of heavy or light gravity, unpredictable flow of time, or everyone walking through a child oneiromancer's demesne turns into a pink plushy elephant. Yeah, that one's happened to me, and no, I won't talk about it. The point is, it's usually up to the **Powers-that-Be** to put these damned things in your path and there's not always something you can do about it. Just remember not to try to get too clever with these things, because sometimes the only way forward is through.

Now, as far as how severe these things should be, the Danger Index is probably a good indicator, but there are mitigating factors when it comes to these things that we'll talk about in more detail later, and below.

So for more on that, see **Appendix C** on page #.

DEGREES OF REALISM

In the Otherworld, what's real and what isn't is usually up to the **Powers-that-Be**. It's still important to know the difference, though, because otherwise how can you make the call? Basically, real matter can go in and out of the Nevernever and not change, but the rest turns to ectoplasm after a while when it's taken out of the Nevernever. That usually happens quickly when whatever force was acting on it is gone. A spell, for example.

First, static geography doesn't necessarily mean real matter. Dud ectoplasm is still ectoplasm, so that just means it won't respond the way mutable ectoplasm can.

Second, whether an object's real or not is a matter of **Aspects**. Use your better judgement to tell if something's important, and then make an **assessment** as best you can.

Yep, that's it. Just needed to be said, is all.

THE WAYS

A Way is a fancy word we use for a connection that takes you from place to place. I've already explained how they can take basically any form they damn well please, but I've not told you why that matters.

If you stand on top of a mountain in Jotunheim and head down the path that takes you to Utgard Keep, that path is a Way.

Why does that matter? Well, I'll tell you: because no matter what shape a Way takes, it's an individual construct. That means while you're in transit from a place in Jotunheim specifically towards another one, you're still in Jotunheim, but you're *also* in a Way.

Part of what it means to call a place in the Nevernever your **Demesne** also gives you control over that place. And you can use that control to influence the Ways... **or shut them down**. This is more or less the same as putting up a border or a ward, but might also require a constant effort, which may or may not mean anything to some of the heavy-hitters you'll find in the Nevernever.

So no matter how little sense that might make to you, because you may literally be able to see where you're going, the Way might still be shut. *How* it's shut will depend on who or what rules that place, but you can usually expect walls or other kinds of impassable barriers. Or no barriers at all. I've heard kids call those magic walls, but hell if I know what that means.

REALMS AND REGIONS

Hope you're ready for some semantics, because this is probably going to seem pointless to a lot of you. The last thing we've got to touch on is the difference between Realms and Regions.

A Realm is a place. You can walk around in it, you can rule it, you can build in it, pretty much always, as long as you understand what kind of **Geography** you're dealing with. We've already touched on all of that, so I won't bore you going over it again.

Regions, though, they're usually pretty damn different. A Region is an inter-connected network of Realms and Ways. If a Realm is a house, then a Region is a neighborhood. You'll usually find more Ways that take you to Realms in the same Region than anywhere else there. Also, it means that when you get down to brass tacks, they're all connected by a core concept or **Aspect**.

For instance, the Realms inside the **Isles of the Blessed** are all divine in origin, so that's where you'll find the Underworld, Valhalla, Mount Olympus, and who knows what else. You can probably get to Valhalla from the Mortal World, but you can get to more Realms inside the **Isles** than to anywhere else in the Otherworld, because those places are connected.

Simple enough? Great.

THE POWERS-THAT-BE

There are usually two schools of thought when it comes to handling traits and hazard, which can vary enormously by table, player or GM. The first is that all challenges should take an entire group into account and stay reasonably balanced so that a group can feel suitably challenged, or that an obstacle can inject a suitable amount of drama or tension into the story.

The second is rather the opposite. The party has made their bed by going someplace, and what happens, happens. It goes without saying that this can create an entirely different experience when compared to the first approach.

It could be argued that *either one* is the true approach to run a game in the traditional Fate RPG style. Personally, though, I have no idea what that means and it would be a lie to pretend otherwise.

Traits, hazards, hell, *everything in this book* is entirely at the discretion of everyone who participates in your game, but especially the GM, since they hold all the cards. Now, does that mean you should either use all of it or none of it? Absolutely not. If you find something in this book that doesn't fit with your GMing style, get rid of it. It's that simple. Do you think all geography in the Nevernever should be Abstract?

Cool! More power to you.

The point of this book isn't to give you all the answers, it's to create less work for you in case you don't feel like doing all that work in session prep, for any reason. It's been my experience that joining or running a Fate game is daunting for the majority of players and GMs, at least at first. Decision paralysis is a real problem for many of us, and being thrown into the deep end without any kind of bestiary or specific tidbits of lore that didn't specifically figure in the source material, strewn across a series of massive reference manuals, well... it can be a lot.

Hence, this book. Realms and regions, natives, lore profiles and a handful of new powers definitely won't answer every question that'll come up in your games, but it's a *start*.

So if, by this point, I've created a new support structure you'd be happy to build on to run one or multiple campaigns, then I'll have done my job.