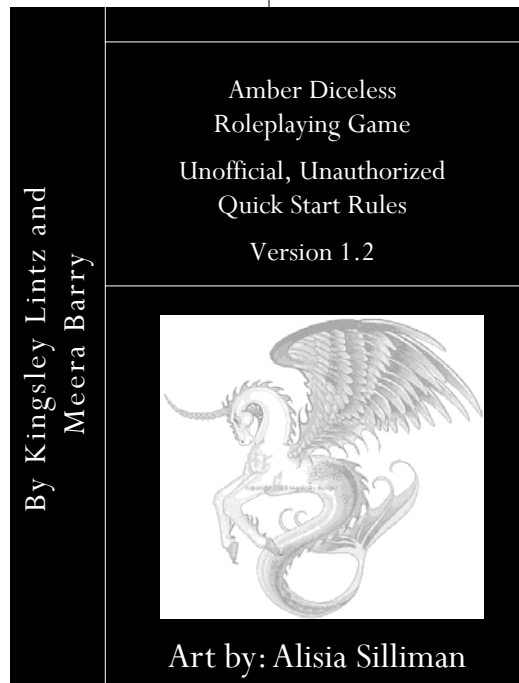


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ATTRIBUTES

Well, let's start with the basics, shall we?

Namely, a quick description of the four Attributes!

PSYCHE:

This is THE attribute. This is your mental power, strength of mind, will, and the force behind Pattern, Logrus, Trump, or Magic. You can fight battles of pure mind via touch, Trump, or more mystic means, and yes, the loser can die. It also gives you sensitivity to a number of things such as magical energy, Shadow paths, the Logrus, objects of power, another's basic health, active hazards, Trump activity, emotional state, the presence of powers, direct lies, and, given time and mental contact, the exact identity of a shape shifter. Of course, this is all assuming you're good enough.

STRENGTH:

Okay, we lied; Strength is absolutely ***VITAL!*** You really want this. A strong character can literally break a weaker one if he can get his hands on him, and having a strong mind isn't going to help when you're a heap of shredded flesh lying on the floor. This is your ability to play catch with a Corvette, rip armor off an opponent and doors off a car, knock down a well-built building, punch through brick, rupture internal organs with a good hit, uproot any tree you can get a grasp around, et cetera. It also lets you resist damage, AND, aside from the obvious advantages of sheer, brute strength, represents your skill at weaponless combat. Again, assuming you're strong enough, but this is certainly not an attribute to ignore!

ENDURANCE:

WAIT! Hold up. Neither Psyche OR Strength will do you ANY good without Endurance! You need it for EVERYTHING. Picking up a car is easy with a high Strength, but without Endurance to match, you'll drop it immediately. (Probably on your foot.) Psyche will let you pick a mental fight with someone, but unless you completely overwhelm them, if they've got better Endurance, YOU'RE the one who'll lose. In a fight with something that breathes poison? Endurance wins. Spending a night with someone special? You need Endurance. Don't forget: this also decides how fast you regenerate. Assuming you've read the books, Endurance is what let Corwin heal before anyone was ready, and walk the Pattern (and live) even when he was badly weakened. To put it simply, Endurance is THE Amber tie-breaker; if you're remotely equal in ranks, a little patience and a lot of Endurance guarantees you the win.

WARFARE:

Vital. What DOESN'T eventually come down to a fight? There's nothing faster, nothing more decisive, and nothing easier to force someone into, especially when you escalate a confrontation. It also makes you harder to be surprised by such intensified aggravation; you gradually begin to see EVERYTHING as a combat situation. You learn to size people up quickly, and to recognize people simply by the way they move. You learn to command troops effectively, break the enemy's morale, and even raise and train an entire army within a few weeks...total. This also includes your personal combat skill. You learn about every weapon that exists, or needs to be extrapolated. Your reaction time is increased. And you learn strategy as well; in other words, even if you're planning an intellectual character, Warfare determines how good you are at chess.

To sum up, all four are absolutely the single most important...so figure it out for yourself.

THE AUCTION

The auction is one of the most contested part of the rules, but because this is a traditional quick-start guide, we'll introduce you to the basics.

You have **100 points**. [Unless the GM gives you more.] I'm only going to say it once, and it's up to you to remember it, because should you go over those 100 points, or suddenly run out of points to spend on things, or otherwise squander your opportunities, the GM has every right to laugh in your face. The other option is **BAD STUFF**, and we'll go into that later...too late, for some.

The auction is conducted in a frenzy. It is the GM's job to get you to spend, and spend high. You want to spend points, because really, being anything less than the best is basically a step away from deciding what you want on your tombstone, and don't let it be, "I only bid four in Endurance." Spend wisely, but don't be cheap.

Choose your opening bid. This will be a number of points above zero. Your other option is "NO BID" which gives you two choices: one, to put zero points (or sell down) in an attribute (see **RANKS**) or to *buy up* secretly after the auction (which also limits your options.) While your mileage may vary, a "NO BID" should never be a winning bid.

From here, it's a cut-throat battle. Your GM will decide if the bids are all done in secret, or in a cacophonous riot of voices, each number higher than the next. Remember that points declared in bidding are spent; there's no taking that "Seventy-five!" back. Some GMs will have a limit as to how far each bid can jump, some GMs will let you bid three-hundred and thirteen points in Strength and oh boy! Your life is interesting now. The auction provides foreknowledge of the competition between you and others of your family. You'll know where you stand...and where you must flee.

RANKS

The highest bidder of an auction is considered "First Rank." First Rank wins **any** contest when faced with lower ranks, except where trickery, luck, or other GM-convincing opportunity applies. (It rarely impresses **Elders**, but that's another section.) Second Rank wins against everyone except 1st, 3rd against everyone but 1st and 2nd, and so on...

What about "NO BID" you ask? NO BID had three options. The first is spending no points at all (AMBER RANK) in the auction. This zero point level is considered the *least* one can expect of the scions of Amber. The second is to "sell down," gaining points for your weaknesses.

SELLING DOWN means choosing CHAOS RANK (just a term; don't take it too personally, denizens of the Pit) which is worth **-10 points**, and leaves your character weak in comparison to those of Amber Rank, greatly weaker than anyone ranked, but still above anything but the best of humanity.

You can also sell down to HUMAN RANK, for an additional ten points, (**-20**) but then you are a danger to yourself and those around you. (A common suggestion is that this rank equals the abilities of your GM. I strongly recommend flattery.)

Option three, and this is open to those who participated in the auction as well, is to *BUY UP*. In this situation, you spend the same number of points to reach an existing rank...but a tie is considered "just below" the rank. Buying up to first makes you a "1.5" — higher than 2nd, less than 1st. That's the advantage of participating in the auction. Remember, even a bid of 1 point is a bid, and a rank.

POWERS: The Pattern

COST: 50 POINTS

Most Amber games are somewhat biased around Pattern. The rulebook sets it up this way, suggesting it is the strongest power in the universe.

Travelling through Shadow: Walk through the Shadows by changing the little details, both obscure and useful; around that corner is a large rock, just through that door is a sword. Never forget, however; it's easier to follow someone else than to beat your own path, and the closer you get to Amber, the harder it gets.

Of course, it requires movement, and, until you get up to an Advanced level, it requires obscurity.

There are three ways to go about it. *Shadow Walking* is the easy way; just turn around a corner (obscurity) and find a glade of purple grass, instead of green. One detail at a time is simplicity itself, but very slow. *The Royal Way* is even slower, keeping to Shadows where things are the way you like them. You can walk through worlds only filled with friendly faces, or stick to the ones where your car will run...changes are gradual, but comfortable. (And remember, if you want to stick to Shadows where magic works, and you're headed for a Tech shadow, the Royal Way isn't going to get you there.) *Hellriding* is the fast way, and needs a destination. You focus on a detail, and change the world around it, like entering a world completely different from Shadow Earth, but where birds still fly.

One of the more useful powers of the Pattern is finding what you want. Just describe your objective (a certain Shadow, person, object...even a situation.) It's nice to hear, "You walk through Shadow for a bit, and sure enough... there it is!" Never underestimate this; you can find all sorts of things in Shadow if you look. Anything you think would be useful...and hey, it never... well, rarely... hurts to ask. Remember, there are infinite versions of EACH shadow. Technically, there's a difference on each one...but it's hard to tell. On the other hand, spending any time in one makes it more Real. Shadow Earth, for example, had Corwin on it for a LONG time, Flora's been here for an unknown length that was probably even longer, and the Jewel of Judgment (a very magical artifact, in fact, a symbol of Reality) was left here for a while, too. All this contact with real things has made Shadow Earth one of the landmarks in Shadow. Even a brief visit has an effect...an overnight stay makes that Shadow into "that place I slept the night."

Shadowfolk, of course, can't travel through Shadow. But with the Pattern Imprint (for the low, low cost of JUST 50 points) YOU CAN HELP! Lead those troops through Shadow! Bring your friends and family! It slows you down a bit, of course: after all, you have to open a much bigger path, and HOLD it open until they're all in. No flitting off to the next Shadow until everyone is caught up.

Going to be late for an appointment? Need some time to yourself...but dinner's in five minutes? Can't WAIT for that hot date in five weeks? NO PROBLEM! Just take advantage of the *Shadow Time* feature...you can do almost anything with time except actually go backwards! There are slow Shadows where a few minutes can put you weeks behind the rest... and then there are the fast Shadows, where you can spend a day carousing, and sneak in before curfew!

Remember; in that day of carousing, you can do ANYTHING. With a little time and effort, the possible can be made probable, the probable can be made certain, and the certain can be put into effect. It takes a little time, yeah...even minor changes could take half a minute. Something useful will take at least a minute, if not more. And one of the hardest things to get the hang of is changing a Shadow without leaving it; like Shadow Walking, you MUST move. Don't neglect other uses of this; you don't have to affect physical objects. You can change your chances of winning the jackpot from zip to absolute with only a few minutes and a little bit of concentration!

Shadows of Desire...a more specific form of object finding. You can locate exactly the Shadow YOU want. Exactly. The more you want (and this includes things you very definitely DON'T want, "I'm looking for a shadow with NO MIMES!"), the longer it takes and the harder it is to find. Of course, if people sense you looking for it, there are entities out there (your own dearest uncle, for example), who can change it. And, unfortunately, your subconscious desires can get in there and muck about with things, too.

POWERS: The Pattern

Besieged by magic? Attacked by some slimy shifting Chaos baby, lashing out with the Logrus like there's no tomorrow? Afraid he might be right? NO PROBLEM! *Pattern Defense* is FOR YOU! Just picture it! No, that wasn't leading up to anything, we mean it. Literally. Call up the Pattern in your mind, just like always, and concentrate on it. Feel the burn! You'll be almost immune to the Logrus, and invasive Magic becomes well-nigh impossible.

Warning: The Pediatrician Private warns that Pattern defense takes a few minutes (depending on how strong your mind already is), and takes REAL concentration. You won't be able to run or fight effectively, just back off slowly and wave your sword around. And if they manage to break your concentration, it flickers out.

Need to get there fast? *Just walk the Pattern!* Okay, so it takes some effort, but YOU CAN DO IT! (At least Amber rank endurance is likely necessary, some restrictions may apply, pregnant women consult your physician, the management is not responsible for lost or stolen lives.) From the center of the Pattern (fatigued but feeling proud), you can go ANYWHERE. And remember, this works for the Rebma and Tir-na Nog'th, as well as Amber, and, of course, the Primal Pattern.

Pattern: The Revenge! If you've just received a fatal wound, and you want revenge (and who wouldn't?), just remember the rarest, and most feared, ability of the blood of Amber: the Blood Curse. Just evoke your personal relationship with the Pattern, and direct your fading life energy towards some dastardly deed. Of course, this CAN be done when you're not about to die, but we're warning you: mucho bad karma, dude. They'll have your curse, but at least there's some idea where it's going. You might as well be cursed, too, as bad things will happen all the time, without rhyme or reason. [In game terms, it gives both you AND your target 10 points of Bad Stuff; yours is just there, theirs' is directed towards whatever you wanted.] The curse is near-impossible to remove.

Blessings are theoretically possible, but even more rare...after all, you're an Amberite.

Disclaimer: Void where prohibited. Namely, Amber. It's too real. The Pattern isn't completely useless there (after all, Walking the Pattern isn't available anywhere else), but it's severely limited. Still, there's something very comforting to an Amberite about being surrounded by reality for a while.

BOOKS OF AMBER

The First Chronicles of Amber

Nine Princes in Amber (1970)
The Guns of Avalon (1972)
Sign of the Unicorn (1975)
The Hand of Oberon (1976)
The Courts of Chaos (1978)

The Second Chronicles of Amber

Trumps of Doom (1985)
Blood of Amber (1986)
Sign of Chaos (1987)
Knight of Shadows (1989)
Prince of Chaos (1991)

Heretical and Other Literary Resources

The Complete Amber Sourcebook by Theodore Krulik. Authorized.

Roger Zelazny's Visual Guide to Castle Amber by Roger Zelazny & Neil Randall, paintings by Todd Cameron Hamilton & James Clouse

A series of short stories continued the Amber tale:

1993 "Prologue to Trumps of Doom"
1994 "The Salesman's Tale"
1994 "The Shrouding and The Guisel"

1995 "Coming to a Cord"

1995 "Blue Horse, Dancing Mountains"

1996 "Hall of Mirrors"

2005 "A Secret of Amber" [story fragment co-written with Ed Greenwood, published in *Amberzine* #12-15]

The Dawn of Amber

The Dawn of Amber series by John Gregory Betancourt started to be published in 2002. Betancourt's series tells the story of Corwin's father Oberon. It is set several centuries before *Nine Princes in Amber* and included:

The Dawn of Amber (2002)

Chaos and Amber (2003)

To Rule in Amber (2004)

Shadows of Amber (2005)

Sword of Chaos (series canceled)

There are two books similar in concept to the Choose Your Own Adventure series, for the *Combat Command* series, by Neil Randall:

Seven No-Trump (1988)

The Black Road War (1988)

There are two three-part comic adaptations of Nine Princes in Amber and The Guns of Avalon, respectively, by Terry Bisson (1996)

POWERS: The Logrus

**COST: 45 POINTS,
Plus Shapeshifting**

[Note: You have to have Shape Shifting, too. If you don't, invoking the Logrus will warp your body AND your mind, and you won't have a say in it. And don't get cute. Of COURSE you have to pay for Shape Shifting separately. TANSTAAFL, eh?]

The Logrus. Remember, years ago, when you walked the bugger? Took even more years out in Shadow, recovering. And wasn't that psychiatrist hot? Okay, so she wasn't, but hey...it was WORTH it! Now that you've walked the Logrus, you can call it to mind. Oh, it's not easy, but what is? The Logrus is slimier'n a hagfish in heat. Just holding it in mind takes more concentration than listening to Duke Drab discussing the economy! [I.e. same restrictions as per Pattern; you can fight with it in your concentration, but only if you've got a really HUGE advantage.]

The Pattern? What a joke! Flat-landish, that...lot of power, sure, but no versatility. Heck, they can't even use the thing in their own stronghold. The Logrus, on the other hand, can wrap its little tendrils around anything...yes, it even works pretty well in Amber. (Of course, all those old Amberites feel it and get mad, but hey, the gloating is almost worth getting pounded by Benedict once in a while.)

A few warnings; Psyche drives the Logrus, but you'll want Endurance too...if your Endurance is too low, you risk being absorbed. Using the Logrus involves going completely insane for the time you want to use it, and you DON'T always come out of that right away. Do NOT use it to touch the Pattern, that hurts. If your blood touches the Pattern, or any Pattern-based item (say, Greyswandir or any other weapon with a piece of Pattern in it), it could, at the very least, ignite. Touching Trump hurts almost as much, like a big electric shock.

But ENOUGH of that! Let's get to the fun stuff! You want something in Shadow, the Logrus is THE way! Pattern users have to go AFTER it, but the Logrus isn't so limited. Sure, you can just grab it and pull yourself towards it (the usual way for a Logrus user to move through Shadow). But you can ALSO bring IT to YOU. Ever seen the Pattern do that? Didn't think so.

Okay, so maybe it's not as easy as it sounds. Maybe you occasionally get something LIKE what you want. Maybe it takes longer to find the RIGHT object. But that's only if you want ONE thing. Getting THE sword will take a while; getting A sword is a snap! Getting a pizza? Easy. Getting a pizza with chicken and bacon and golden manna? That'll take some time.

You can also fight with it! Just wrap Shadowstuff around it 'til you've got 'arms,' and have at it! These fight with a Strength equal to your Psyche. [We use a rule-of-thumb: Number of tentacles fight with Psyche divided by that number, but this is not mandated by the system.]

You can also look through it. Call up the Logrus as always, and put it between your eyes and whatever you want to examine. Pattern, Logrus, Trump, and Magical energies will be obvious. You'll know if it's a thing of Shadow, Amber, or the Courts. Touching someone with the Logrus while you're using Logrus Sight will give you a general idea of their Psyche, and let you know if they're charged with ambient magic (Power Words, or Sorcery for the uninitiated.)

Sick of having to hang your spells on trees? (Little salesman joke, there.) Just weave it into the Logrus! Sure, it takes a bit longer [10 minutes plus the time it'd take to cast], and maybe they decay (within days or weeks), but the Logrus is easy to carry around!

Like that silly Pattern, the Logrus DOES have its defensive abilities! Fill your body with its energy, and it'll resist Pattern, Trump, Magic, Psyche, and quite a few other forces... but no help against anything physical. As an alternative, hold it in front of you as a shield, and ward off physical, energy, and most magic from one direction! True, it doesn't help a bit against Pattern, other Logrus masters, Trump, or Psyche this way, but just watch those bullets bounce! Of course, you can only use one of these defenses at a time.



POWERS: Trump

COST: 40 POINTS

Yes, Trumps! Tarot with a twist!

Trump Artistry is a difficult art, but very useful. Trumps are the one thing you'll never just "find" in Shadow. They can't be conjured. They can't be bought. The ONLY way to get one is from a Trump Artist...unless you are one. Then it's easy. Well, not EASY, but possible.

What is Trump? The ultimate in business cards—you can contact someone from across the width, breadth, depth, and even sheer perpendicular nature of Shadow. (Some exclusions apply.) Contact them or a place, and then...the neat trick? Get lost! I mean, go there...or in the case of an individual, bring them to you! You can bug your little sister when she's out on a date, get quick advice (or assistance in person!) from your cousin the Warfare master while facing that bug, and much, much more. All this and a cool rainbow-y effect in the form of a painting in very convenient, possibly indestructible card-sized bites!

What can a Trump artist do? Well, make Trump, obviously. This takes a while...a day or two, usually, and it can take weeks working from memory. Making a Trump from someone else's description has a good chance of linking up to a Shadow of what they want, or something similar...the same problems you get with Logrus searching. Of course, the more detailed the description, the better the chances...but no Trump is going to be more accurate than the Trump Artist knows how to make it.

Sketches are easier, but they still take time (your rule of thumb is about half an hour.) They're entirely impermanent, and if the subject changes, they stop working. They're also a bit hazy, and therefore take more concentration to use. Not a problem if you want to get off the phone early, but bad if you're trying to get help in a fight!

Here's a big advantage to knowing Trump like only an artist can; if you get a Trump call, skim through your deck real quick. If you've got the person's card, it'll be 'active'. Of course, if you've also got the Trump of someone ELSE who's having a conversation with someone ELSE, this just narrows the possibilities...but it's more than anyone else gets.

Being attacked by something more powerful? Play your Trump! Concentrate on your own Trump card, let that cool sensation fill your body, and as long as you can concentrate, it'll protect you from Pattern, Logrus, Psyche, and most Magic! A bit draining, though; holding off major powers is just as hard as a real mind-to-mind battle, and it can wear out your Endurance. Spiffy, though, isn't it? You'll also recognize Trump in anything else. Most people don't know a painting from a Trump, but you will.

And, finally, you'll have access to Trump powered objects! More on that later.

BASIC VOCABULARY

Amber: The one true realm, of which all other places are but Shadow.

Chaos: The other true realm. If Amber is the light, Chaos is its reflecting darkness. Or the other way around.

Diceless: A fnord used to cover up the actual mechanics. [snort]

Elders: The named (N)PCs of Amber, from the books, usually.

Rebma: The underwater reflection of Amber.

Shadow: Each of the parallel universes (differentiated by what the PC determines) between Amber and Chaos.

Tir-Na Nog'th: The ghost/sky reflection of Amber, reachable only by a stair that appears when the moon is full and the sky is cloudless. Really.

Unicorn: The heraldic symbol of Amber, also powerful creature within it.

POWERS: Magic

COST: 10, 15, or 20 POINTS

That's all well and good, you say...but what about Magic? I'm glad you asked! As it happens, we've just gotten in a new shipment, and currently have THREE varieties of Magic! Diet, Cherry, and Decaf! AKA:

POWER WORDS: 10 POINTS

Cheap! And worth it! For these 10 points, you begin with 5 Power Words! More at 1 point each.

To clear up a common misconception, these do NOT have to be words, per se. They do not use power of Shadow like other forms of Magic; Power Words are based on you! Of course, this means they can be draining if you aren't too strong (below Amber Endurance), and even if you've got a high Endurance, we won't be responsible if you use them when you're doing something strenuous, like walking the Pattern.

All Power Words are quick and easy. Their effects are instantaneous, and there are no "delayed effect" Power Words. This power is the only Power in Amber that cannot significantly advance; you can learn more Power Words, but they don't get any better. Also, keep 'em secret; if someone's ready for it, they aren't likely to provide the needed kick.

There are twenty common varieties of Power Words, but almost anything within those parameters is possible. Power Words can protect you from almost anything (*Magic*, *Chaos*, *Trump*, or *Pattern Negation*, and *Psychic Defense*, effective against Magic, Logrus, Pattern, and Trump or Psyche, respectively). Note that Pattern and Chaos Negation do not actually negate it; they simply defend YOU against it. *Magic Negation*, however, actually disrupts their spell, and if used fast enough, can fizzle traps or wards before they are unleashed. Another method of Power Word defense is *Defensive Luck*, which gives you a temporary boost of "Good Stuff."

Their attack ability is, we admit, limited. You can disrupt a person's mind, Trump, or body (*Psychic*, *Trump*, or *Neural Disrupt*). *Pain Attack* will hurt them, but not harm them. *Weaken Structure* can help if you need to break down that wall, and aren't QUITE strong enough, and it WILL work against an opponent's weapon. Unfortunately, we cannot guarantee (or even offer) results against magic or mystic items.

One of the most effective uses of Power Words is to boost or dampen something else. You can give yourself a "pulse" of magical or psychic energy, boosting your abilities, just for that necessary instant! In combat this could well turn everything to your favor! *Process Surge* and *Process Snuff* are good examples of this.

Finally, there are the more useful, miscellaneous, Words. *Lifeforce* won't heal someone, but it can wake up unconscious friends, and help in certain medical emergencies. *Shade* is useful for creating a spooky atmosphere. *Light Strobe* can blind someone for a moment. *Spark* does just that. *Thunder* allows you to make a REALLY LOUD noise. Remember, each of these is shaped by the caster, so the specific Word (gesture, whistle, etc.) will vary.

This is not a complete listing; if you have any ideas, consult your game master.

SORCERY: 15 POINTS

A useful power, but it requires a lot of upkeep.

Spells take time. Anywhere from 10 minutes to a few days. Fortunately, they can be prepared in advance!

Of course, there are limits. YOU can only hold one spell at a time...and that only as long as you can concentrate on it. So you'll need something you can "hang" them from. Note that the Logrus itself can be used for this, giving Logrus Masters a big advantage!

The second restriction is that spells are VERY specific. If you know exactly what, where, when, and how you'll cast it, you can have the whole thing ready and drop it in an instant.

POWERS: Magic

In the likely event that you haven't the foggiest, however, you'd best leave "lynchpins." Essentially, these are parts of the spell that haven't been done yet, variables in the magical equation that trade time for versatility. The exact amount varies from spell to spell, of course.

There are a few ways to get a spell to someone. The easiest is to go there yourself, of course. An alternative is to cast it through someone ELSE's Psyche, via a mind link. Unfortunately, few people are so generous as to allow this, because if you decide to attack THEM with the spell they have no defense. Lastly, another big advantage to Logrus users; magic can be cast through the tentacles of the Logrus! What a deal! Cross-Shadow Sorcery!

An actual listing of all the spells possible is silly, because almost anything is.

CONJURATION: 20 POINTS

The most powerful variety of Magic.

This is really using Magic to shape Shadow, or to give it a bit of Shadow power. If you want to use magic spells in conjuring, you will need Sorcery too, of course!

The uses? Myriad! They're everywhere! Okay, they're split into four basic capabilities.

- 1) **Basic Conjunction.** The easy stuff. Pulling a scarf out of thin air, or a horse from your hat. The actual details on this are under Artifacts, so hang on.
- 2) **Conjure Shadow Shape.** This is when you want to "Build" something out of the stuff of a particular Shadow. It's pretty quick; it takes around an hour. But the conjunction will only exist in that Shadow, and fades away depending on the amount of Pattern around (from six hours in Amber to years in the Courts.)
- 3) **Empowerment.** Temporarily put some power into an already existing item or creature. This takes about 30 minutes of preparation, plus 10 per point of Quality, and an hour per point of a Power. Multipliers for quantity and form apply to this time, as well. Trying to make it permanent can require up to ten times longer!
- 4) **Complex Conjunction.** Conjuring up magic items or living things. Again, use the Artifact Creation guide. The total point cost represents the number of hours it'll take, and the item loses its power if taken out of the Shadow it was created in, is disrupted by other magics or something Real.

Combinations for the adventurous!

Shape Shifters Delight: A spicy blend of blood and magic, this allows you to conjure items from your own blood! These can be given a measure of your powers! An Advanced Shape Shifter can do it from someone ELSE'S blood, too!

Power Word Combo: Put your power words into your items! The only drawback is that it has to be the same power word you know, so anyone who knows you have it could be just as prepared. Note that a Word in an inanimate item will be invoked by the wielder, whereas anything alive can use them itself!

Sorcery Special: Yes, if you have Sorcery, you can create SPELLS OF CONJURATION! A Conjunction that would take four hours still will, but this allows you to, like other spells, cast most of it ahead of time! Also, you can Conjure items capable of storing and activating spells! Any of the magical powers from the Artifacts section (*coming soon to a screen near you!*) can be invoked into an item. Using advancement points can even make it part of your permanent inventory!

POWERS: ShapeShifting

COST: 35 POINTS

This is NOT the Power for the easily frightened. Sure, Pattern or Logrus users occasionally risk destroying a universe, but you, daily, must cope with the ability to destroy YOURSELF. There are a lot of nasty things that can happen to a shape-shifter. Simple changes don't take long, maybe 15 seconds to harden your skin. A complete change you're familiar with is a matter of minutes. Of course, if you're hurt, hungry, tired, or wounded, it's a lot harder...if not impossible.

Anyone with Human level Endurance can manage a shift once a day. Chaos rank can pull off a couple. Amber or higher can shift almost at will, but they'll need to replenish their bodily supplies. You know, EAT.

You can learn just about ANY new form, but it takes time. And practice. The first time you imitate someone, you'll need something to go on, and a mirror to see how it's going. After a few days of dedicated practice, and you've got the form and can take it on quickly.

Just look at all you get, for a measly 35 points!

Did that nasty peasant just shred your arm with his rake? Hey, you're a SHAPESHIFTER! No need to wait for your body to heal naturally, you can actually shape shift the body to repair itself! Open wounds can be closed really fast, even in the midst of a fight. Actual repairs, especially nervous tissue, however, takes a while. It'll go dramatically faster than the 'natural' way, but healing yourself this way uses a lot of energy. And if you actually LOSE something (arm, eye, intestines...whatever) you have to regenerate it the usual way, based on Endurance. In the meantime, that part (or its equivalent) will be out of every form you take.

You can also shape individual body parts. Soft tissue is the easiest, followed by cartilage, and then bone. Nerves are the hardest, and holding the change requires full concentration since your body prefers a more familiar form.

With effort and a mirror, you can change your facial features to disguise yourself, or even imitate someone else! Shape-shifting that grey right out of your hair is just ONE of the myriad uses! Unfortunately, you'll go back to your usual features if you're forced to concentrate on something else, say, a Trump battle, or calling up Pattern or Logrus.

All shape-shifters have three "natural" forms. Human is your usual one, and looks, you'll never guess, human!

The Chaos Form is designed for combat. Usually demonic looking, it's got scales, claws, and other natural hardware. This form is usually best for dealing with a wide variety of environments. Overall, it's the Chaos equivalent of putting on your armor and grabbing your sword. There are no actual attribute effects, though. (And yes, even Amberite shape-shifters have a Chaos form.)

And then there's the Avatar form. You can take an animal form, generally of roughly your size and weight. Or perhaps an Elemental form, based on fire, stone, air, or water. Of course, holding a water-based form in a non-watery environment is tough.

But wait! There's more! You can also take on an animal form directly. This is easiest if you've had a chance to make Psychic contact with that kind of animal first. Once you've "learned" it, you can copy it accurately at any time. Quick note on flying, however: it takes at least Amber rank Strength. And, alas, we can't offer any of their natural skills. A bird can fly, yeah, but your first time in bird-form, you'll have a hard time with it, trying to figure it all out. You'll just have to, erm, wing it.

And, as usual, there's one REALLY useful but REALLY dangerous trick. Ginsu shape-shifting! No, just kidding. You can put your power on "automatic," in a REAL emergency. Your mind and body can shift to defend against rapid environmental change, physical attacks, drowning, poison, mortal wounds, burning, and yes, even defenses against Magic, Logrus, Pattern, and Trump. And more! But this is an EMERGENCY measure; once you let it loose, you can't control it. ANYTHING can happen to you.

NOW HOW MUCH WOULD YOU PAY? No, don't answer yet, there's ONE MORE POWER! YES! Can you believe it? An advanced version of the Automatic shifting, PRIMAL FORM! This isn't just letting your Shape Shifting loose...this is letting it take over! One danger is that it often gives those around an insight to your personality, as your Primal Form will be a reflection of your deepest hopes, fears, and dreams. But WOW! It can shift to meet any challenge, instantly.

The BIG problem? You're not in there anymore. Sure, your personality's still around, but it's buried WAAAAAY in the back. You won't know what happens when you're in Primal Form, and if you're really paranoid, it might never feel comfortable enough to let you out. Then, unless someone gets it to a point where sheer rage and shape shifting CAN'T get it out, you may well never "wake up." So use this only when things are so bad that the last resort of Automatic turns out not to be enough of a last resort!

ARTIFACTS (Magic Items)

Very, very, variable. It's as easy as one...two...three! Uh, four...five! Your character can have anything he wants, but if it's interesting, and you want to keep it, it's going to cost points!

STEP ONE: Pick an item, any item! Swords, necklaces, pencils, keyboards, humans, iguanas, cats...whatever you like, the basic item is free! (Check with your GM; they can be finicky creatures, can't they?)

STEP TWO: **Step two:** Add in qualities!

VITALITY- Not just physical strength, this also measures life force.

Animal Vitality: Bring good (inanimate) things to life! *1 point*

Double Vitality: Animals become twice as strong, humans hit Chaos level. *2 pts*

Immense Vitality: Animals get REALLY strong. Humans hit Amber level. *4 pts*

QUALITIES

MOVEMENT- Animating the inanimate or speeding the animate! Not really combat movement, this applies more to long-term stuff.

Mobility: Let that table come to YOU! Without Vitality, it's real slow. *1 point*

Double Speed: Doubles movement. Who'd've thought it? *2 pts*

Engine Speed: Let that horse hit 75+ mph! Dogs can hit 60! Even items without normal mobility can wriggle along at 20 (No kilometer conversions, sorry!)! *4 pts*

STAMINA- Not Endurance; this doesn't give healing, just duration.

Double: Gives equivalent of Chaos endurance to humans or items. *1 point*

Amber: Run for hours without getting tired! You know, like an Amberite. *2 pts*

Tireless: Supernatural, dude. NEVER get tired. *4 pts*

AGGRESSION- Not all of Warfare; this is just combat reflex and skill

Combat Training: Trained soldiers; teamwork, basic tactics, and above-human expertise in their weapon. Items have a specific expertise up to Chaos level Warfare. *1 point.*

Combat Reflexes: Creatures become faster than someone with Chaos. Items or humans hit Chaos rank Warfare. A specialized item improves to Amber rank. *2 pts*

Combat Mastery: Puts most people up to Amber level. Specialized items can actually surpass an untrained Amberite. *4 pts!*

DAMAGE RESISTANCE- Armoring, preventing different types of damage.

Resistant to Normal Weapons: Deflect normal, others will have reduced effect. *1 pt*

Resistant to Firearms: Adds immunity to guns, explosions, and fire. *2 pts*

Invulnerable: Includes edged and pointed weapons, firearms, and energy attacks. Still only conventional weapons, though. *4 pts*

WEAPON DAMAGE- What d'ya think this could be?

Extra Hard: Armor penetration abilities. *1 point*

Double Damage: Again, adds durability and penetration. Can easily cut through "Resistant to Normal Weapons," and Resistant to Firearms with time. *2 pts*

Deadly Damage: Can even pierce Invulnerable to Conventional Weapons. Always inflicts a serious, if not fatal, wound. *4 pts*

INTELLIGENCE & COMMUNICATION: Just that...

Able to speak: Can speak the user's language (Thari) with a limited vocabulary. Items can obey limited commands, intelligence as per loyal dog. *1 point*

Able to Speak and Sing: Can speak with a normal voice, sing, hum, whistle, etc. It can take complex orders, and has a good memory. *2 pts*

Able to Speak in Tongues and Voices: Human intelligence, individual mimicry. *4 pts.*

ARTIFACTS (Magic Items)

PSYCHIC QUALITY- limited Psyche attribute.

Psychic Sensitive: Chaos rank. Mind-to-mind communication, limited to touch. Doesn't give real "intelligence." 1 point

Sensitive to Danger: Can pick up general distance and direction of hostile thoughts. Can't sense inanimate traps. 2 pts Often limited by GMs.

Extraordinary Psychic Sense: Flashes of insight, danger sense regardless of distance, mental contact with anyone in the area, able to reach through Shadow to known minds. Not as good as Trump, can't do Psyche battles, and it doesn't include intelligence. 4 pts

WARNING: Intelligence and Psyche makes items vulnerable to Psyche attacks!

Therefore, give them: *PSYCHIC DEFENSE*- Purely defensive.

Psychic Resistance: Resists Psyche attacks at Chaos rank 1 point

Psychic Neutral: Can "cloak" itself. Keeps people from sensing that the object is psychically active, or any other powers it may have. Resistance is equal to Amber level. 2 points

Psychic Barrier: Resists ALL Psyche attacks, but you can't give it to something with Psychic sensitivity or communication. It can be "switched," but there has to be a way to do it. And a Psychic Barrier IS obvious to anyone who's highly sensitive. 4 pts

STEP THREE: Add Powers! The really FUN stuff!

POWERS

MOVEMENT THROUGH SHADOW- Allows limited Shadow movement.

Shadow Trail: Can follow someone else. 1 point

Shadow Path: Can find a way to any Shadow it knows well. If it knows the path, too, it goes as fast as a Hellride. Otherwise, it can take quite a while. 2 pts

Shadow Seek: The item can move toward a person or item in Shadow. It tends to find the worst possible "Hellriding" route. 4 pts

CONTROL OF SHADOW- Power over various aspects of Shadow.

Shadow Stuff: Can change simple items and features. Say, making coins match the currency of the Shadow you're in. 1 point

Shadow Creatures: Can effect inhabitants of a Shadow. 2 pts

Shadow Reality: Can effect the environment, such as making magic more difficult in a certain Shadow. 4 pts

HEALING- Kinda obvious, ya think?

Self Healing: Lets an item heal where it wouldn't, naturally, or doubles the rate of healing. 1 point

Rapid Healing: Amberite Endurance regeneration. 2 pts

Regeneration: Repair any damage quickly, lost parts take under an hour. 4 pts

SHAPE SHIFTING- Qualities and Powers are active in all shapes.

Alternate Form: Has two forms. 1 point

Multiple Alternate Forms: Maximum of 12, all determined at creation. 2 pts

Limited Shape Shift: Can change to anything of similar size and mass. Can't gain powers or personae, and it doesn't heal through shapeshifting this way. 4 pts

TRUMP IMAGES- Only available for Trump Artists!! Can NOT be "found" or conjured!

Trump Image: Item doubles as a Trump, has the innate durability of Trump (including resistance to Pattern, etc.) This can NOT be given to a creature! 1 point

Personal Trump Deck: A deck that's innately connected to YOU! In other words, if you lose it, it's easy to find in Shadow. Limited to cards YOU created, however. 2 pts

Powered by Trump: Trump-Like. Can have images, but the main point is that it's Trump powered. 4 pts, CHEAP!
(keep in mind that Trump-powered Artifacts are nearly indestructible by the rules, so this adds what is essentially a better form of the 4 point Immunity to Conventional Weapons)

POWER WORDS- Remember, only Words that YOU have. And if you want it to cast the Word on the wielder, you need to give it Confer Power.

Power Word: Has a single Power Word. 1 point

Multiple: Can hold as many Power Words as you know to give it! 2 points

SPELL STORAGE- This can be used to "Hang" spells

Spell Rack: Can hold a single spell. Note that the spell is being "hung," and requires a Sorcerer to complete 1 point

ARTIFACTS (Magic Items)

Multiple-Spell Rack: Can hold up to a dozen spells. *2 pts*

Rack and Use Multiple Spells: Can hold up to a dozen spells, and can cast them independently. If it isn't "alive," it means the wielder can cast the spells even if they aren't a Sorcerer. *4 pts*

STEP FOUR: Transferals! Lets you put qualities and powers into the wielder!

If, say, you've got Human strength, you might want to create a Belt of Strength! When you wear it, you'll have Amber level! Note that it isn't additive; if you've got a sword with Combat Reflexes, you'll fight at that level of Warfare...even if you're better! **Qualities** are 5 points, **Powers** are 10 points. Note that if you want to be able to transfer TWO Powers, it takes 20 points.!

STEP FIVE: QUANTITY! Buy in bulk!

* *Unique:* Pretty obvious. This is the basic cost.

* *Named and Numbered:* Limited to about a dozen, but you can get, say, four daggers (one for each sleeve and one for each boot assuming humanoid body stock), each with a few Qualities, for only TWICE the price!

* *Horde:* You can get up to 50 of them on short notice, but they're limited to one location in one Shadow. Three times the base price.

* *Shadow Wide:* In one Shadow, they're *EVERYWHERE*. Four times basic price.

* *Cross-Shadow Environmental:* Found in all of the infinite Shadows that have that particular environment. Say, a dagger you can buy in any knife shop of any world that has a knife shop. Depending on the item and what you want, there can be up to Named and Numbered quantity in any 1 environment. Five times base price.

* *Ubiquitous:* THEY'RE EVERYWHERE! AUUUUGH! The only exception is the poles of Reality (Amber and the Courts.) Anywhere else, one can be found within a few minutes! As with Cross-Shadow, they have to look normal, and should appear to be really commonplace. SIX times basic price!

But, you're asking deviously, what about 64 POINT strength? Technically possible, but not very likely. If you want something over 4 points, contact our local representative (your GM) and tell him/her what you want, and we'll see if there's one in stock. But be aware that we only regularly carry the binary system, so we may have to special order if you were looking for a 6-point power.

STUFF

Are you keeping track of your points? We've got more to offer you, of course, but I figured I would give you a quick reminder. If you can be happy a little UNDER your total point value, you get Good Stuff, which is, basically, good luck. Stuff influences how people see you — Good Stuff characters are given positive reaction bonuses. Good things happen to Good Stuff characters.

If you're balanced out, that's Zero Stuff, which is boring, but easy. (gryn)

Finally, there's Bad Stuff. While the actual amount varies per campaign, one point will make life interesting. With 7, Murphy's Law likes you; anything that can go wrong, will go wrong, and at the worst possible moment. Mid-teens will do all that, AND make EVERY moment the worst possible moment. Twenty? Forget it...your character will trip and land on his tooth, the impact breaking it off and shooting it up into his brain, killing him instantly...well, that's probably not quite how it'll happen, but with that much bad luck, you won't be around more than a minute or two. {And if that's how bad 20 points of Bad Stuff is, it should give you some idea what kind of weakness a Human Ranked attribute will be.}

Again, this is something to check on with your GM, but it seemed like a good opportunity to let you know.

PERSONAL SHADOWS

What's that you say? Mere items aren't enough? You want power? *Influence*? **Popularity**? Of course you do! And there's a real EASY way to get it!

Yes, your own Shadow! Shaped to YOUR specifications! Anything you like! True, just like Items, there's nothing to stop you from heading off in search of the right Shadow after the game begins. But that will take time later, and, more importantly, the GM has a lot more say in it. And you know how they love to mess things up. "Hmm," the evil GM mutters to herself. "I wonder who's interfering with THIS one. And what tiny detail did he forget to specify that I can use to completely twist his Shadow into something horrible?" And perhaps worst of all, "Exactly what's been placed in his way that's going to mangle him?"

More importantly, like Items, Shadows purchased with points become an innate part of your character's destiny.

And it's CHEAP! Well, if it's relatively unchanging, under its own control, and vulnerable to each and every power that happens by. It's getting control and protection that makes it a little more expensive. But hey, isn't it worth it to have the Party World you always wanted?

The first consideration is how real you want it to be. A *Personal Shadow* is just a shadow, set to your specifications. **[1 point]** A *Shadow of the Realm* will be near Amber...or Chaos, possibly close enough that its denizens can move through the Golden Circle/Black Zone, respectively. The problem, of course, is that it's too close for easy shadow shifting, and everyone knows about it. Oh, and the politics, oh the politics... but hey, it's a big deal! **[2 points]** A *Primal Plane* has a bit of Reality in it, all its own. Remember, a Primal Plane, properly cultivated, could well start casting little Shadows of its own! (Ah, the pitter-patter of tiny universes...) **[4 points]**

The next thing you want to think about is protection. Do you really want just anybody strolling through, stepping on the grass? Keep those pesky neighbors who bring property values down OUT! A *Communication Barrier* **[1 point]** blocks inter-Shadow talking. It can block Pattern, Logrus, Trump, Magic, and/or Psyche. Incoming, outgoing, or both! But remember, it's all-inclusive...you can't block everyone but YOU... and of course, you have to pay by the barrier. *Restricted Access* **[2 points]** not only blocks communications, but access as well. You can limit people to always entering at one point, or only being able to enter from a type of feature (say, a sewer). You can even make them jump up and down, pat their head, rub their stomach, and whistle dixie if that's your fancy. But remember, once again, it applies to YOU too. Finally, for **[4 points]**, you can set *GUARDIANS*!

Exactly what your guardians are, and their instructions, are up to you. Oh, and the GM. But remember, for four points, you're not going to get 64-point item-style powers...or are you?

Now you'll want some control over the place. Just *Controlling the Contents* **[1 point]** is easy, and lets you act like God, changing material, society, reality, and physical laws. The *Time Flow* is a bit harder **[2 points]**, but allows you to speed it up or slow it down, relative to, of course, Amber. (Timing things in Chaos is almost irrelevant.) Finally, the hardest; controlling the *Shadow's Destiny* **[4 points]**. With this, it can exert influence over those who walk through Shadow, setting it up so that the next time they, say, hellride, they'll run across it. The trap potential of this is just amazing, isn't it?

ALLIES

Now, on the off chance that a universe full of Shadow people isn't enough popularity for you, you might want Allies. People who like you, and might even help you out in the places that count.

An *Ally* in Amber costs **1 point**; this won't be a family member or anything, but it'll be a familiar face.

A *Family Friend* is **2 points**, and could be anyone from Dworkin on down.

Finally, there are *Devotees*. Chaos Devotees are **four points** (by the rules) and Amber Devotees are **six points**. The basic importance of these is as a place holder; if you don't have either the Logrus or the Pattern, a Devotee in either place means you've got the blood, and when the points become available, you can walk it.

Unfortunately, while you can make suggestions if you like, whoever it is is completely up to the GM. You may never know.

FINISHING UP

OKAY! Now you've got it in mind. An awesome character. A Shape-Shifting, Magic-Wielding Trump Artist who's walked the Pattern AND the Logrus, with ridiculously high ranks in all four attributes, and with an Ubiquitous army of 60-point invincible soldiers. Picture it. Fall in love. Now, forget it.

The points you get will not be enough. Fortunately, there is an answer! The first thing to look at is Contributions. Frequency of contributions is often subject to speed of game events. There are a lot of possibilities. Some official suggestions, worth up to 10 points each, maximum of two:

Diaries: A write-up of the game, from your character's point of view. This makes for good documentation and, more importantly, helps you get your characters personality down. Similarly, you could write Amber Stories, or Poems. You could also keep Campaign Logs — Write up the session. Earn points...with the GM as well. Trumps and pictures, if you are more artistically bent, are also usually well-received!

Don't forget Bribing the GM. Don't bank on it (sorry), but it never hurts to try!

And remember, with anything, DON'T just give your GM NUMBERS. If there's one thing Amber's not, it's a game of number-crunching...give DETAILS. True, an Ally will be up to the GM...but if you've got a Shadow, don't just tell her what level of Control you have...tell her what you did with it! Don't just say you want Restricted Communications...list which ones are Restricted. If you've got a sword, don't just list what it does and give point costs...tell her what it looks like, where you got it...make everything FIT. You may have to smooth out some details on your character, but it's your character, so have an idea where you want to go with it, before you're savaged by the machinations of the evil GM.

OTHER RESOURCES

And finally, because we like you and want you to play lots and lots of Amber, here are some resources for you...

<http://www..skyseastone.net/amberlinks/>

New home of the Amber Link List, the most comprehensive list of Amber links on the 'Net. If you're just starting a campaign, or needing resources, start here!

<http://bb.bbboy.net/shadowsofamber>

The **Shadows of Amber** online forum.

<http://www.chorazin.org.uk/gcircle/>

Home of the Golden Circle, an Amber webring of sites.

<http://www.ambercons.com/>

There are just under a dozen regular Amber-themed conventions worldwide. This is the main connection for those conventions.

<http://wso.williams.edu:8000/~msulliva/campaigns/amber/tips/>

Mike "Epoch" Sullivan's tips on running Amber campaigns.

<http://www.skyseastone.net/itsog/>

In the Shadow of Greatness: blog with many Amber topics

<http://www.alkime.org/mtfierce/amber/>

The Fierce & the LintKing's Amber blog.

The Main Amber E-Mail List:

e-mail **majordomo@logrus.org**

with SUBSCRIBE AMBER

as the body of the post.

There are numerous additional e-mail lists, on-line discussion groups, and pages upon pages of very neat campaigns on-line. Feel free to e-mail MT Fierce (mtfierce@alkime.org) if you have any questions or are looking for something specific. Let her know where you saw this!