

# The Keep of the Thirteenth Hour

## Kevin Cowley

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### PART 1

## Campaign Guide

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Edited Kevin Cowley

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## 1. Introduction

The Keep of the Thirteenth hour is an introductory Campaign for experienced RPG players who are new to the Amber setting. Whilst not totally canonical the backstory/history for the campaign keeps reasonably close to events as details in both Corwin's and Merlin's Chronicles. It is not necessary to know anything about the books to play although knowing a little does help with character generation.

If you want to know more about the Amber Setting then a good synopsis of the stories including the Pattern Fall War and Merlin's exploits can be found on the following web sites.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Chronicles\\_of\\_Amber](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Chronicles_of_Amber)

<http://www.stwing.upenn.edu/~avm/Amber.shtml>

[http://members.tripod.com/~hurakan\\_2/amber/amber-timeline.txt](http://members.tripod.com/~hurakan_2/amber/amber-timeline.txt)

History is not necessarily as in the books so don't take everything written there as gospel.

The first step in any Amber Campaign is to work out some sort of character background. Unlike traditional RPGs you don't work out your attributes, then your race, then your class, and then your skills and then your skill set.

The whole precept of Amber is that you're playing a character, therefore the first step is determine what sort of character you want to play, scientist, doctor, soldier, warrior, activist, teacher, missionary, and what sort of world or universe they come from. The world/universe determines what level of technology they may be familiar with and whether they've come across magic as a reality, and any familiarity with real demons and shape shifters.

I have written 3 extended examples of character creation, which are on the website and which in later sections of this document. The first, Angelica Larson-Gates, is based on converting an existing Shadowrun character. The second, Gabriel Barwicke, is a complete stream of consciousness character generation intended for use in this campaign, and the third, Carlos Francisco Rojas, is a character generation for my Adventures-In-Role Play (AiRP) introduction to Amber campaign, based on the questionnaire I produced to aid character generation. Some of the elements of this I've now back ported to this Campaign Guide.

One of the key parts in defining the character is to define the world or shadow from which they hail.

In the Keep of the Thirteenth Hour campaign there are no preclusions on starting worlds (shadows), including coming from modern day or a parallel version of Earth with a different history other than those defined below.

If you specifically want your character to come from modern day Earth (the Earth as we know it and remain both in cannon and within the campaign parameters then it's not possible, primarily as the current date is beyond that of the campaign start date!

This wasn't the case the first time I ran the campaign.

If you want to come from the canonical shadow Earth, then the current date on this Earth is January 15th 2004.

Corwin was last here in January 1995. The Pattern Fall War ended in June 1995. Merlin was last here in June 2003 when Bill Ross disappeared. The time ratio between this Earth and Amber is 1.5:1

This means that if you come from modern day Earth then neither Corwin nor Florimel can be one of your parents (see section 2.3 Choosing a Parent). Don't worry about who either of these two are exactly for the time being if you aren't familiar with the Amber setting nor who or what other things stated below are – they refer to events and people depicted in the books and may be relevant later. The time ratio (and don't initially worry about these either) for modern day Earth is 1.507:1

The ratios for various other Shadow Earths are as below

Shadow Earth (Atlantis – 1000 BC)	0.0005
Shadow Earth (Ancient Greece – 300 BC)	0.0007
Shadow Earth (Roman Empire – 50AD)	0.0337
Shadow Earth (Mongol Empire – 1250)	0.94
Shadow Earth (Japanese Shogun – 1600)	1.2
Shadow Earth (Napoleonic War – 1810)	1.35
Shadow Earth (American Civil War – includes Deadlands 1876)	1.4
Shadow Earth (First World War – 1915)	1.43
Shadow Earth (Second World War – 1940)	1.45
Shadow Earth (Korean World War – 1952)	1.46
Shadow Earth (Vietnam World War – 1970)	1.47

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Shadow Earth (Falklands World War – 1982)	1.48
Shadow Earth (Gulf World War – 1992)	1.49
Shadow Earth (Chaos Earth – Palladium – 2098)	1.57
Shadow Earth (After the Bomb – Palladium – 2020)	1.51
Shadow Earth (Rifts Earth – Palladium – 2387)	1.79
(AD&D world or equivalent - AD1600 equivalent)	2.0
(Palladium RPG)	1.5

The ratios for other places that may be of interest (use) are as follows:

Golden Circle State (any)	1.0
Carnelian	4.0
Courts of Chaos	10.0
Elysium	8.0
Ygg	6.0

I suggest that the time ratio for most characters is between 1.4:1 and 4:1.

Characters originating from Pre-Industrial Revolution Societies, of from Societies that haven't reached an equivalent level of Technology will suffer severe Technological Shock at the start of the Campaign and thereafter until they adapt. Even those from Industrial but pre-WWII societies will suffer some degree of Technological shock. I fully expect the character to be played in a manner which reflects this!

## 2. Characters and Character Generation

This section should be read in conjunction with the Players Guide.

Characters in Amber are generated using points and the limits as detailed in section 2.2

Please read the entire section before attempting to generate a character especially the section relating to choosing a parent.

You may find the questionnaire in Appendix X useful when generating your character.

### 2.1 Character Knowledge in relation to the setting

The characters know little or nothing of Amber or the Courts of Chaos or anywhere else (and specifically about Carnelian). They may have heard of some of these places, dependent upon whom their parent(s) were and their involvement with their offspring.

If the characters had any involvement with their Amberite parent then the last possible time they would have seen them would have been the year in which their 13th birthday fell, and which corresponds to the year in which the Pattern Fall War (and the books) started. This interaction explicitly sets the age of the character based upon the Time ratio of the Shadow, and must be consistent with the Age limits for the character.

Irrespective of what the character may know of Amber, The Courts, or anywhere else the character has never been to any of these places, and has never met nor been introduced to any members of the wider Bariman Family, or if applicable any relatives or wider family or clan at/within the Courts! This is a fundamental precept of the campaign. The only Family members able to act are those who are unknown to one specific member, and the only way to ensure this is by the characters being completely unknown.

The character may have brothers or sisters, but they're half brothers or sisters. The character may have been adopted or raised in an orphanage. The possibility of half brothers or sisters depends on their parentage.

The character may have children and may be married, living with a partner, or single.

### 2.2 Auction and Points

Base Character Points	160
Attributes (minimum)	40
Attributes (maximum)	80
Mundane Skills (minimum)	10
Mundane Skills (maximum)	20

There will not be an Auction for this Campaign!

You get to assign one element of the following set of ranks to one of the 4 attributes: 3, 5, 5, 7.

### 2.3 Choosing a Parent

Read the whole section before attempting to select either or both of your Amberite and/or Chaosite Parent(s)!

I'm not going to pick your parent for you. You need to decide who you wish your parent(s) to be. However, there are a number of constraints that you need to bear in mind.

- 1) to be able to walk the Pattern the character must be one of Oberon's grandchildren (have Blood of Amber)
- 2) to Assay the Logrus the character must have full Shapeshifting capability
- 3) to gain full shapeshifting capability the character must a parent who is a Chaosite (have Blood of Chaos)
- 4) If you have both Blood of Amber and Blood of Chaos and your mother was one of Oberon's daughters then you are automatically an orphan brought up somewhere either in an orphanage or by adopted parents. There is no record of whom your real parents are only that you were abandoned!
- 5) If you have both Blood of Amber and Blood of Chaos and your mother was a Chaosite, but not necessarily a member of the Courts when she met your father. She was in almost all cases in human or humanoid form when she met your father. See "some Notes on Chosites as a parent"

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So who might your likely Amberite parent be? Let's start with Oberon's children (i.e. the children of Amber) in the order in which they were born.

Benedict

Osric (Definitely Dead – Killed by Oberon – This is a Campaign specific!)

Findo (Presumed Dead – Presumed Killed by Oberon – Currently I've made no specific Campaign decision on whether this is not true or on potential descendants.)

Eric (Died in the Pattern Fall War)

Corwin (Disappeared shortly after the end of the Pattern Fall War)

Deidre (Died at the End of the Pattern Fall War)

Fiona

Bleys

Brand (Died at the End of the Pattern Fall War)

Llewella

Caine (Died after the End of the Pattern Fall War – Assassinated during Merlin's Saga)

Julian

Gerard

Florimel

Coral

Random

Mirelle

Delwin & Sand (Twins – Brother and Sister)

Dalt

There are also a couple of other potential parents, which would make you a great grandchild of Oberon

Dara (Great Grand Daughter of Benedict)

Merlin (Son of Corwin by Dara)

Rinaldo (Son of Brand and Jasra)

Martin (Son of Random)

Whilst it appears an extensive list, it's not, as the histories of a lot of these are well documented in the books.

Of the daughters of Oberon, Deirdre, Llewella, Fiona and Florimel are thought not to have any children. Of the four all bar

Fiona are unlikely to have abandoned any offspring.

Florimel's history is fairly well known, and she is known to have been on Shadow Earth for the period 1970 through 2002.

During this time she had no children and had none hanging about!

Deirdre dies during the Pattern Fall war at the hands of her brother Brand, but no reference is made to any children she may have had prior to this time. There are campaign specific reasons why she is not available as a parent!

Llewella features as a character in both The Pattern Fall war books and the Merlin books, and again no mention is made of any children she may have had.

This potentially leaves Mirelle, Sand, and Coral.

- Coral is proscribed as a parent as her history is well documented.
- Mirelle is a complete unknown, she barely gets a mention in the books
- Sand features briefly in the books little but little is known about her, other than she detests Amber and most of the rest of the Family. She has not been seen in Amber for more than 200 Amber Years.

Note: If you read the Extended Character Example for Angelica, then it may provide an idea of how Fiona can have children without the hassle of needing to become pregnant and give birth.

Of the sons of Oberon Corwin's history is well recorded. He arrived in London, England in 1666 during the Great Plague. He stayed in England for a while before travelling in Europe and settling in France, until the Second World War when he moved to back England. In 1970 he moved to America with his English Chinese girlfriend, who in 1973 bore him a daughter. He lives with them until 1977, when he moves to his own residence in, New York. He disappears from Earth 1987 although his movements until Early 1995 are accounted for. This removes Corwin from the pool of possible parents!.

This leaves the rest of the children of Oberon as potential parents, Brand, Bleys, Benedict, Delwin, Eric, Caine, Julian, Random, and Gerard.

For various reasons, unless you can come up with a convincing argument I'm ruling all the others out as potential parents, including Findo and Osric. There is a campaign mechanism that potentially allows you to be a descendant of Osric. If you wish to pursue this angle then you will need to discuss it with me.

If you want Brand as your father then there is an additional complication. If he was your father then you actually have no idea that he was! Neither you nor your mother have had any contact with him since the point at which she became pregnant, and it was most likely a chance encounter/one night stand, and whilst she might not have actually been physically raped, she couldn't have said no either!

The same comments apply to Delwin as apply to Sand.

If you have Blood of Chaos then neither Dara nor Jasra can be your mother. Your Chaosian parent is from one of the following houses:- Hendrake, Helgram, Sawall, Chanicut, Jesby, Amblerash, Barimen, or Minobe. See "Some Notes on Chaosites as a Parent" below.

## **2.4 Character Age**

Whatever your parentage you should arrange your history so that you start the game with an age of between 25 and 35.

## **2.5 Some Notes on Chaosites as a Parent**

### **2.5.1 What the Books say**

The Amber books make no determination or statement on way of another as to whether or not Chaosites are only found in and around the Courts. There are various odd references in the Merlin Saga and the original Phage Press books as to how dodgy the Ways around the Courts can be in terms of dropping the unwary across Shadow, but it's all pretty much speculation.

In addition to this there are lots of references to Chaosites being Demonic but no firm descriptions or detail, and then there is Rebma, supposedly a vast city under the sea.

### **2.5.2 The Rebma Problem**

So if Rebma exists as a huge city under the sea, and again exactly how far "under the sea" then it can't be populated by humans, unless the whole city is covered by a massive air dome – note the word dome here this means that the height the dome extends above the city is the same as it's radius, so if you have a city 1 mile (5700ft) wide then the dome has to be 2850ft in radius, which means the city has to be at least 3000ft below the surface, and the only place you'd find anything like that on Earth is Hawaii, and that's because Hawaii is actually a volcano, and not on what is considered a continental shelf.

In reality this means that Rebma as a city could be a series of much smaller interlocking domes, but this doesn't really fit with a vast sprawling undersea city. So what does?

Well to have an undersea city without a vast array of domes means you need a population that can freely survive underwater without the need for vast air domes. But Remba does have Air Domes, otherwise your average Amberite family member wouldn't have either been able to live or visit Remba, unless the whole city has the same magic enchantment as the stair case, which allows free movement and breathing underwater. Except that this is only mentioned in connection to the staircase, and as the Pattern inherently dispels magic couldn't be used anywhere near the Pattern unless it's a Pattern based enchantment in the first place..

We therefore have a housing problem in Remba that needs to be able to cope with air breathing humans or humanoids, that needs to be able to cope with those that are water breathing, and that allows transition and free movement.

### **2.5.3 The Population of Rebma**

The Rebman population is therefore made up of 3 groups, Humans (for all intents and purposes) approx. 15%, Merpeople approx. 40%, and Aquaotl (pronounced Aqua-Kotal) approx. 45%.

The latter group are a humanoid aquatic race, that is a genetic branch of a genus of which the Aquassi are the other. The Aquaotl have less dense fur, a lesser ability to deep dive, but a greater ability to stay submerged. They also don't possess the secrets of Techno-Wizardry but are adept Mages none the less. Like the Aquassi, they are not water breathers but have the same physiological adaptations as Earth Cetacean species that allow them to stay submerged for long periods of time and deep dive without significant consequences.

The third group are in fact Chaosites, or rather one of the groups of natural shapeshifters that fall into the racial group called Chaosites. Merpeople, or rather your stereotypical Merman or Mermaid, a race capable of appearing as half man/half fish with the ability to appear human as they wish, and breathe water or air with equal ease, are just one of the genus of Chaosite, as Apes are a genus of mammals.

This group of Chaosites are also almost unique and predominately found only in Rebma and within the Golden Circle, although occasionally they find themselves but dint of Magic gone awry, Shadow Storms, and Dimensional Rifts, transported to other shadows where they give rise to Legends.

Whilst in theory the Chaosite residents of Rebma could, with the right training Assay the Logrus, in reality they are barred from the Courts by Suhey. They are also, since they are not descended from Dworkin, unable to set foot on the Pattern.

#### **2.5.4 The Population of the Courts of Chaos**

The Courts of Chaos as per the books are just a named place without much detail; it's not even clear if the "City" abuts the Abyss or is completely separate from it. If the Abyss, is a moat or border where does it start and where does it end, and what's on the other side of said moat? And if it's a moat how do you cross it?

What is clear is that the "City" is vastly larger than Amber City, and that the majority of most of the Noble houses, including the Royal Palace, are actually not in the Shadow in which the Courts actually reside but spread over a vast number of shadows.

This puts the population of the Courts into the hundreds of thousands, if not the low millions.

The Books also describe Chaosites as "Demonic" in appearance, but that could mean anything!

There are therefore a few rules..

- 1) They are not Demons.. Demons are something else entirely
- 2) They are all "humanoid", that is bipedal, with 2 arms, and a single head atop a short neck
- 3) They may have scaly (like a snake), leathery (like Komodo Dragons), or Chitinous (like beetles) hides
- 4) They may have taloned hands and/or feet
- 5) They may have small protruding horns, bony ridges, or small curly horns.
- 6) They do not have tails or additional limbs or appendages(unless as a shapeshifted form)
- 7) They may have small wings, although these only allow them to glide rather than give them the true power of flight.
- 8) In their natural demonic form they are between 6'6" and 9'6" tall.
- 9) Their "normal" form depends on where they are raised.. In a "human" population their normal form is "human". In the Courts it is generally demonic, although post the Pattern F all War and post the ascendancy of Merlin to the Throne of Chaos, human form has become de rigueur.
- 10) Their natural lifespan is between 450 and 750 years
- 11) They are taught from an early age the techniques of shielding their thoughts, and the techniques of psychically manipulating others. However standard Psyche dominance applies, so they can manipulate those over which they have Psyche Advantage but also be manipulated by those with a Psyche advantage over them.

The Gargoyle race is one of the distinct Chaosite genus and accounts for about 10% of the population. Gargolyes have grey leathery skin, small wings, small horns, and taloned hands and feet. They do not turn to stone when exposed to sunlight!

#### **2.5.5 Chaosites Elsewhere!**

Aside from the Chaosite population in the Courts there are as many if not more scattered across shadow.

These are a mix of Renegades, Exiles, and the "lost", members of low echelon families who've fallen through Rifts, or voids in the Ways of the Noble Families, and ended up somewhere in Shadow.

The entirety of the "lost" generally just have the genetic ability of all Chaosites to Shapeshift, although this may have been further developed over their lifetimes. Some may also possess the ability to use Power Words, and if the shadow supports magic they may have enhanced this ability over their lifetimes. They may also in these cases have also acquired the ability to use Sorcery.



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Renegades and Exiles are a different matter. The distinction is that Renegades have left the Courts voluntarily or are the descendants of former Exiles. Exiles are those who have been “thrown out” of the Courts for one reason or another. The complication with both of these groups is that if they have Logrus Mastery they can never use their Logrus abilities as doing so alerts the Logrus to their location, and if it so chooses it can feed this information to other Logrus users. Both of these groups tend to be members of the Nobility, so are better educated, and often will have either or both of Sorcery and/or Conjunction in addition to Shapeshifting. Some may also be skilled in the use and creation of Trump (Note creating a Shadow traversing Trump requires the use of the Logrus). This means their descendants may also possess Sorcery, Conjunction, or basic Trump skills.

## 2.6 Example Characters

What follows is a walk-through of the generation of 4 characters. The first two are done using “quick” concept characters based upon particular RPG settings which already have well defined worlds and technological settings.

As sketch concept characters they also don’t qualify for any bonus points for use in character creation.

The second two characters are far more detailed and serve as examples of the process of “conceptualizing” a character, defining their history, and then fitting this in with acquiring representative Amber skills and powers.

The first of these, Angelica Olivia Larson-Gates is based upon a character I played in a ShadowRun campaign. Her history is outlined as I wanted it for the ShadowRun campaign, but what then follows is how this can be modified to turn this character into a character that would fit within an Amber setting.

The second of these two characters and the last of the 4 is used to illustrate the process I use when putting together a character from a simple template. It starts as a stream of consciousness development and ends with how this can be written up as a fully-fledged character background.

### 2.6.1 Augustine ‘Tank’ Malchovich

Let’s create a Marine Commander aboard the CAF Cruiser Meron. His father is Julian and his mother is the daughter of one of the Minor Lords of the Chaos house Minobe. She was exiled for absconding after her marriage to Lord Krane of House Jesby was announced, and then getting herself pregnant. We want Tank to be first in Endurance and first or second in Strength, with a good Warfare. However he’s a bit thick so we’re buying down his Psyche to Chaos and using the points for Shapeshifting. We need to keep points back because we want to assay the Logrus and maybe walk the Pattern.

Blood of Amber and Blood of Chaos cost us 5 points total.

The auction is first and we’re allocating 70 points to Attributes. The order determined for the auction (by drawing cards is) Endurance, Psyche, Warfare, and lastly Strength. After all the bidding Tank has the following ranks

- Endurance – 1st – 37 points
- Psyche – Unranked – Chaos
- Warfare – ranked – 2 points
- Strength – 2nd – 31 points

Dividing the points ignoring ranks, we decide on the following

Psyche (Chaos)	
General	-
Will Power	-
Logic	-
Intuition	-
Memory	-
Perception	-
Spatial Awareness	-
Danger Sense	-
Empathy	-

  

Strength (31)	
General	15
Bench Press	8
Lift	7
Torsion	5
Impact	5
Agility	6

Endurance (37)	
General	<b>18</b>
Mental	<b>6</b>
Physical	<b>17</b>
Healing	<b>6</b>
Constitution	<b>8</b>

  

Warfare (2)	
General	1
Strategy/Tactics	-
Unarmed	-
Armed	-
Swordplay	-
Propelled	-
Firearms	1
Artillery	-
Guided	-
Armour	1
Fighter	-

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As 1st Rank in Endurance we get to add  $5 \times 37 / 4 = 46$  points to Endurance:General and divide 74 points amongst the other categories.

As 2nd Rank in Strength we get to add 31 points to Strength:General and divide  $7 \times 31 / 4 = 54$  points amongst the other categories.

As ranked in Warfare we get to add  $2 / 10 = 0$  points to General and  $2 / 10 = 0$  points divided amongst the other categories.

Thus we get

<p>Psyche (Chaos)</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td>General</td><td style="text-align: center;">-</td></tr> <tr><td>Will Power</td><td style="text-align: center;">-</td></tr> <tr><td>Logic</td><td style="text-align: center;">-</td></tr> <tr><td>Intuition</td><td style="text-align: center;">-</td></tr> <tr><td>Memory</td><td style="text-align: center;">-</td></tr> <tr><td>Perception</td><td style="text-align: center;">-</td></tr> <tr><td>Spatial Awareness</td><td style="text-align: center;">-</td></tr> <tr><td>Danger Sense</td><td style="text-align: center;">-</td></tr> <tr><td>Empathy</td><td style="text-align: center;">-</td></tr> </table> <p>Strength (31)</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td>General</td><td style="text-align: center;">15+31</td></tr> <tr><td>Bench Press</td><td style="text-align: center;">8+13</td></tr> <tr><td>Lift</td><td style="text-align: center;">7+13</td></tr> <tr><td>Torsion</td><td style="text-align: center;">5+7</td></tr> <tr><td>Impact</td><td style="text-align: center;">5+10</td></tr> <tr><td>Agility</td><td style="text-align: center;">6+11</td></tr> </table>	General	-	Will Power	-	Logic	-	Intuition	-	Memory	-	Perception	-	Spatial Awareness	-	Danger Sense	-	Empathy	-	General	15+31	Bench Press	8+13	Lift	7+13	Torsion	5+7	Impact	5+10	Agility	6+11	<p>Endurance (37)</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td>General</td><td style="text-align: center;">18+46</td></tr> <tr><td>Mental</td><td style="text-align: center;">6+10</td></tr> <tr><td>Physical</td><td style="text-align: center;">17+24</td></tr> <tr><td>Healing</td><td style="text-align: center;">6+10</td></tr> <tr><td>Constitution</td><td style="text-align: center;">8+20</td></tr> </table> <p>Warfare (2)</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td>General</td><td style="text-align: center;">1</td></tr> <tr><td>Strategy/Tactics</td><td style="text-align: center;">-</td></tr> <tr><td>Unarmed</td><td style="text-align: center;">-</td></tr> <tr><td>Armed</td><td style="text-align: center;">-</td></tr> <tr><td>Swordplay</td><td style="text-align: center;">-</td></tr> <tr><td>Propelled</td><td style="text-align: center;">-</td></tr> <tr><td>Firearms</td><td style="text-align: center;">1</td></tr> <tr><td>Artillery</td><td style="text-align: center;">-</td></tr> <tr><td>Guided</td><td style="text-align: center;">-</td></tr> <tr><td>Armour</td><td style="text-align: center;">1</td></tr> <tr><td>Fighter</td><td style="text-align: center;">-</td></tr> </table>	General	18+46	Mental	6+10	Physical	17+24	Healing	6+10	Constitution	8+20	General	1	Strategy/Tactics	-	Unarmed	-	Armed	-	Swordplay	-	Propelled	-	Firearms	1	Artillery	-	Guided	-	Armour	1	Fighter	-
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Fighter	-																																																														

Note: it's useful to write the values for the attributes as base + bonus as shown above, as it better enables you to track how your distributable points are spent and enables easier upgrade of the values when the base stat is upgraded.

Having determined our attributes, our parentage, and got the auction out of the way we've used up  $5 + 70 - 10 = 65$  of our 160 points. We've now got to allocate a minimum of 10 points to mundane skills that reflect our career as a Marine in a high tech society.

As we're not a warfare specialist we'll pick up some skills that may be useful.

- Energy Weapons – 2
- Aerospace Fighters – 1
- Unarmed Combat -2
- Zero-G Manoeuvres -1
- Force Blades -1
- Power Armour -1
- Grav-Bikes-2

This leaves us 85 points to spend on powers either immediately or later in the game. We decide that Tank's quite flash and the universe looks kindly on him so take 10 points of Good Stuff – we can always burn these later on powers, attributes, or items.

The universe Tank comes from is high tech, magic, and is quite used to strange aliens and shapeshifters. Given his mother is Chaosian we decide that he's been able to shapeshift since he was a kid and has become quite good at it developing several forms to suit various needs over the years. We therefore can buy various Shapeshifting powers.

- Basic Shapeshifting to Known Forms (20) –
  - Primal Form, Demon Form (Normal, Non-Flying, Air Breathing),
  - Human Form, Demon Form (Winged),
  - Demon Form (Aquatic), Demon Form (Vacuum Survival)
- Automatic Shapeshift/Primal Form (5)
- Shift Wounds (5)
- Shift Features/Body Parts (5+5) Fluid Flesh

- Mould Unliving non-self Matter (5)

This uses 45 of our remaining 75 points leaving us 30.

We're going to need 10 points later for Logrus Imprint and a lot more if we want to do anything useful with it. Similarly it's going to take 10 points for Pattern Imprint and 5 points for Shadow Walk if we don't want to be reliant on our brothers and sisters. If we bank these we've still got 5 points to play with. We decide to burn these on a suit of armour. As we know nothing of Amber or Shadow it can't have any powers relating to Shadow Manipulation but damage resistance and other such abilities should be okay.

Armour – Engine Speed (4)

Impervious to Normal Weapons (4)

Extra Damage (2)

Amber Healing (2) – regenerative armour

Since we've gone seven points over our 5 we reduce our good stuff to 3.

### 2.6.2 Marlina

Let's create a character from an AD&D type world. Abandoned by her father, Marlina's mother had a hard time in life, and Marlina grew up on the streets and became an integral part of the Thieves Guild in her home city. When she was 20 a job opportunity arose and she joined a group of adventures spending the next 11 years travelling the continent. Magic had always fascinated Marlina and one of the group she worked with was a Mage, and after several months of persuasion he agreed to teach her the ways of sorcery, although it never became her primary skill area. As a Rogue archetype Marlina needs good Dexterity and benefits from a high IQ. Translating these into Amber terms we need good agility, intuition, and logic. Since Rogues are reasonably good at combat we're also going to need some skill at arms and a reasonable constitution to back all this up

We're not sure what Amber powers we want so we're going to try and save some points to buy skills as they come along and we get a feel for the game. The game notes indicate that Pattern or Logrus are important, and the GM has hinted that pattern would be useful, so we'll reserve the 10 points for Pattern Imprint.

We haven't got a clue about who we should have as a parent so we roll a d10 ignoring 10's and get a 1 - Brand is our Father

The auction is first and we're allocating the full allowed 80 points to Attributes. The order determined for the auction (by drawing cards is) Endurance, Warfare, Psyche, and lastly Strength

After the bidding Marlina has the following ranks

- Endurance - ranked - 10 points
- Warfare - 7th - 10 points
- Psyche - 5th - 30 points
- Strength - 1st - 30 points

Dividing the points ignoring ranks, we decide on the following

Psyche (30)	
General	15
Will Power	4
Logic	4
Intuition	4
Memory	4
Perception	4
Spatial Awareness	4
Danger Sense	4
Empathy	2
Strength (30)	
General	15
Bench Press	4
Lift	4
Torsion	4
Impact	6
Agility	12

Endurance (10)	
General	5
Mental	2
Physical	2
Healing	3
Constitution	3
Warfare (10)	
General	5
Strategy/Tactics	-
Unarmed	-
Armed	3
Swordplay	3
Propelled	4
Firearms	-
Artillery	-
Guided	-
Armour	-
Fighter	-

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As 5th Rank in Psyche we get to add  $30/4=7$  points to Psyche:General and divide 30 points amongst the other categories

As 1st Rank in Strength we get to add  $5*30/4=37$  points to Strength:General and divide 60 points amongst the other categories

As ranked in Endurance we get to add  $10/10=1$  points to Endurance:General and divide  $10/4=2$  points amongst the other categories

As 7th Rank in Warfare we get to add  $10/10=1$  points to General and  $10/2=5$  points divided amongst the other categories

Psyche (30)	
General	15+7
Will Power	4
Logic	4+6
Intuition	4+6
Memory	4
Perception	4+6
Spatial Awareness	4+6
Danger Sense	4+6
Empathy	2

  

Strength (30)	
General	15+37
Bench Press	4+10
Lift	4+10
Torsion	4+10
Impact	6+10
Agility	12+20

Endurance (10)	
General	5+1
Mental	2
Physical	2
Healing	3
Constitution	3+2

  

Warfare (10)	
General	5+1
Strategy/Tactics	-
Unarmed	-
Armed	3+1
Swordplay	3+2
Propelled	4+2
Firearms	-
Artillery	-
Guided	-
Armour	-
Fighter	-

Thus having determined our attributes, our parentage, and got the auction out of the way we've used up 80 of our 160 points. We've now got to allocate a minimum of 10 points to mundane skills that reflect our career as a Rogue come Sorcerer.

- Detect Traps - 1
- Disarm Traps - 1
- Pick Locks - 2
- Move Silently - 2
- Hide in Shadows - 2
- Climb - 2
- Rope Use - 1
- Balance - 1
- Identify Magical Symbolology - 1
- Decipher Magical Inscriptions - 1
- Spell Lore - 2

This leaves us 64 points to spend on powers either immediately or later in the game. We want to reserve 10 points for Pattern Imprint leaving us 54. We're not unlucky but we're not particularly lucky either, so we'll take 2 points of Good Stuff, and we'll bank 10 points for skills later. This leaves us with 42 points to use to purchase Sorcery Skills and Magic Items

Looking at the Sorcery Skill we need Magical Initiation, 5 points, and Basic Sorcery one side of Ygg (whatever that is) 3 points. Our GM suggests spending the additional 2 points to get Both Sides of Ygg. We've now spent 10 of our 42 points. If we read the power descriptions we can only store 1 spell which is not much use so we take Spell Rack, 3 points. Reading this power description suggests we might need a container to actually rack our spells in and the GM confirms this. He also confirms that to get Advance Sorcery we do need 35 points of Basic Sorcery despite their only being 15 points listed in the table- what we need to do is spend more than the required number of points on any power which increases our understanding.

Before we do this we'll have a look at items. A magic sword would be useful and we need a container. The problem is the Items section is difficult to understand and interpret. To get say a Frost Brand we need Deadly Damage(2), Manipulate Shadow(2), Impervious to Normal Weapons (4) + Transfer & Retain(+15) = 23 points! A 'simple' sword, Deadly Damage, however costs just 2 points.

We could add a Spell rack to this but we prefer a ring so pay 2 points for a name and numbered spell rack ring - stores up to 12 spells.

Rings generally work differently in Amber to other systems so it is better to have magic armour rather than rings of protection, so we get a suit of leather armour Resistant to Normal weapons for 2 points

We've now spent 19 of our 42 points. We now add Spell Stealing (purely because it sounds neat) 2 points and start adding points to get our 35 in Basic Sorcery, which include the 5 points for Magical Initiation.

- Magical Initiation - 5
- Sorcery - Both Sides of Ygg - 5 + 10
- Spell Rack - 3 + 8
- Spell Stealing - 2 + 2

This actually cost 43 points, with our items reducing our banked points to 9. We could opt to take an Advanced Sorcery power at this point, but we choose to develop it "in game" instead.

### 2.6.3 Angelica Olivia Larson-gates

For those of you not familiar with the ShadowRun setting it is inspired by the whole "cyberpunk" genre exemplified by (amongst others) William Gibson in his Neuromancer and MonaLisa Overdrive novels. The character I wanted to play in this campaign was loosely based upon "Step'n Razor", a female Assassin/Body Guard/Enforcer from Neuormancer. At about the time the campaign started the second "St Trinians" film had just been released and I wanted to incorporate some of the "bad girl" attitudes from this; although the new versions are nowhere near as risqué as the originals were when compared to the time when they were made.

Putting these two together gave me a background archetype for a "spoilt little rich girl" dis-inherited by her family in an attempt to force her to mend her ways. The flaw in this of course is that the "average spoilt little rich girl" would just fall apart and reform so to make the character work we're not average. We therefore need to throw in a large devious streak ala "The Heathers".

The next step is to work out why she was dis-inherited and how she got there. Now in terms of the games system I also needed her to have the dis-advantage of Enemy-Hunted, the obvious enemy in this case being her family. Elevate her father to somebody important in a medium to large Corp with a need to bring her in-line to avoid losing face or allow some major screw-up to become public knowledge and we fulfil the requirements; the Corp becomes the Enemy with her father misusing Corp resources in an attempt to bring his wayward daughter to heal.

So if her father/the Corp he works for is hunting her, how did this situation arise? We'll the most obvious answer is that her father used Corp resources to attempt to bring his daughter to heal but the attempt failed, and because it failed its now become necessary to bring his daughter in because if it got out that the Corp couldn't control to actions of its employees or their families then the Corp would face a serious loss of credibility. This also backs her father into a corner that in-order to cover-up the misuse of Corp resources in the first place he's having to now use them officially not to bring his daughter in but erase her.

Following this line suggests that she fell into the line of work she's currently in possibly by accident, probably because things went wrong at some point, and at some point she's also been forced to kill one or more of the Goons sent to retrieve her. In her bio, which I've re-written a couple of times since the basic conceptualization, the first time she kills is a complete accident, she stabs a goon waiting for her as she enters her motel room. She's then grabbed by a second goon and dumped into a chair. He tries to cuff her but doesn't do so from behind. As he's applying the cuffs, realization dawns on her of her predicament, and she stands up abruptly head butting the goon. In epic Hollywood style we now apply a little dramatic license and give the Goon a glass jaw, which she breaks in the process of head butting him, add a trickle of blood from the nose as she cuffs and gags him and we set the scene for a double murder, which at this point in her career she's completely naive about.

This also furthers the corporate powers mis-use angle, as her father still inclined to protect her covers up the murder whilst sending further corporate goons after her.

At this point in the character history there are two missing elements

- 1) How she gets from here to acquire her combat skills
- 2) Why she was forced to "run" from her father in the first place.

So let's deal with the second element first, and explore the "St Trinians"/"wild child" angle a little more. If she's as bad as we would like her to be then her school record is going to be pretty poor, so she's been to multiple schools and probably has been expelled from several of them. No any parent, with any status, faced with this situation is likely to try and do something about it. This means she's going to get moved to a specialist school in the latter years of her education and have any allowance reduced or stopped.

Given the archetype she's not going to take any of this lying down and is going to try and find a manner in which she can maintain her "lifestyle". Given her social level, the answer is pretty obvious, bored execs with dull lives and dull wives and a very attractive 15 year old in need of cash. Throw a twist into the plot, say just before she turns 16, when one of her clients enquires if their sessions will continue after she's married, and we have the perfect setup for her to run.

We now move to the acquisition of her combat skills and her conversion from "spoilt wild child" to bodyguard/assassin. In ShadowRun the modern geographic and political scene is vastly different to that of today. Most of the world has devolved to anarchic city states, most controlled by large Mega corporations who are continually at war, both openly and subvertly with one another. Those city states that aren't controlled by Mega corps are both at war with one another and at war the Mega Corps. Travel is possible, generally those states notionally allied or friendly or nominally neutral. Anyone of any status is registered at birth and has a SIN number which identifies them and links them with their bank accounts and health provision. Of course there is an "underground" where things operate differently, and real cash as opposed to "credits" and barter rules. At the point at which Angelica "runs" she knows nothing of this underground, how it functions, or the relationship between SIN registration and cred sticks. This is one of the first things she learns as her father's goons pursue and track her.

My original concept for where she learnt her skills was in Mongolia, which meant I had to get her there from Seattle. In the original campaign I'd just invented this on the spot without any real thought and it wasn't until later that I actually worked out how it may be possible. It was in the process of doing this that I actually was able to fill in, how her previously nicely concocted plan falls apart, how she loses most of her possessions and cred sticks she's previously acquired and is forced to start changing her world view, how she accidentally kills the first sets of goons, how they pursue her and how she both acquires weapons she later uses, and how a chance encounter with a deserter enables her to learn how to use them.

#### **2.6.3.1 Converting Angelica for Amber**

So how might I take the character of Angelica as outlined and developed for ShadowRun and make her valid for Amber? What if I said she was already a valid template, as she is. I could use her exactly as her biography is currently written; all I need to do is to work out, the "parentage" angle and what if any "Powers or abilities" I want her to have.

In her story as presented her mother is left as a blank canvas, assumed to be as human as her father is. This means her mother could in reality either be an Amberite or a Chaosite, or neither. Similarly, so could her father, but we're assuming that her father as she knows him is her biological father, what if he isn't. What if he's sterile, or if she was conceived as the result of an affair her mother had. What if her mother is in reality sterile and she is the result of in vitro fertilization of donated eggs or eggs and sperm? At the level of technology present in the genre any of these scenarios is eminently possible.

Because I know Amber well, and in particular the temperament and characters of the "Children of Amber", I'm going to use this with a "left field" concept to set Angelica's real parents, and in doing so change the perspective of why certain things in her history are the way they are.

So firstly I'm going to make her mother Fiona. Now if you've read the intro properly you know that Fiona is thought to not have any children. If you've read the Amber books, the RPG Books, and various other Amber sites, you'll be aware that to Fiona the thought of spending 9 months crippled by carrying a child and then giving birth is just repugnant. However, Fiona is one, if not the cleverest of all the Amberites, and she's not averse to using any technological advantage she may come across to ensure that she has a claim on the Throne. Fiona like the rest of the family is very familiar with Earth, so it would not be difficult for her to find an alternate shadow with a slightly different history and adapt it to meet her needs.

So, finding a suitable shadow earth Fiona set about manipulating events to meet her needs. She found a medium sized corporation that was struggling to survive, bought it outright, and by subtle manipulation of probability turned it into a tiger. Amongst its staff she found Lachlan Larson-gates, a man languishing far below his potential, but more importantly he had a wife who was sterile and both wanted children. Again through probability manipulation and a little psychic coaching she got him promoted to a position where she could make him an offer. She would arrange an in vitro fertilization implant for his wife, and a seat on the board, in exchange for him bringing up the child in the manner she dictated. It was an offer neither he nor his wife could refuse (even if they had any idea they wanted to). Fiona then donated the necessary eggs and had them fertilized with sperm unknowingly donated by Random, and implanted into Lachlan's wife. The result was that 9 months later Angelica was born.

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From then on everything more or less happens as per her original history, except now, and unbeknownst to Angelica, the real controlling influence on what happens to her is not her Father as she thinks, but Fiona. The other problem is, which fits very nicely within her history and within characteristics of her mother, is that she has a massive stubborn streak, is somewhat pig-headed, and very competent at what she does. This effectively means that Fiona's nicely conceived plan of how she's going to train the ideal candidate to take over the throne of Amber just falls apart.

Having dealt with Angelica's parentage we know need to deal with her skills. As she knows nothing of Amber, she can't have any pattern powers. In the original ShadowRun context she was just a cybernetically enhanced bodyguard/assassin, and under the ShadowRun system cybernetics and magic don't mix (very well), so she never learnt any magic. She's also not a shapeshifter, which leaves 4 possible powers she could acquire, Jewel of Judgement, Abyss, Chi, and Trump. The first two are ruled out by the "knows nothing of Amber or the Courts" ruling for the campaign, leaving just Chi powers and Trump.

Now in her original history, apart from acquiring a number of combat skills by accident she actually acquires her formal combat training in Mongolia, leaning Gung Fu. The decision now is as to how many points to put into martial arts skill as Chi powers require 4 points, which doesn't fit with her history, and she definitely doesn't embrace either a Taoist or Buddhist philosophy. I'm therefore not going to give her Chi powers.

Before I go much further I'm going to actually translate her original ShadowRun skills into Amber concepts.

- Martial Arts (2)
- Archery (2)
- Firearms (1)
- Polearms (1)
- Thrown weapons (1)
- Stealth (2)
- Shadow (2)
- Streetwise (2)
- Biology (1)
- Chemistry (1)
- Poisons (1)
- Psychology (1)
- Sociology (1)
- Etiquette (1)
- Business (1)

This uses the maximum number of skill points available for mundane skills. If we reserve the full 80 points for the auction we still have 60 points of our original 160 to either spend or leave in reserve. I now have a decision to make. If I want her to have trump ability then I need her to have a mundane skill in art; 1 point is sufficient, which means altering her skills.

However, I don't feel I want to do this, which means that if I want Trump powers in-game I'm going to need to find a way of gaining that art skill....

So I have 60 points completely un-used which is fine as far as things go, but I've so far not done anything to reflect her cybernetic enhancements. If I'm going to do a full translation then I really ought to address this which means going and consulting the "Items and Constructs" section of the rules.

And now I hit a snag.. Because her cybernetic enhancements are actually magic items from a 3rd Edition supplement, which I don't have, so I'm going to need to do a little work.

On second thoughts let's not do it that way. Let's go back to my original concept based on Neuromancer, but translated to 3rd Edition Bioware. If we do this then she would have had Headware:Commlink (enhanced) with sub-vocal microphones, Cybereyes(Low light, thermographic, image magnification), Retractable Hand Spurs, Dermal Plating, Wired Reflexes with Reflex Trigger, Smartlink.

To translate these to Amber rules each of these items needs to have a power or quality and the transfer option. Since the item in question doesn't retain its powers (it can't operate independently) it uses the lower multiplier.

So let's see what translates and what doesn't.

- Headware:Commlink (enhanced) with sub-vocal microphones – just an implanted item; doesn't confer anything special in relation to Amber items – no cost.



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- Cybereyes (Low light, thermographic, image magnification) – just and implanted item; doesn't confer anything special in relation to Amber items. However – if we go to a Shadow where such high tech items cease to function we'd end up blind! Therefore, we're going to need these to function wherever we go (or at least most places). The easiest way to do this is to give the item Shadow Manipulation – Shadow Alteration [1]. This would allow it to function almost everywhere. Also note this does not need to transfer ability as it doesn't need to give this power to the wearer.
- Retractable Hand Spurs – These do enhanced damage, but don't need to transfer this quality to the user. Let's make these Serious Damage Items [4]. However – if we go to a Shadow where such high tech items cease to function we wouldn't be able to extend or retract them, so again we give them Shadow Manipulation – Shadow Alteration [1]
- Dermal Plating – this is plating bonded to the user's body which is highly resistant to damage. Since it doesn't actually transfer this power it doesn't need the transfer ability. Also in Amber terms this doesn't work very well, so instead of Dermal Plating we'll just take a suit of armour Impervious to Normal Weapons [4].
- Wired Reflexes with Reflex Trigger. – In ShadowRun this item specifically boosts the user's reflexes; which in an Amber setting means it needs the transferal ability and which multiplies the item quality cost by 2. The closest quality to the requirement is the Aggression quality. Because we're already Amberite, we already have considerably better than human reflexes, but the effect of the item is to allow us to exceed the normal restriction on an attribute not exceeding the value of the general category which governs it. Now Amber inherently has no Reflex attribute, but I use the average of Intuition and Agility to gauge Reflexes. However, these sub-attributes are in two separate Attribute areas, Psyche and Strength, and it's more logical for Wired Reflexes to boost Agility which is a sub-attribute of Strength. Now since this is a very specific specialization the item functions as if it were 1 rank higher than it would otherwise, so we can probably get away with a 1 point item, but with the transfer power means it costs 2 points. Again – if we go to a Shadow where such high tech items cease to function we wouldn't be able to use this ability, so again we give it Shadow Manipulation – Shadow Alteration [1]. However, this is not a transferred power so it just adds to the cost making it a 3 point item.
- Smartlink – In Shadow run this just enables a suitably equipped weapon to project its targeting and status information onto the user's retina. Again there is no specific item quality or power that represents this in Amber, so it's just an implanted item. Since this item is likely to work in any Shadow where a Smartlink weapon would work we wouldn't need Shadow Manipulation for it as we could live without it.

But suppose we also wanted a weapon, excluding an unpowered melee weapon such as a sword, that would work in most Shadows. Suppose we wanted a Gauntlet Microlite Mauler Smartgun that worked in most shadows. Well this would just be a 1 point firearm (for Shadow Manipulation – Shadow Alteration [1]), but this is a bit limiting as it still requires ammunition. If we made it a 2 point item then we could get it to replenish its ammunition over a period of time. Now as a fire arm it is inherently a 1 point damage item. Therefore if we paid an additional point we could make it a 2 point damage item.

However, in Amber terms it's still not smart. For that we need to add the Psychic quality. At 1 point it's not much use, but at 2 points the weapon would be able to identify hostile targets in the vicinity (up to about 30m) and relay this information back to its wielder, as well as relaying exactly where it's pointing.

Now it becomes worthwhile to add the Shadow manipulation power to our Smartlink. This means that for 6 points we get a clever weapon that replenishes its ammunition over time, identifies hostile targets, and works most places in Shadow – the definite exceptions being Amber (itself) and the vicinity of the Pattern in Carnelian.

Lastly I'm going to add an item she did possess as one of her magic enhancements, Danger Sense. Now in Amber Danger Sense is a specific sub-attribute of Psyche. Therefore I need an item that will boost this sub-attribute. Since it's a boost it's a transfer ability item, and in this case a transfer of a specific sub-attribute of a Psyche item quality. It looks therefore much like Wired Reflexes above giving us a 3 point item.

If we total all these up it comes to 22 points. Probably a worthwhile spend given we have no other powers of abilities.

Going back to the character history, an interesting pattern emerges. Whenever anything goes wrong, she always comes out on top, luck seeming to always be on her side. Therefore adding a couple of points (let's say 3) of good stuff seems appropriate.

All in all we've spent 125 (80+20+22+3) points of our possible 166 (160 + 4 points background + 2 points diary – see section 3.2.3) points.

## 2.6.4 Gabriel Alexander Barwicke

So Angelica Olivia Larson-gates was a character I played in a ShadowRun Campaign and which I've had a chance to revisit and "enhance" since the original sketch I came up with on the night. So how about a new character from scratch... this concept occurred to me as I tried to get to sleep as I was working out details for re-running the campaign, and how I could introduce the concepts of generating an Amber character to novice role-players.

This is done as a stream on consciousness process and also done "knowing" the Amber system but that shouldn't matter too much.

So the character I wanted needed to be male and combat(ish) orientated.

I also wanted the character to not originate in one of my normal high tech or modern settings. So what era then World War I, Napoleonic, American Civil War, or a "steampunk" or "Deadlands" version there of?

What I really wanted was a character from the "Age of Sail", sort of "Pirates of the Caribbean". With the Amber concept in mind and the fact that Amber characters are never run of the mill, we end-up with a Pirate Captain who has their own ship. We also need to remember that most of the so called "Pirates" that operated around this time were actually Privateers and a large number were initially sponsored by the British Government as a method of un-officially waging war on the Spanish and Dutch without needing to be "At War" with them. They only really became the modern vision of a "Pirate" after the British decided to disown them meaning they need to find a source of income, or just carry on doing what they'd actually been doing for years, except "British" vessels now became legitimate targets.

Looking at the historical context (Google and wiki are your friends) ship captains were either "Owner/Captains", "Captains of military vessels", or in a very few cases long service veterans promoted from within an "Owner/Captained fleet" ala the TV series the "Onedin Line". Non- of these fitted the "Privateer/Pirate" idea I had. What I wanted was a street urchin that had hauled themselves to a position of power which also fits very nicely into the "Amberites naturally float to the top perspective".

Just so you're aware this was close to the limit of where I've got to at this point in visualizing the character so from this point on things were apt to change as I continued writing (this at the time of original writing sort of being a live brain dump).

So I need to get from street urchin to pirate captain, except I've already missed a step or two.. how did he get to be a street urchin.. Obvious answer he lived in poverty which implies low class mother, most likely a "bar maid". This also suggests a simple single room apartment, probably in a slum area, close to the docks, and him having to make himself absent for long periods of time. So his mother was single, therefore he never knew his father. So we can make his "conception" a chance encounter and his father anyone we want, so a little arbitrarily I'm going to pick "Bleys" as his father.

Note also I want both Amber and Chaos powers for this character, so I'm going to make his mother a Chaosite. I haven't a clue about her family yet. I'm also arbitrarily deciding that she dies when he's about 11 and that he gets pressganged onto a ship when he's 12.

By this point he can Shapeshift to a certain degree, again I haven't decided how much yet, just that his mother taught him and he's been able to Shapeshift to some degree or other since he was about 5 years old, or at least he started to be able to Shapeshift sometime between his 5th and 6th birthday.

I also want him to come from a version of Earth where magic is known, which sort of ties in with some of the "steampunk" genre, but where Shapeshifters would be classed as demons or devils and hunted down and killed as spawn of the devil, so both he and his mother would need to conceal their powers. This also shapes and refines the world he comes from...

So a 12 year old boy on a ship isn't going to be able to do a great deal, swab decks for short periods, fetch and carry, mend ropes and sails (so this implies some form of skill which I'm going to call Rope Mastery for want of a better term, and as he's done this for some considerable time he's going to have a couple of points worth if this). Whilst I'm on the subject of skills, he's a Pirate Captain so he's going to need to be able to Navigate, pilot the ship, use a sword, brawl, use powder weapons, and use cannon. I'll work out the point's values for these later but most are likely to be 2 point skills. What I do need to sort out is the correct timeline for this, mainly so I can set the time ratio between this world and Amber. So off to Google...

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So I'm going to set the time line so as of 1670 he's 35. He's also in Jamaica/West Indies at this time, and has served under Henry Morgan, before being promoted to a Captain in his own right. Reading Morgan's history on Wikipedia([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry\\_Morgan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry_Morgan)), I'm determining that, [wow I haven't thought of a name yet], leaves Morgan's employ after the Maracaibo raid and is therefore not part of Morgan's seizure of Panama which results in him becoming an outlaw. I can also use this as the point when the campaign starts and the world falls apart.

So from the campaign timeline page on the web site 1670 is somewhere between Shogun circa 1600 at 1.2 and Napoleon circa 1810 at 1.35. Dividing 1670 by 2004 and multiplying by 1.5 we get 1.25; not a bad time ratio.

Taking stock of where we are, at least in terms of what points we may have committed

Blood of Amber (father is Bleys) - Free

Blood of Chaos (mother is a chaosite) - 5 points

Mundane skills - 12 points

    Rope Mastery - 2

    Navigate - 2

    Pilot: Sailing Ship - 2

    Fencing: Cutlass/Sabre - 2

    Brawl - 1

    Guns: Powder Weapons - 1

    Artillery: Powder Weapons - 1

Shapeshifting -

    Basic Known Forms - 20

At this point our character history/background is almost enough to get us the extra 2 points for our character pool, and having a name would help. As I have no idea of a name, it's back to Google. A check for most popular names in the 1600s yields this site.. <http://victoria.tc.ca/~tgodwin//duncanweb/documents/names.html>. A quick peruse of the 1620-1630 list and Gabriel and Alexander strike a chord. Now I just need a surname.

A further Google search yields <http://answers.yahoo.com/question/index?qid=20081224211003AAAtgZIR> which whilst not an ideal spread leads me to Barwicke. So we now have a name Gabriel Alexander Barwicke, born March 13th 1635, in Bristol, England.

Looking at where we are, I've missed one thing from his background. Given he's a street urchin from the slums of Bristol, his most likely early career was that of a pick-pocket so I need to add this as a 1 point skill to his skill list. I'd also like him to have some form of body weaponry if possible; time to consult the Shapeshifting powers description [http://www.azer.co.uk/amber/Powers/13\\_shapes.html](http://www.azer.co.uk/amber/Powers/13_shapes.html).

So apart from what appear to be a couple of contradictions, to gain body armour/weapons without changing into a form that has them, we need Shift Anatomy and Structure/Acquire Forms abilities which is an Advanced Shapeshifting ability. By its position in the table, it also has a stack of pre-requisites: Shapeshift Features/Body Parts+5, Shift Wounds, and Automatic Shapeshift:Primal Form. If we total these up Shape Shift Features/Body Parts is 5 points but we need it at +5 so that's 10 points, Shift Wounds is 5 points, Automatic Shapeshift is 5 points, and Shift Anatomy and Structure is 5 points for a grand total of 5+5+5+5+5=25 on top of the 25 points (Blood of Chaos and Basic Known Forms) we've already spent. So of the 80 points possibly available for powers/mundane skills, assuming we're going to spend a full 80 points on attributes in the auction, we've spent 63 if we go with this.

Parking this lets go back to his mother, for want of a better name she was Celeste (just because that name came into my head) somebody .. time to consult the campaign background page. So it just details "Houses", which could mean anything. So we're going to say that his mother was using her real surname Barwicke, and that the Barwickes are part of the Amblerash house.

To complete the "picture" all that is really left is to sort out a career progression from conscripted (pressganged) cabin boy to Captain. I need to do a little more research here. Hornblower, which I couldn't remember the title of earlier, now springs to mind. So until tomorrow..

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So I've been doing a little reading and could in theory actually turn this stream of consciousness into a character biography, which I'll probably get to in a bit. Before I do that I thought I'd give you an idea of how long developing this character has taken; about 5 hours of thought and 2 hours of writing (predominately writing this). A lot of the thought processes happen whilst doing other things, trying to sleep, driving to and from work, waiting for unit tests to fail, writing this..

Most of the writing, apart from the initial block which I did in about 45 minutes whilst eating my lunch, has been done in 5-10 minute stints, primarily whilst waiting for other things to happen, builds and unit test runs primarily. Of course, the writing time is being extended now as I'm writing this and eating my lunch.

Anyway back to the research. It seems that "Pirate" ships didn't really have a formal rank structure, sure they had a Captain, but he was generally elected by the crew and ran the ship by their consent and if he went against a crew vote was generally replaced. Whilst he generally ran the ship in times of battle it was the quartermaster who pretty much ran the ship at all other times, who distributed rations and treasure, and who doled out punishment (working the bilge pump being one of the commonest, as it was one of the foulest jobs on board ship). There was often a First mate but he was appointed by the Captain and acted in the Captains stead when he wasn't there or if he succumbed during a battle. First mates didn't necessarily become captains, unless the crew elected them to that position. There could also be 2nd, 3rd, and 4th mates. The other two positions of authority tended to be the Bos'n (from boatswain) and the helmsman. The Bos'n tended to be in charge of sails and rigging (somewhat different to the role in the Navy), and the helmsman steered the ship and was often involved in sailing decisions along with the Captain and the Quartermaster.

I also read a little more about Sir Henry Morgan, who co-incidentally was also born in 1635. Whilst his early life isn't very well documented he first comes to prominence in 1655 when he seizes Jamaica from the Spanish and turns it into an English Colony. It's surprising what turns up and how it sort of fits with a character.. so all that's really left is to write the biography..

#### **2.6.4.1 Biography:Gabriel Alexander Barwicke**

Born on March 13th 1635, in Bristol, England, to a working single mother whose true nature he didn't discover until he was in his 6th year, and an unknown father, Gabriel's early life of abject poverty was harsh. The only schooling he gained was that in the "School of Hard Knocks" and as soon as he was able he was inducted into the urchin's world of petty street crime in-order to survive.

During his 5th year his true nature began to surface and his mother spent as much time as she was able teaching him how, initially, to hide his abilities, and later, as his control developed how he might use them to his advantage. Being able to change one's height, weight, stance, hair and eye colour, and clothes [ note 5 points for "Mould Non-Living Non-Self Matter] when being chased by victims of failed pick-pocket attempts is a significantly useful asset.

Whilst his life was difficult, it was no more arduous than any of his peers until his 11th year when his mother succumbed to the stresses of her life style and orphaning him to the street. Looking back, being pressganged, to serve of on, as fate would have it, the Celeste out of Bristol, a little under a year later, is probably what saved his life. At least he got fed on a regular basis thereafter. Life on board ship was just as hard as life on the streets but taught him a few new skills, not to be lippy to any of the Officers as that either resulted in a week in the bilges or several strokes of the lash. Somewhere in those early years on board ship he acquired the ability to splice and repair ropes, something for which he had a natural talent, and as a result of which enabled him to move from waiting on the Officers and swabbing decks, to a role as a mast rat, where his ability to rapidly tie knots and more importantly remember how to time them after a couple of attempts won him much praise, but no increase in status except amongst his peers.

The Captain of the Celeste was a pig of a man, and obstinate and pig headed with it, proud that he'd never succumbed to Pirates, but in July 1651 that changed abruptly after a particularly bad voyage to the West Indies. They'd encountered pirates in the past, and every time they'd made a run for it, and had previously always succeeded. On this occasion, the crew had other ideas and were deliberately slow in their actions. As usual the Captain failed to lower his colours after the Jolly Roger had been hoisted and as had been seen previously the red flag of no-quarter had been hoisted in response.

The battle which followed was short and brief, as fully 70% of the crew failed to offer any form of resistance to the pirates. Whether this had any bearing on the resultant execution of only the officers the crew never knew but now they had the chance at a new life. Most chose to try and make it on their own, after all they had a ship now even if they no longer had most of the cargo. Gabriel and a few others chose to join the pirate crew and by the end of the year his talents had earned him the place of Bosun's mate, and more importantly lessons in reading and arithmetic.

### 2.6.5 Carlos Francisco Rojas

So this character was generated for my alternate Introduction to Amber Campaign "Adventures In Roleplay". The character is based for on some conceptualisation I had done this for another game that I was/am thinking of running at some point when I can line all my thoughts up on how to do it.

This currently conceptual game uses the Immortals-City of Bones film, and possibly the Netflix Series and the universe as its setting, but given that none of my potential players would be familiar with this setting, I needed a way of introducing them to it. My solution was to allow them to pick from one of 8 partially pre-generated characters. The premise behind these characters was that they were Shadow Hunters that had been secretly hidden by a group within the Conclave to preserve them against the demonic forces working within the Conclave. These children would have been hidden around the world, so as not to be your average "White European" character, and even the one that did fit that bill hailed from Southern Poland. The others were scattered around the world, India, China, Malaysia, Australia, North East Africa, and South America.

Given I already had an oriental NPC, I didn't want to use that as an example of how to conceptualize a character, so I'm going to use the "South American" character as my example, at least in terms of where they come from. After that everything is strictly related to the AiRP setting as laid out in the introduction, so a character born between 1st October 1991 and 31st March 1995, making them between 18 and 21 years old for a campaign starting in May 2013. It is probably worth noting at this point, that when I came up with the idea for the campaign it was early 2013 so this would have been "real time" if I'd run it at that point.

Now when I created this conceptual character originally I knew very little about the southern tip of South America, I just wanted somewhere where a character could be hidden, somewhere out of the way. My first step was to pull up Google Maps, and scroll round to the southern tip of South America, and look what possible towns and cities I had to play with. This also allowed me to use Wikipedia to add some detail using its regional/county/state entries and from that it's city statistics. For various reasons I also wanted the character to come from Chile rather than Argentina. After a certain amount of research I settled on Punta Arenas, Chile, which is pretty much the most southern city in South America, well Chile at least.

So that was for the conceptual Shadow Hunter game, and this is now for AiRP. All we're sticking with is that the character comes from Punta Arenas, in Chile. All the relevant research indicates that this is a very strongly Catholic region of the world, so we're going to have to take that into account. Whilst thinking about all this, i.e what to do in terms of the character, as I didn't want to go into specific areas and deal with things I know about "In game" that are on the questionnaire, I initially couldn't decide what to do - I knew what I didn't want and what wasn't going to fit, so not a shapeshifter, most likely not a magic user, definitely nothing to do with martial arts, and definitely not anything related to Mogwai.

If I went with a female character, then I'd have to either make her strongly adherent to a Catholic upbringing or rebel against it, and I have enough "rebel" type characters and NPCs already. My next thought was if I were going to generate a male character, then what sort, socially gregarious perhaps. It was at this point that I thought of "The Fonz" from "Happy Days" - go look it up if you're not familiar. This proved to be my "ker ching" moment, the "hook" for the character.

Going with the gregarious "Fonz" type character, this would mean he would always have a group of friends around him, certainly a group of girls, 2 or 3 maybe, well lets go with 3. If we add 2 of 3 guys as well then we're going to need a few more girls to round out the group, so lets say 7 girls total, and 3 guys. However, I don't want to have all the girls the same, so I'm going to have one staunchly adhere to Catholic principles, and I'm going to have our character staunchly defend her rights to do this, so that none of the other tease her or are spiteful to her as a result. I'm also going to say that 3 of the girls plus our 4th are staunchly attached to him, to the point he's sleeping with 3 of them. This is also going to mean he's in the older age range we're allowed.

We can also resolve a couple of other things relatively easily at this point. There are lots of RPGs out there that have height/weight generation tables, but we don't actually need them, at least for height. 5ft plus 3d6 gives us a height range of 5'3" to 6'6" with an average of 5'11". Using a simple online dice roller gives 11, so he's 5'11. We'll actually no.. I want him to stand out a bit more, so I'm going to make him 6'3". Also for want of being different I'm going to make him a "Red Head" (which of course occurs in canon - three of the elder Amberites are red heads). Weight is a little more difficult, but just requires finding a height/mass lookup table online. Using this one <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-weight/height-weight-chart/>, I'm just going to pick mid point in the "healthy" weight band, so 183lbs(83Kg). Given he's a red head, and red hair is genetically recessive, I'm also going to give him blue eyes, which again are recessive.

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I mentioned above that I didn't want to deal with certain things in relation to the questionnaire (the AiRP setup is specifically done based on a character creation questionnaire), and whilst thinking on this, and on the Fonz, whose "hall mark" was his leather jacket, it occurred to me that the selection from the list of options could easily be an item/pet, and in his case, some sort of "smart" jacket. It'd be really cool if it could change to match different fashion styles, and change to accommodate massively changing weather conditions. Beyond that maybe some form of armour protection..

You'll note that I've ignored, and am for the time being ignoring education, mainly because this requires me to go research the education system in Chile. I've also not exactly decide on what sort of career I want for him. Given where he is in the world there a lots of nature reserves, lots of sea, and a lot of volcanoes, given we're just off the "Ring of Fire" and not far from "Tierra Del Fuego". There is also a lot of "tourism" related jobs looking after both tourists and research scientists involved with all aspects of the above. Time to go re-read Wikipedia....

So after a couple of hours of reading and thinking, I'm going to change things slightly, and move his home town from Punta Arenas(pop 127,000) to Puerto Natales (pop 18,500). This is because it fits better with the "Family" business being a hotel/riding establishment catering to tourist holiday makers since the big draw in this part of Chile is the Torres del Paine National Park. It also crystallizes a few thoughts on what his education career might be. If he's grown up around horses then his likely career choice is going to be a Vet, so he's going to be at University studying Veterinary Medicine, so back to Wikipedia..

The most prestigious university is "Universidad de Chile" in Santiago, with the Faculty of Veterinary and Animal Sciences (Facultad de Ciencias Veterinarias y Pecuarias- Universidad De Chile) on the "Universidad de Chile, Campus Sur" in La Pinta. I'm assuming that their Veterinary Degrees as certified by the World Centenary Association are 5 years in length. If I make our currently nameless character 21, then he'd be in his 3rd year..

If I were generating this character for an AiRP campaign based on the questionnaire then you would have noted by this point I'm not doing things in the order they are laid out on the questionnaire. Generating a character from the questionnaire is in lots of ways like doing an exam - read the whole paper through first and then answer the questions you can do easily, before attempting any of the harder ones. In my initial text, which is on the website he neither has a name yet (I specifically gave him a name to write this up here) nor have I worked out any family sibling status.

Whilst we're considering the questionnaire let's see what we have left to cover off... Well there's his attributes to rank, and his internet presence to sort out. We also have to decide on his hobbies, how he gained his jacket, whether there are any other important concepts we wish to note, and this Rodian War stuff and it's effects.

I suppose the easiest of this list to pick off is ranking his attributes. We'll just go with (after a couple of re-arrangements - and ignoring that I actually know how they translate) Intellect:2 Fitness:1 Health:3 Competitiveness:4

Given he's gregarious he's likely to have a very high social media presence, but we also need to remember it's 2013 not 2021 so Instagram 3, Twitter 3, Facebook 10, and university email 10.

I'm now going to deliberately complicate things to illustrate a point. I've already alluded to there being a "family" business. This indicates at least one parent and siblings. The complication I'm going to throw in here is to make him the middle child of 5. Why does this cause a complication, well because out-of-character (OOC) we know that our biological father has to be an Amberite - the introduction says so. This means that if all of the other 4 siblings have the same father then something must have occurred that caused our conception by a different father, and it's an event we'll need to come up with a plausible explanation for. It's much easier for the eldest child, only child, or youngest child.

So let's look at resolving our sibling issue. We know as the middle child, fitting the maximum age that we would have to have been born in October 1991. If we assume minimum reasonable pregnancy rates, of a child every 2 years, then at a minimum our elder siblings would have been born in 1989 and 1987. The problem then becomes how to explain the difference in fathers, as Chile didn't implement a divorce law until 2004. The defacto solution of course is to assume that the father of the elder siblings died either as the result of an accident of some description or due to a sudden serious illness or medical condition. If we go with this then we need to push the birth dates of the elder siblings back by a couple of years to allow a suitable period of mourning, so 1987 and 1985.

Next up would be resolving our own conception, maybe some sort of short romance, holiday romance may be, and actually that would fit with the peak tourist season being in the Chilean Summer which is October to April. Resolving the 2 younger siblings then becomes relatively easy, some years later, our mother remarries and has 2 further children, lets say she remarries in 1997 and has children in 1998 and 2001.

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We've now dealt with most of our outstanding issues, the two that are left being how we got our jacket and the Rodian War and its affects. Dealing with the jacket is easy, we received it "parcel post" on our 12th birthday. The parcel was addressed to us, had no sender or return details, and had a note inside "Happy Birthday.. Sorry I can't be there in person, hopefully next year... It should come in handy if you need protection from the elements". We're making the assumption here that the jacket came from our father, and something happened to him in the Rodian Wars, that meant he couldn't make it to our 13th birthday in 2004.

### **3. Campaign Introduction**

#### **3.1 To Hell in a Hand Basket – Generic Players Introduction**

The world you knew has been shattered, blasted, shaken, and lashed into your version of hell. The skies have darkened and the temperature plummeted, snow falling where snow has been unknown. It is not snow as you would know it, white and refreshing, but grey and depressing. Whatever vision of Ragnarok or Armageddon your society believed in appears to have arrived.

Several days (1) ago serenity was replaced with hell, volcanoes erupted devastating huge areas and darkening the skies with their ash and smoke, fault lines slipped and tectonic plates heaved causing earthquakes and Tsunami. A gash, black and straight, which warped anything it touched, appeared. The gash or "Black Road" appears to have no start and no end. Anyone who attempts to cross or enter never returns. But that is not the problem for creatures of nightmare erupt from the road.

This is not the first time the Black Road has appeared, but it is far worse this time than last. Each day is a constant struggle for survival and you retire each night tired and exhausted.

Two nights ago as you dozed you thought you heard a clock (2) chime thirteen times but consciously you know that's not possible. Somewhere deep in your subconscious you knew something was amiss, something that called to your very soul. Last night sleep would not come and you watched the minutes tick by towards midnight(3). On the first stroke of midnight the world shimmered. As the chimes of the clock echoed the world slowed and stopped standing still, well for everyone except you that is. With each striking chime a little more colour left the world until on the last stroke everything had resolved to shades of grey, whatever light you used to see by no longer casts shadows but is a pallid point frozen in the greyness. Around you hung silence like a heavy cloak, oppressive and thick like a dense fog.

For what you judged to be nearly an hour the situation persisted, nothing moving or functioning, doors and other mechanical devices stuck in the position they were in on that first stroke. Then out of the corner of your eye you catch a glimpse of a flash of dark(4)

From out of the greyness a tendril appears, thick and vibrant in its blue-black colouration, with red streaks that dance across its surface. It appears it's searching for something, sensing the air like a snake. It stops, and rises up, thickening as it does so. You realise it's found its quarry. The quarry is you!

(1) The exact number of days depends upon the relative speed of time of the players Shadow to Amber. On Corwin's Shadow Earth, and Benedict's Avalon 15 days have elapsed.

(2) What the players hears depends upon the method of time keeping used by the society they hail from. For those which have evolved mechanical clocks the sound heard will be that of the equivalent of a Grand Father clock chiming the hour. For societies without mechanical clocks the sound will appear to be that of a bell or gong being struck or rung.

(3)The Occurrence rate of the "Thirteenth Hour" signified by the Chiming of the Clock depends on the rate of Time flow in the Players Shadow. In the Golden Circle the Chiming occurs every 8 hours.

(4) The Tendril appears on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Occurrence of the "Thirteenth Hour"

#### **3.2 From the "Example" Character Perspectives**

The "generic" introduction above is an outline that can be used by any character to define how they may be introduced to the campaign. What follows is an interpretation of the generic introduction for each of the example characters as they may perceive it, and should serve as a useful introduction to "diary writing"; or "how to get more points for your characters".

##### **3.2.1 Augustine 'Tank' Malchovich** **80.210.54.10**

Shit. Where do I start this? It's just over 19 hours since the general and I've now got a few hours to get some kip and gloop. None of us was expecting that general. Nope we were all looking forward to 60 and some well-earned down time after a 60 tour on this rust bucket. Not that I should complain, she's one of the best ships in the fleet and until now it's been plain sailing even if friking boring.

So there I was near the end of a game of shuvelhak, and I was well up and looking to clean up, when the general sounds and all hell breaks. Galk I hate that sound, but I tell you I've never heard it out of the blue like that. We all looked at one another as if it were some drill until the Major starts barking.



I'd just about made it to the armoury when she transitions' to trans-light and we're flung all over the shop. Like what kind of frisking emergency were we in; no one ever makes the transition without warning. I think we got off light though, only two dead and 8 with serious injuries, mostly broken limbs.

So I rack my gear and head to the briefing hall. Seems we were being sent to rescue the "Alarkan", she's a big science vessel that was in the Korato Nebula. Well "was" is now the operative word as 2 hours prior to that general the Nebula exploded. Frik .. nebulas don't just galking explode, certainly not ones that have been stable for several hundred thousand years.

So we come out of translight about half a light year from her last known position in-order to arrive at a "safe" distance where we can begin the search. Safe my arse. We decamp straight into this solar storm, and it's all we can do to make it to the lee of the only "habitable" within range. So we think we're gonna make it when the ship gets struck by something, tears a ruddy great gash in the hull and knocks out the grav drive. Still don't see how we made it to the surface let alone with as much of the hull and crew intact as we did.

We've got a perimeter now, and most of the injured have been treated, or are at least triaged in med or adjacent sections.

### **3.2.2 Marlina**

#### **23th Jarketh 15Qarnen**

I hadn't really wanted to take this job on but the Guild had insisted, and there are only so many times you can refuse before they revoke your privileges, and although it was no longer my sole occupation, I still liked to keep my hand in, and of course I had my position to consider.

On the surface it doesn't look too difficult a job, which means there's a catch, and if they're coming to me specifically it means magic is involved. I'm going to need to proceed a little cautiously therefore.

#### **26th Jarketh 15Qarnen**

I was right to be suspicious. After three days of careful study and a couple of trial attempts I can see why they came to me. Until I get fully inside I won't be able to tell if there are additional safeguards, but my intuition and experience tell me there will be. Let's see how high they're willing to go on the fee for this one.

#### **28th Jarketh 15Qarnen**

So after 2 days of haggling we've come to an agreement on the fee. Now all I've got to do is complete the job.

#### **30th Jarketh 15Qarnen**

It's really difficult to write when your arm is swathed in bandages. When things first started to go wrong I thought I'd tripped a ward I hadn't seen, but I've never heard of anyone using an Earthquake spell as a ward, and destroying the property you're trying to protect is damn stupid. However, whatever had triggered the earthquake effect had 2 consequences. It shook me loose of the wall I was carefully traversing, dumping me on the floor with a loud thud, triggering the siren warding, and it dislodged a number of the picturesque statuettes, one of which landed on the fire glyph at the end of the room.

I'd managed to douse the fire by the time the first of the guards arrived. They were the least of my problems however, as the building was heaving and shaking, and the floor I was clinging too was rapidly disintegrating. The thought of falling into the pit below was less than appealing, and as I attempted to work out a course of action, and in my current predicament not having enough time to cast anything more than a cantrip, the roof gave way dumping a number of rather large rafters onto the already unstable floor. Whilst thankfully, none of them hit me directly, I'm sure I wouldn't be here if they had, one of them, after colliding with another smashed into my right arm, numbing it entirely. As I lost my grip, it collided with the beam it had hit previously, and wedged across the pit, meaning I landed atop it rather than in the foul smelling liquid a few feet below. Perched precariously on the beam I could see the faint points of what appeared to be rusty spikes protruding from the liquid surface below

Ignoring the falling masonry, and hoping nothing large enough to beak my concentration hit me I recited the incantation for the fly spell. I always have this one in reserve on a job just in case I need a fast get away. As I took to the air, the guards by this time ignoring me in an effort to save their own skins, the full impact of the quake could be seen on the city. I estimated at least 40% of the buildings had collapsed completely, with a further 20-30% looking somewhat precarious. Amongst those still standing, and looking remarkably untouched, stood the Mages Guild. I headed for my apartment. I needed to get my arm treated before I could think about resetting my spells to some that would be of greater use against the unfurling chaos in the city below.

### **5th Retnvn 15 Qarnen**

Whilst the city is calmer now, and all the fires are out, rumours of demon packs roaming the country side have reached us. A patrol is heading out tomorrow to investigate and I've agreed to go with them. Whilst normally only a single Mage would accompany such a patrol, there are 3 of us going this time, including my mentor Klenlanen. The fact that the guild master insisted that 3 of us go gives me cause for concern.

### **10th Retnvn 15 Qarnen**

I fear now as to how many more entries I shall be able to make. Barely a handful of us made it back to the city, and we were hard pressed all the way. I have lost track of how many skirmishes we have fought over the last 15 days or exactly when it was that Plaidreth fell. Klenlanen's passing shall haunt me for the rest of my days, and should we survive this I shall see to it that he gets full recognition for his sacrifice.

### **17th Retnvn 15 Qaren**

What men we have are stretched thin around the city walls, and each loss costs us dearly. I like those of the Mages that remain do what we can, but we are all run ragged now catching what sleep we can where we can. None of us are in any shape to use any powerful magics, so we are reduced to casting simple lightening balls which seem to work better than fire against the demons, which press the walls about the city.

### **18th Retnvn 15 Qaren**

Perhaps my exhaustion is getting the better of me for there can be no other explanation other than hallucination, of the bell I heard last night. I thought at first it was the city bell but that tower fell the night or the quake. The city is all but lost to us and we are preparing an evacuation. Whilst the situation is the same across the whole of Garneth, the Order of the Pectoral Serpents' fortress at Qorovia is much more defensible, so we are retreating there. The Guild HQ will be sealed as the last act of the evacuation to prevent the demons gaining access.

### **20th Retnvn 15 Qaren**

The bell rang out again tonight. I had thought at first that I had been engulfed by some illusion magic, but the effect had not the feel of magic about it. As the bell rang out, I cannot be sure but I think it rang 13 times, the world about me began to freeze, and all colour and sound drain from it. Had I at that time been inside a building I would have been trapped, as doors and shutters refuse to budge during the time the effect lasted. If it is some spell then we are surely doomed for it appeared to affect the whole city as far as I was able to tell, that is the whole city bar me. What curse is it that I appear to be immune to its effects? Or is it perhaps that I have things wrong and it is some magic that affects me such that time passes for me in some pocket of reality outside what is considered normal. Perhaps I should have paid more attention to Klenlanen's teachings in this area.

## **3.2.3 Angelica Olivia Larson-gates**

### **12<sup>th</sup> May 2092**

At what point do you consider yourself fortunate? People would consider me fortunate by dint of being born into a wealthy family, if they ever knew the truth. I consider myself fortunate by dint of both being alive and having the skills to cope in the current crisis.

"Crisis", now that's an interesting word but it doesn't really do justice to the situation. Perhaps I should have used the word "holocaust", but that tends to have connotations, especially if you're familiar with 20th Century Earth history, so that's probably not suitable either. Maybe "Armageddon" would suffice, but that implies the end of the world, and while this may be its prelude we're not there yet.

Still, prelude or not the situation is pretty grim out there at the moment, and by all account we're getting off pretty much scot free compared to the rest of the continent. Whilst we're getting intermittent showers of ash and rock the bulk of the eruption appears to be spreading east and south across the continent. Which event triggered which event no one seems to be able to determine. Did the "Big One", for so long predicted trigger Yellowstone or did Yellowstone trigger the "Big One"? Irrespective of the cause California is lost to us, and the devastation along the west coast is no less severe than that in the east. Even we have not escaped and all three or the port archologies are gone. Whilst my own archology has suffered damage we still have power, and water, and as much security as we ever had. In this respect we are fortunate, the age and decrepitude of our building, and that fact that for 2 decades now we have been independent and home to the underground has probably saved us. Now we will find out how resilient the Corps really are for now we have the resources they appear to lack.

### **15<sup>th</sup> May 2092**

I ventured into the city today, which nearly proved to be a fatal mistake, but we needed the intel. The Corps seem unable to cope and we are turning away most of the refugees; too great a risk of Corp spies and saboteurs. We've had to repel three assaults to date, with heavy casualties on both sides; although we tally ourselves up, as whilst we have lost a small amount of manpower we cannot afford to lose, we now have significant gains in terms of equipment at the expense of its former owners.

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**The Keep of the Thirteenth Hour**  
**Kevin Cowley**  
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The city itself is a blood bath, literally! The bodies of soft execs and their families all lying where they fell as they tried to flee the destruction of their artificial havens. What poses the greatest threat is the appearance of small groups of scavenging gangs armed with whatever weapons they have managed to scavenge or cobble together. We should be able to hold out long enough for them to eliminate one another, leaving us free to plunder the more valuable resources locked inside the Corp Archology Vat pools.

**18<sup>th</sup> May 2092**

The city has quietened over the last three days and we are theoretically now in a position to contemplate boosting our own supplies. Why theoretically, well a new threat has surfaced, one which appears to be responsible in a large part for the reduction in the bands of scavengers. It is unclear as to exactly what this threat actually is, but there are reports of “demons” roaming the world and the appearance of a “Black Road” from which things of nightmare emanate and any who enter fail to return. Whilst I would usually dismiss such things, just thinking about them makes my blood run cold and the hairs on the back of my neck stand on end. This appears not to be a reaction based on fear but on some racial knowledge lodged at some genetic level.

**20<sup>th</sup> May 2092**

We had our first encounter with the demons today. Apart from their hideous appearance, they are some tough sons of bitches. We lost more men than we can really afford but did manage to bring in the supplies we need to keep us going for the next few weeks. There is a meeting scheduled for tonight. I fear it is going to get very heated. My assessment of the situation is that we’re going to have to change our strategy on letting corp deserters in. In fact I think our whole policy is going to have to change and we’re going to have to join forces with the bastards, otherwise none of us are going to survive.

**24<sup>th</sup> May 2092**

We’re still in something of a hiatus. The meeting got rather heated and broke apart without any real decision being made. Feelings are still running high on both sides. Another assault like last night may swing the tide though, assuming we survive it.

**25<sup>th</sup> Math 2092**

Something is very wrong. They didn’t attack tonight, as they’ve done for the previous 5 nights. In fact the city was quiet, too quiet.

**26<sup>th</sup> May 2092**

So our hand has been forced. Whilst we repulsed last night’s raid it wasn’t without cost, both in terms of life and at the expense of one of the generators. Without the generator, we’ll not make it through tonight. I know where we can get the parts we need to repair it, but we don’t have the manpower left to take it by force. I’m not looking forward to the next few hours. It’s not a place I had any intention of visiting ever again if I could possibly avoid it.

**26<sup>th</sup> May 2092 – Update**

It’s been a really long day. I get the distinct feeling, even if they won’t admit it that, they were relieved that we made our approach. From the state their all in, and the wrecked state of the archology, I don’t see how they were managing to survive, let alone how they would have made it through the next week. Still moving the survivors, and more importantly their resources has been a night mare, especially as half way through the afternoon what was left of its neighbour threw in the towel and wanted to join us. Perhaps that’s how they’d survived this long by watching each other back. By moving one the other wouldn’t have lasted but the logistics has been a nightmare.

Perhaps this is what led to my earlier delusion. I’m sure I head a Grandfather clock strike, a sound I haven’t since I was a little girl, but one which nobody else heard. Maybe I should stop writing and try and get some sleep.

**27<sup>th</sup> May 2092**

Oaky so it isn’t. It’s actually shortly after 4:15 in the morning of the 28<sup>th</sup>. I didn’t get much sleep last night which probably accounts for my irritable state yesterday, and for me crashing out yesterday evening. Whatever the cause, I awoke again shortly after 3am feeling like shit. I’d grabbed a much needed shower and a change of clothes, and made my way down to “ground zero”, not actually ground level, but the main transit level and the level on which the demons launch most of their attacks, on the grounds that it has the largest and least defensible entrances. Blear eyed faces greeted me as I exited the lifts and made my way towards the barricades. Then the world went strange. “Strange” hell that doesn’t even come close to what actually happened.

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This time I didn't imagine that clock. As I heard that first chime the world appeared to slow, the world that is, not me. By the fifth stroke it was pretty much stationary, and had started to turn grey and silent. I thought for a moment that my implants were failing but a self-diagnosis, completed as the 11<sup>th</sup> chime rang out, indicated that all bar my comm-link which wasn't functioning at all, were working perfectly, even if there was a different quality about them that I hadn't noticed before.

As the clock chimed 13, and yes I know clocks can't damn well chime 13, but 13 times is what it struck, the world stopped and the last remnants of colour and sound vanished. Carefully I approached some of my frozen comrades. They didn't appear to either be breathing or register my existence. When I tried to open one of the barrier doors it refused to budge. I tried moving a chair. It wouldn't budge, neither could I pick it up. It appeared welded to the floor. I tried a few more doors and moveable objects. They all exhibited the same behaviour. I tried my repelling line but that too was inert. I checked the rifle. Again apart from the strange difference in its feel it was still working.

I sat down to wait. How long I waited I'm not sure, but I guess it must have been half an hour or so, which on top of my previous exertions meant that this effect, whatever it may be lasts possibly about an hour. One thing of note; I cannot be sure but I thought I saw something moving out in the city. It's difficult to judge, you know just catching a glimpse of something coloured, yes colour in that grey void, out of the corner of your eye, and I have very good and very expensive eyes.

As to how I know this wasn't a delusion, the 20 witnesses who wanted to know how I got from by the lifts to the other side of the atrium in the blink of an eye, and the fact that when to world resolved itself to normal why the barrier door and several others all opened mysteriously...

### **3.2.4 Gabriel Alexander Barwicke**

#### **17<sup>th</sup> October 1870**

The crew has declined to sail with Admiral Morgan to raid Panama, for which I thank god. I have an ill feeling about the raid not least caused by the growing rumours circulating of the crowns increasing displeasure with our continuing harassment of the Spanish. Rumour also has it that there is a treaty between that Crown and Panama that if true will result in Morgan being outlawed if he carries out his plan. Instead we will sail for St Vincent and Barbados and see what we may find.

#### **19<sup>th</sup> October 1870**

We are sorely beset. God has decreed that we are to be punished for surely this storm has been summoned for this purpose. It's arrival was a sudden as its unexpectedness. Whilst we managed to furl most of the sail, it was insufficient and we had lost both the main and mizzen masts. It is all we can do to run before the storm and make landfall where ever we can.

#### **20<sup>th</sup> October 1870**

This can be no ordinary storm. We are now becalmed, yet on the horizon the clouds are black and ominous. How much of a respite we have I do not know but it does allow for us to bail as much water from the bilge as we are able and caulk as many of the leaks as we can.

#### **25<sup>th</sup> October 1870**

To whom ever finds this journal, know now that the ship is lost, with the majority of hands. What little could be salvaged we have done so. What land we walk upon I know not, for the wind now brings us not the wet of rain but the stench of brimstone and misery of blistering ash.

#### **28<sup>th</sup> October 1870**

Of the 13 of us that made it ashore there are but 7 left. This cave that provides shelter from the foul scouring wind at least has fresh drinking water, although none have eaten a decent meal in days and we are surely short on rations.

#### **29<sup>th</sup> October 1870**

For sure we are in hell, as foul demons walk upon this ravaged land. There are but three of us left now as the demons have taken their toll. We have but a few rounds of powder left, so it would seem we are not long

Most strange I'm sure I heard a bell toll but cannot locate the source. Perhaps it is but another sound carried on this foul wind.

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**The Keep of the Thirteenth Hour**  
**Kevin Cowley**

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**30<sup>th</sup> October 1870**

I am doubly dammed; for not only do I walk in hell by day but I am assaulted by visitations with the power to injure in my sleep for there can be no other explanation for the happenings of tonight. A bell cannot be heard to toll without a bell to make the sound, yet I heard a bell toll thirteen times, and no ships bell tolls in that manner even when sounding when running in thick fog or heavy swell. What is worse is that my senses failed me also as colour and sound appeared to flee from my vision and hearing. How long this hallucination persisted I do not know but had I not "awoken" with injuries consistent with those I sustained when I fell I would have thought it just that. That my remaining comrades experienced none of this makes it doubly sure that I am a damned man. Perhaps death will come quickly upon us this day for I'm sure I will surely go mad if these visitations come again.

#### 4. Some questions to get you started..

Player Name

Character Name

Gender

Height

Weight

Hair Colour

Eye Colour

DOB

Family circumstance

Both Parents : Single Parent (Father) : Single Parent (Mother) : Fostered : Adopted : Orphanage

Siblings

Only Child : Youngest Child : Eldest Child : Middling Child

If any except only child

Older Brothers

Younger Brothers

Older Sister

Younger Sisters

Ethnic origin

Caucasian(white) : Indian : Pakistani : African : Caribbean : Chinese : Japanese : Korean : Vietnamese : Thai: Arabian(Specify):

Something else entirely as found on your native shadow (Specify!)

Country of Origin

England : Scotland : Wales : Ireland : France : Germany : Spain : Poland : Bosnia : Hungary: Italy : Austria : Switzerland :

Morocco : Kenya : Uganda : South Africa : Dubai : Egypt : Turkey : Greece : Russia : Ukraine : Mongolia : Nepal :

China : Korea : Hong Kong : Japan : Vietnam : Thailand : Australia : New Zealand :

USA : Canada : Brazil : Argentina : Peru:

Somewhere else, since I'm not from a Shadow Earth (Specify!)

Place of residence (where you live)

Major City : City : Major town : Town : Village : Farm

Suggest/define where \_\_\_\_\_

Maturity of your character:

- Consider romantic relationships your character may have had, past/current boyfriend(S)/Girlfriend(S), if any, marital status if applicable), and potential children.

- Are you going to play a Catholic (other religions/faiths are applicable) who adheres to the dogma, or has strayed, or are you going to play a "lady's man" who cruises the bars in their spare time looking for conquests, or are you going to play somebody who's been in a stable relationship for a number of years with your first and only love, or something else entirely.

Describe any hobbies interests your character may have (i.e. what they do in their spare time)

Describe any other concepts in relation to your character that you may think are important:

Read the Campaign perspective from the Example Character perspectives.. How have the last few days affected you and your world?

Remember this is your world's version of Armageddon/Ragnarok!

## **Character Sheet**

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## Equipment

*Note: If you want specific mundane equipment then if it's not listed you don't have it.*