

world of anahuac and the flowery dream

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This World takes place in a version of the Valley of Mexico - in both our everyday reality (**Anahuac**, where you might end your life in the jaws of a coyote) and other, stranger corners of the Aztec cosmology (**The Flowery Dream**, where you might end your life bled out by an obsidian butterfly or as a slave to a gigantic owl with a fleshless head). The key to this World is that the threats that beset the warren in Anahuac can only be solved by undertaking a dangerous expedition to the Flowery Dream, where it is possible to cajole, plead or threaten the gods themselves. This World is set up to be free of the influence of humans, in this world or the next. All the gods assume aspects familiar to a rabbit. Include humans if you like, but the whim of the gods is the real apocalypse here.

A cultural note - I took great liberties with both the Nahuatl language and the Aztec pantheon, cherry-picking locations and deities that would be the most interesting to - and interested in - lowly rabbits. No disrespect is intended. The Nahua are still around in Mexico and Central America, although a systematic cultural genocide has left them with only echoes of their pre-Columbian heritage. What we know of their original faith and cosmology is limited but striking in its beauty and order. Some of it may seem strange to you, but every system of belief - including your own - is odd to the unacculturated. I urge you to make this setting more than an exotic playground and to treat it with the respect and wonder it surely deserves.

Names

Rabbits

Laughs At Pain *Tonehuahuetza*, Flower-Gatherer *Xochipepe*, Purple Feather *Matlalihuitl*, Pawful Of Reeds *Acamapichtli*, Consistent *Nochehuatl*, Snake-Rabbit *Coatltochtli*, Eagle-Rabbit *Quauhtlitochtli*, Unique One *Izel*, Arrow Star *Citlalmina*, Alligator-Rabbit *Cipactlitochtli*, Obsidian-Rabbit *Itztochtli*, Death *Miquiztli*, Serpent Flower *Coaxoch*, Radiance And Majesty *Tlanextli*, Mother Of Light *Tonalnan*, Heart Of A Gentle Flower *Xochiyotl*, Source Of Life *Yolihuani*, Maize Tassel *Miyaoaxochitl*, Magnolia *Eloxochitl*, Most Beautiful Flower *Xochiquetzal*, Ant Flower *Azcalxochitzin*, Rain Flower *Quiauhxochitl*, Broken Plume *Tziquetzalpoztectzin*, Hero Doe *Citlalmina*, Grass Flower *Malinalxochitl*

More Rabbits

Dark Green *Matlal*, Earth *Tlalli*, Left-Behind *Ne-cahual*, Hungry *Nezahual*, One Who Is Loved *Tlazohtzin*, Grass *Malinalli*, First Born *Teyacapan*, Rainbow *Cozamalotl*, Little One *Tepin*, Twig *Tlacotl*, Reed *Acatl*, Youngest Child *Xocoyotl*, Middle One *Tlacoehua*, Leader *Achcauhtli*, Joy *Ahuiliztli*, Dancer *Itotia*, Glorious Rabbit *Mahuizohtochtli*, Defender *Manauia*, Moon *Meztli*, Prickly Pear Fruit *Nochtli*, Comet *Xihuitl*, Only One *Centehua*, Small Heart *Yoltzin*, Grandfather *Colli*, Coward *Mauhcat-layecoani*

Bad Animals

Coyote *Nezahualcoyotl*
Dog *Itzcuintli*
Cougar *Miztli*
Cat *Mizton*
Jaguar *Ocelotl*
Wolf *Cuetlachtli*
Scorpion *Colotl*
Owl *Tecolotl*
Falcon *Tohtli*
Eagle *Quauhtli*

Other Animals

Monkey *Ozomatli*
Deer *Mazatl*
Squirrel *Techalotl*
Spider *Tocatl*
Tortoise *Ayotl*
Frog *Cueyatl*
Hare *Cihitli*
Vulture *Cozcaquauhtli*
Turkey and Turkey Hen *Huexolotl* and *Cihuatotolin*

the warren

www.bulypulpitgames.com/warren

world of anahuac

Questions: The Warren

- What directions would a rabbit give to locate the warren?
- What hot, dry vista can you see as you look out from the warren?
- Is the warren large, small, or somewhere in between?
- Where is the White Forest *Iztayacuauhtlah* where the magical ololiúqui flower grows?
- Where's the Muddy River *Aātōyātl Zoquiyo*? The Hill in the Wilderness *Tepepan*? The Place Where Amaranth Grows *Tlalihuauhtli*?
- Which god is your warren's patron? The Lord of the dead? The Lord of water? The Lady of abundance and fertility? The magnificent Lord of the southern skies?
- What do your senses tell you about the warren?
- How long has Knife Cape *Itzquemitl* been in charge here?
- How are decisions made in the warren?
- Who last consumed the magical ololiúqui flower and entered the Flowery Dream, and why?
- What is your place in the warren?
- Who might know why Water-Bird's *Atototl*'s pregnancy has been so difficult - Lady Slowly? Stinking Beast? The old rabbit Wise One *Toltecatl*?
- How often do you have to make an expedition to Salt Mountain *Iztatltepetl*?
- What would make the warren a better place?

Questions: Stakes

- What happens when rabbits are born, and when they die?
- What things do you all prize in the warren?
- What happens when a new rabbit arrives?
- Who leads The Strong Ones *Chicahuaque*, your warren's protectors?
- How do you deal with the coyote that lives around here?
- What other animals live nearby?
- What will happen if the rabbits are driven from the warren?
- What happens when rabbits' status in the warren changes?

Questions: Situation

- Is it day or night or somewhere between?
- Why are you all atop Serpent Hill *Coatepec*?
- When did you realize you were being stalked?
- Where did Kite Snake *Ciuxtli Coatl* go and why hasn't she returned?
- What animal just approached you? A turtle, a vulture, a monkey or something else?
- What predator has just revealed itself? A coyote? A falcon? A cat?

...What do you do?

world of anahuac

NPCs

LADY SLOWLY, Cihuapilli Ayaxcanyotica, a Tortoise (Tired old lady voice)

Trait: Calm

- Take her time
- Search for rotten chayohtli fruit to eat
- Drink half her body weight in water
- Offer laconic advice for free
- Offer good answers for a steep price

STINKING BEAST, Potonitecuani, a Monkey (Teenager on speed voice)

Trait: Excitable

- Appear out of nowhere
- Lie about various adventures
- (Literally) hang around to see what might happen
- Get in trouble and make a mess
- Carry a rabbit to a new vantage point

STUBBORNNESS, Aquimamatcayoti, a Vulture (Gravelly old man voice)

Trait: Ghoulish

- Arrive when bad things are about to happen
- Assume the worst, and usually be right
- Clean his bill stoically
- Tell grisly true stories
- Share knowledge of Mictlan and the Black Heaven

Predators

BAD BREATH, Camapotoniliztli, A Coyote (Ending every sentence with a question? voice)

Trait: Stupid

- Announce her arrival with a foul odor
- Talk to herself as she hunts
- Try to make a clever deal
- Over-commit and under-deliver
- Eat dead things

SHE KNOCK DOWN GHOSTS, Tlaza Tlācanēximilli, A Falcon (Clipped, soft-spoken voice)

Trait: Efficient

- Haunt the edges of the forest
- Stoop out of the shadows
- Rend and tear
- Suffer no fools
- Respect courage

STARVING DESTROYER, Mayana-Cocotona, A Cat (Frustrated, whiny voice)

Trait: Unlucky

- Miss an opportunity
- Alert some more deadly predator
- Hurt himself
- Ask for help
- Occasionally catch a break

Threats

THE DROUGHT

Intent: To parch the land

- The early rains come, but they are weak - a bad sign
- Soon no rain comes at all
- The rivers dry up and the land bakes
- The grasses die and the trees shed their leaves
- No rabbit can survive in Anahuac

OLD JAGUAR

Intent: To destroy the world

- Signs of a large new predator are everywhere
- Animals start seeing a huge jaguar.
- The oldest know it is Obsidian Snake *Itzcoatl*, who was driven off in ages past by a clever rabbit who knew his one weakness.
- Without knowing his weakness, all of Anahuac is helpless before Obsidian Snake.
- The terrible jaguar slaughters all those who do not pay him tribute, forever.

THE BIRTH SICKNESS

Intent: To break the chain of life

- Hot, damp air permeates the warren
- Does start feeling ill
- Pregnancies become difficult and painful
- Does near term fall into horrific fevers, afflicted with a strange disease
- Not a single kit is born alive, and many does die

world of the flowery dream

Entering the Flowery Dream

The land is harsh and unforgiving, and the Gods are cruel and demanding.

In the few wet places, intertwined among the fragrant cacahuaxochitl, there is a climbing vine with white flowers known as ololiúqui - eating the seeds of this plant allows rabbits to enter temicxoch, the Flowery Dream, where they can freely interact with the Gods. Perhaps this is a good thing, perhaps not, but either way but it is not for the fearful or weak of heart.

WHEN YOU ENTER THE FLOWERY DREAM

Resist Panic. In addition to the ordinary effects of the roll:

On a 10+ ask either one questions to be answered with clarity and precision, or three questions to be answered. On a 7-9 ask one question and have it answered.

- Where is the rabbit, deity or object I seek?
- What god should I appeal to for help?
- What danger lurks between me and that which I seek?
- How might I best please [a particular god]?

On a miss you bring the stink of Anahuac with you, a beacon for the hungry and ill-mannered of temicxoch.

Gods a Rabbit Might Meet

LORD WIND

An unnatural gust of wind, scented with cacahuaxochitl blossoms, presages the arrival of Lord Wind *Ehecatl*. An aspect of the great god Feathered Snake, Lord Wind's breath moves the sun. Always curious and good-natured, Lord Wind often greets visitors to the Flowery Dream to ask about their business. He occasionally visits Anahuac.

WHEN YOU TELL LORD WIND YOUR BUSINESS

Roll +Shrewd.

On a 10+ Lord Wind is impressed and grants you a boon. Name it!

On a 7-9 Lord Wind wishes you well and invites you to call upon him in a future time of need.

On a miss the sun cannot stand still any longer.

OLD GOD

Old God *Huehuetotl* is the personification of life after death, warmth in cold, light in darkness and food during famine. He is a god of hope and often appears when hope is desperately needed, in the form of an ancient deer. Old God usually wanders the Flowery Dream but can be found in the deep forests of Anahuac as well.

WHEN YOU HAVE MET AND LATER CALL UPON OLD GOD WHEN YOU DIE

Roll the dice straight.

On a 10+ Old God gently intercedes. You will not die today, little one.

On a 7-9 Old God offers you a bargain. Take it and live; refuse it and Black Rabbit *Tiltictochtili* waits impatiently.

On a miss you die.

THE FOUR HUNDRED RABBITS

The Four Hundred Rabbits *Centzontotchtin* are a group of deities who meet for frequent parties; they are divine rabbits, brothers and sisters, and the gods of drunkenness. Their parties are legendary and magical, and they love to meet new rabbits. The Four Hundred can be found in the Flowery Dream or in Anahuac.

WHEN YOU PARTY WITH THE 400

Roll +Strong.

On a 10+ you are the Four Hundred and First Rabbit and your new brothers and sisters change something about you permanently (and probably for the better). What is it?

On a 7-9 you hold your own and have made a new friend. Is it Texcatzonatl, Colhuatzincatl or Ometochtli? What trouble does your new friendship presage?

On a miss you don't make a fool of yourself, which the Four Hundred view with pity.

Other Strange Denizens of the Flowery Dream

Lord Terror *Imacaciteotl*, a ghost with more bark than bite

Afternoon Owl *Tlaccatecolotl*, a demon from the Black Heaven

Tremble Before Me *Papatlaca*, a deadly but inanimate monster

Fat-Grinder *Tecitomahuac*, a wolf visiting from Anahuac

world of the flowery dream

Landscape of the Flowery Dream

The Flowery Dream is much like Anahuac, but in the four cardinal directions a rabbit can travel to strange lands.

NORTH

To the north the ground darkens and slopes downward. Light fades. Mictlan lies in the deepest darkness, and to reach it is a journey of four long years. But what is time in the Flowery Dream? Almost every rabbit who has ever died - save a few exceptions - resides in Mictlan. The Lord of this place, Mictlantecuhtli, receives few visitors from Anahuac and might be charmed by brave, exhausted rabbits - or he might instruct his servant Black Rabbit *Tlilticochtli* to add them to his grisly retinue. He manifests as a gigantic owl with a fleshless head. A rabbit might journey to Mictlan to seek the wisdom and counsel of an ancestor, or to learn the truth about some event only a dead rabbit was witness to.

OBSIDIAN BUTTERFLY, *Itzpapatl*, (Confident, icy whisper voice)

Trait: Filled with darkness

- Beat a cold wind with obsidian wings
- Choose a victim and make it known
- Offer a terrible bargain, and laugh
- Offer a glimpse of the Black Heaven
- Seize with obsidian claws
- Feed the thirsty earth hot rabbit blood

Obsidian Butterfly is first among a group of minor goddesses known as the Monsters From Above (Tz-itzimime). They will come to collect the living after the end of the world, but they stalk the Flowery Dream out of malignant, ineffable rage. At the lonely field known as Place Abundant with Arrows *Miacatlán* on the journey south, she will surely descend to claim her toll.

EAST

To the east the land grows progressively more lush and fertile until it becomes a rich, steaming jungle of edible plants and other delights. This is Tlalocan, land of eternal springtime, the home and domain of Lord Tlaloc, God of rain. He is greatly feared among all rabbit-kind, as he is responsible for both flood and drought. Tlaloc has a fondness for the physically deformed. If in a good mood, Tlaloc manifests as a magnificent heron with a jaguar skull hanging from his neck. If in a bad mood, he is a roiling, lightning-spitting storm cloud. No living rabbit may linger in Tlacopan, and the way in is guarded by the terrible Ahuizotl. A rabbit might journey to Tlacopan to entreat Tlaloc to relieve some natural disaster.

WATER MONSTER, *Ahuizotl*, (Unintelligible cries and groans)

Trait: Dangerous

- Grab Suddenly with all three hands
- Tear out an eye to eat raw
- Burst from still water
- Vanish, dragging prey to drown
- Guard the gates of Tlacopan

The Ahuizotl is a degenerate primate with a hand protruding from the end of its tail. Greatly feared due to its liking for flesh, especially nails, eyes, and teeth, it lives at the choke point of Mapachtepec, near the Hill of the Raccoon, the only way in or out of Tlalocan.

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SOUTH

To the south is the Place of Thorns, Huitztlampa, where the powerful Hummingbird of the South *Huitzilo-pochtli* administers the celestial heavens. Beloved of men, Hummingbird of the South is not a friend of rabbits. His mother, Skirt of Serpents *Coatlicue*, is a fearsome maternal Goddess and is likely to befriend any does she meets - although her friendship is itself a terrible thing. Hummingbird of the South manifests as a majestic iridescent hummingbird. Skirt of Serpents manifests as a massive black rat snake with a necklace of buck rabbit hearts worn just behind her jaws.

The razor-sharp briars and heavy, dagger-like maguery thorns form a fortress-like wall around Huitztlampa, and are proof against anything larger than a rabbit. Escaping something worse is the only reason a rabbit might come here. The southern thorns are always close at hand.

WEST

To the west is the Place of Women *Cihuatlampa*, where the sun dies. Seven Snakes *Chicomecoatl* is an agricultural goddess. Her retinue are the fierce Divine Women (Cihuateteo), does who died delivering litters. They guard Seven Snakes' residence, the House of Corn, and the Heaven of the Stillborn *Tonacacuahtilan*, full of rabbit kits. Her husband, Heart of the Mountains *Tepeyollotl*, abducted her and keeps her prisoner within Cihuatlampa. He is the powerful and ruthless jaguar aspect of Smoking Mirror *Tezcatlipoca*. Seven Snakes manifests as an imposing stalk of corn heavily laden with rich, ripe ears. Heart of Mountains manifests as a jaguar, and woe be unto any rabbit who meets him beyond the civilizing influence of his unhappy wife.

A rabbit in the west entertains great peril, but the compassionate Seven Snakes is the one to beg for a litter's safe delivery. A heartbroken parent might come here to visit their dead kit as well.

HEART OF THE MOUNTAINS, Tepeyollotl, (Aggressive, barely contained rage voice)

Trait: Territorial

- Challenge interlopers
- Guard his wife jealously
- Slay the defiant or ambitious
- Revert to jaguar nature
- Tear rabbits to shreds

