

War of the Mountain King

A alternate-history RPG fantasy campaign setting

#1 Overview and Campaign Style.

Overview: On the alternate Earth known as Pasales, the year is 1942... if you're an American. If you're not, it's been over three thousand years since the Fall of the last True Empire, and no realm on Pasales can truly compare itself to that glorious, terrifying, and ruthless magic kingdom. Certainly not the upstart United States of America, which is not so much a realm as it is the living embodiment of an apocalyptic curse. That country is here because there was a now-dead empire that lost a war; they decided to call down doom upon the entire continent as their last act of defiance; and this 'USA' was the result. Utterly dead to magic and comprised completely of madmen.

But they are *dangerous* madmen. The USA lost the first war they fought on Pasales, having no standing army and no magical might; and it lost its province of 'California' for a generation. And then it took back California, and much of what the USA called 'Mexico' in the process, thanks to terrifying machines of the earth, air and sky that shrugged off magic like it was immaterial. Worse, the Americans also allied themselves with the Mountain King (ruler of a realm in what the Americans call 'Russia') in order to get access to the King's sorcerous power. The Americans should have realized that there may have been a *reason* that no realm had previously voluntarily allied itself to the Mountain King, but nobody was interested in telling them until it was too late.

And so it is, again, 1942. The bill from the Mountain King has become due, and so American troops have been dispatched to the King's realm in order to fight his enemies (i.e., everybody else). Some Americans are pleased with the idea of wrecking still more Pasalan realms and petty-empires, given the typically horrible regimes running those realms. Some Americans

are becoming more revulsed with the one realm that they *are* allied with. Quite a few Americans would love to block the borders entirely and let the rest of Pasales get on with the Hell that it has created for itself. And a few Americans wonder if there's any way to reverse whatever this curse is...

Campaign style: this is fantasy, with a certain twist. If you're playing an American, you're almost certainly incapable of using magic, or having magic used on you. And if you're not playing an American, you have to describe to the GM just why you're a hated outcast from your parent culture... and just what horrible things that your people will do to you if they ever safely catch you. To be fair, American PCs are also often theoretically subject to this kill-on-sight rule, but many realms are quietly terrified of infuriating the American government. Besides, people who are immune to magic can be useful.

This campaign tends towards the grim. By American standards, the rest of the world is a dark carnival of terror where mages will light a town on fire and bet on whether more people would burn, or suffocate. By Pasalan standards, the USA is a place of sheer madness where the laws of the universe simply don't function, and if you look too hard at that, you go mad yourself. Which side has the right of it?

Well, check with your GM.

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