



Wonderland Background

By Kevin Anderson



Introduction

This document details some of the setting details for the Savage Tales set in the realms of Wonderland as featured in the two books *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass and What Alice Found There*. It is recommended that the GM be familiar with the two stories, which are available online for no cost.

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland:

<http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/11>

Through the Looking Glass and What Alice Found There:

<http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/12>

After Alice Left

Wonderland

The books recording Alice's adventures do not tell the whole tale, and who can blame them? They record only the highlights of her journeys, glossing over the minor events and seemingly inconsequential conversations she had with the less interesting people of the land. However these less 'important' encounters had a marked effect on Wonderland. Alice's tales of her world inspired the denizens of Wonderland and great leaps were made in technology, social, and almost every other aspect of life. Three cities sprung up, named after the three Victorian virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity, ruled by the Red Queen, Queen of Hearts and the White King, respectively. Some time long after Alice left Wonderland, changes started occurring in that magical realm, and not for the better.

The King of Hearts withdrew from public life and his partner, the Queen of Hearts, became even more heartless and her realm became a darker place. Soldier cards patrol the roads and visit towns to tax the people. Beheadings are ordered and, unlike in more peaceful times, carried out.

Both the Red and White Kings were no longer seen. Stories were spread that the White King had died, slain by a traitorous attack by Rosewood. Other tales told that the sleeping Red King, whose dreams were so important, has been taken to a place of safety as assassins of Whitefield were seeking him. The Red Queen seizing her chance rallied the once defeated forces of Rosewood and attacked Whitefield. Taken by surprise the white forces had no time to react and with the inept leadership of the White Queen soon fell to the attack. Technically the two houses are now at peace with the House of Rosewood in supremacy, however there are still hostilities albeit little direct combat with both side using terrorism and guerilla combat.

Geography of Wonderland

Wonderland is split into two areas separated by the vast, and rumored to be impassable, Mountains of Division. The mountain range runs north to south, dividing the land into two roughly equal halves. The Western area is the Monarchy of Hearts while the Eastern is the Scarlet Monarchy.

Essentially, Wonderland is a large island bounded on three sides by forest and on the fourth (the northern coast) by the Endless Sea. The Mountains of Division extend quite some distance into the sea, and south almost as far as the edge of the land. Hills surround the mountains and give way to the flatter landscape. The Hills of Gloom to the south of the Mountains are very heavily wooded, and they are indeed very gloomy and depressing. These hills mark the southern boundary of Wonderland, and any who venture too far south find themselves somehow turned about and journeying north. Tall trees with overhanging boughs cover the eastern and western edges of Wonderland. The direction reversal effect noted earlier takes place if one travels too far into these forests.

The Monarchy of Hearts is predominantly wooded, with settlements, farmland and other notable features existing as islands within the sea of trees. In contrast, the Scarlet Monarchy is a vast expanse of plains and hills (divided into a chess board pattern by streams and



brooks) with copses, farmland and other features scattered throughout.

The only common route between the two Monarchies is through the Hills of Gloom. The journey is fraught with danger, as the hills are home to some of the more ferocious and wild of Wonderland's creatures. Both Monarchies have acted together to provide safe passage through the hills. A trail known as the Guarded Way winds through the hills, guarded by regular guard posts charged with aiding legitimate travelers. These guard posts have burning beacons atop them and mark out the safe path. It is possible that the journey could be accomplished via the Endless Sea, but such a trip involves a long detour around the Mountains of Division, which protrude far into the sea.

The Monarchy of Hearts

As its title implies, the Monarchy is ruled over by the Queen of Hearts (a Card). She has a husband (the King of Hearts, unsurprisingly) but he has withdrawn from royal life since Alice left. For all intents and purposes, the realm is a dictatorship.

The western realm has only one major city - Hope, though many other small towns and villages lie scattered throughout the woods. The most famous of which is the Village of Animals where the White Rabbit lives. The smaller villages have cleared the surrounding woods and farm the land, producing crops and raising such animals as cows, sheep and pigs. Excess foodstuffs are taken to the larger villages and towns to be sold or bartered.

The people of the Monarchy of Hearts are predominantly anthropomorphic animals (Anthros), Cards and Humans, with a smattering of Chess Pieces, Living Plants and Tweedle. Villages tend to consist of just one of these races, while the towns, and particularly Hope, are more of a mixture.

The Monarchy of Hearts is technologically and socially very similar to Great Britain in the 1890s (Victorian period), having been influenced by Alice's Real World experiences.

The Scarlet Monarchy

The eastern realm is ruled over by the Red Queen (a Chess Piece) who, like the Queen of Hearts in the west, is a virtual dictator. The Red Queen's partner (the Red King) has been asleep and dreaming as long as any can remember so there is no one to curb her control.

The Monarchy's main city is named Faith, and it is here that the Red Queen resides. A second city, Hope, lies in what is essentially an enclave of the defeated

House of Whitefield (the white chess pieces). Other towns and villages are scattered through the forest. These, like their counterparts in the west, live a primarily agrarian life.

The people of the Scarlet Monarchy are predominantly Chess Pieces, with those of the House of Whitefield mainly gathered about Hope. There is quite a large population of human, Tweedle, and a few Anthros and Cards. Again, villages tend to be single-race and the towns more of a mixture.

The Scarlet Monarchy is technologically and socially similar to that of medieval Great Britain -- not necessarily the reality of that period, but the idealized image painted by the Victorian people.

The Races of Wonderland

Anthropomorphic Animals, or Anthros



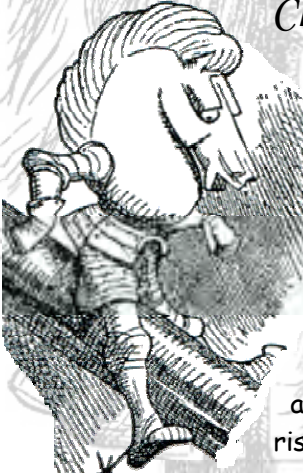
'Anthros', or Anthropomorphic Animals, are a varied race of Animals in vaguely human form. The physical shape and size of an Anthro may vary wildly, although no Anthro is as small as its Animal namesake. For instance, a rabbit Anthro may be almost completely human save for a rabbit head and fur over its body, or almost completely rabbit-shaped but with human-like hands. Either of these forms may be between three and six foot tall.

Cards

Cards are living playing cards averaging some 4' tall and about 4" wide. Their skin and muscle structure is reminiscent of that found in flat fish such as Manta rays. All cards of an extended 'family' (or pack) have identical markings upon their posterior sides. The anterior sides bear markings more familiar to those of the real world as playing cards.



Chess Pieces



Chess Pieces look like giant anthropomorphic Chess Pieces. They are a construct race with vaguely human features in what is otherwise a 'traditional' Chess Piece shape. All Chess Pieces are either colored red or white, and this division splits the race as a whole. Rare individuals can rise above this. Chess Pieces have a very logical way of thinking - most

are great tacticians but have trouble making intuitive leaps or 'thinking outside the box.'

Living Plants

Living Plants appear quite delicate and fragile, tottering around on their thin rootlike legs, their slender bodies swaying from side to side and their leaves curling in all directions. However, the truth is far from their appearance. The fibrous nature of their plant bodies is surprisingly tough and plants have long since evolved to stand up to quite amazing forces (try and crush a grass blade by standing upon it!). That said, the Living Plants are slow and not physically strong. Exceptional members, as always, prove this generalization wrong.



Tweedle

The Tweedle (both singular and plural use the same word) look like nothing less than man-sized children suffering from obesity. Their bodies are massive with both muscle and fat and their heads seem overly large due to the almost complete absence of a neck. Their complexion is almost universally a sickly pale, and their hair is almost always thin.

Tweedle are always born as one of identical twins and grow up as rambunctious and noisy children. When working together the twin Tweedle excel at whatever they do. However such occurrences are rare as more than anything else the twins argue and bicker, particularly when there is loot involved!



Humans

Humans are a minority race within Wonderland, with the Monarchy of Hearts being dominated by cards and Anthros and the Scarlet Monarchy being dominated by Chess Pieces. Rumors abound that all humans within Wonderland hail from the Real World and none are indigenous.