

# Lost Child of Amber 02

## Ester – Ancient Sorceress



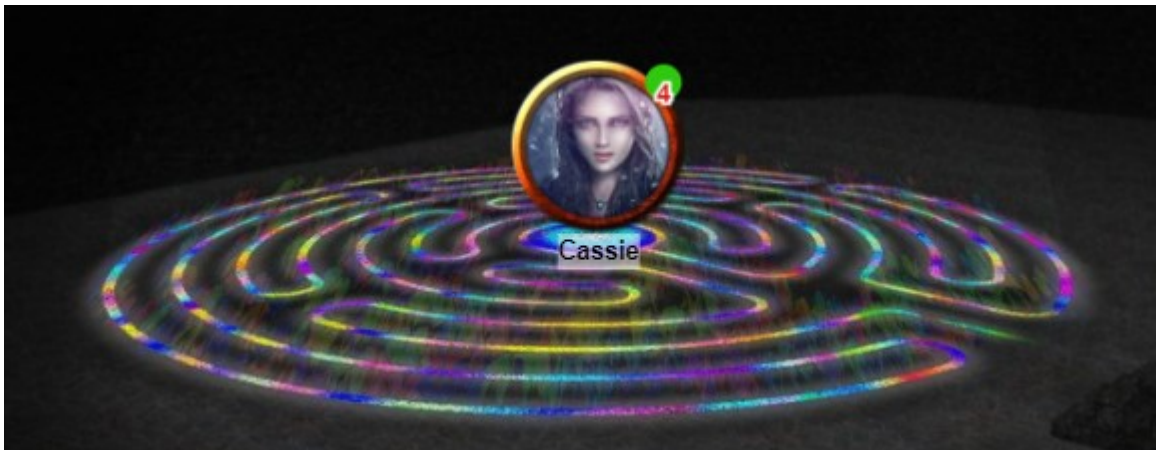
After six hundred years in self-imposed exile in the Roman-Empire Shadow - Belisar, Ester decided to visit Rebma after getting a prophetic dream. Her mother, Elizabeth (one of Benedict's elder sisters), had taken them both into Exile because of undisclosed threats she feared. Elizabeth vanished from the Imperial Palace 400 years ago leaving her daughter still without answers.

Due to her long seclusion in Belisar, Esther hasn't had much practice at Shadow-walking or Trump Use beyond the basics, but she is a highly accomplished Sorceress and a renowned tactical expert and warrior.

Her dream showed a strange young woman being pursued by apes with disturbingly human faces through the ruins of Rebma. She was convinced the dream was the Pattern sending her a message. Her travelling kit was ready and so with a few words to her household staff, she set off through Shadow heading for Rebma.

## Cassie Walks the Pattern

Cassie stepped onto the Pattern in the dungeons of Amber Castle. She wasn't instantly incinerated, so Florimel's suspicions were proved to be true. Her DNA tests indicated an Amber parent and the Pattern confirmed it.

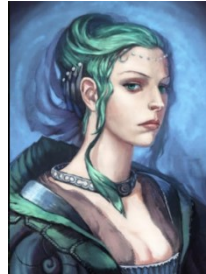


The young woman had excellent powers of concentration and focus, so ignored the glimpses of strange images and the resistance of the many burning veils and struggled through to the centre. All her fatigue was gone and the infinity of Shadow Worlds beckoned. She chose to teleport to the equivalent Pattern Chamber in sunken Rebma.

The bored guardians of Rebma's pattern were VERY surprised when she walked OUT of the chamber – that hadn't happened in living memory – or even in recorded history! She had been invited to visit Rebma by Princess Llewella, so they sent for some of Llewella's people to give her a guided tour and bring her to the Palace.



Rebma was stunningly beautiful – similar layout to Amber Castle, but with massive atlantean statues and glittering mirrors. It seems that there was a recent incident in one area, where buildings had been crushed when something cancelled a small portion of the protective dome. This was one of the Pattern Disturbances that Llewella had mentioned at the Family Feast a few nights ago.



Llewella tried to offer Cassie a “job” but she declined in order to spend some time exploring the infinite worlds of Shadow with her newly-awakened abilities.

## Ester comes to Rebma

After descending the Great Stair - Faiella-bionin - Ester is left to wait with a bunch of merchants and minor ambassadors for an audience with Queen Moire (nb. I incorrectly remembered her as an old woman whose mind is failing – but I’ll stick with that now and Llewella is the power behind the throne). But, when a powerful sorceress enters Rebma down the Long Stair, word is sent to Llewella, and she greets Ester and leads her into the Palace where she meets Cassie.

Ester is vaguely remembered from ancient history. Llewella recognises her as a powerful sorceress and is only too glad to enlist her help in examining the Pattern to identify what is going wrong with it.

Ester recognises Cassie from her Dream and they discuss the young woman’s recent experience in Tir Na’Nogth. Somehow her strange encounter with the angry monkeys might be related to the fluctuations in the Pattern.

They head down to the Pattern Chamber and carefully inspect it. With the Pattern currently very active in Cassie’s body, she can tell it seems healthy and the physical Pattern exactly matches to the sense of it newly burned within her.

Ester uses Sorcery to summon a Pattern Ghost and interrogate it. She chooses to summon a ghost of Fiona. The ghost is a memory of a much-younger Fiona – before she became Amber’s Mistress of Magic, but it seems to have access to some information from the Pattern itself. She tells them that the issue is caused by some OTHER Pattern that has been imprisoned for a long time but is breaking out (or has broken out) of its long-term Prison.

This leads Cassie to remember the conversation she lip read between Benedict and Caine about a dangerous individual who MAY HAVE ESCAPED.

Llewella is suddenly contacted via Trumps, by the real Fiona who has sensed a “disturbance in the force”. She is asking if something has recently “interfered with” Rebma’s Pattern.



## Back in Amber

There are introductions all around and then Fiona brings them all through the Trump and up to the Great Library of Amber for discussions. The ladies exchange all their snippets of information and decide that the link between Caine & Benedict's "possible escapee" and the "imprisoned Pattern" is significant enough to pursue.

Esther calls her Uncle Benedict (after a 600-yr estrangement!) and he admits that...

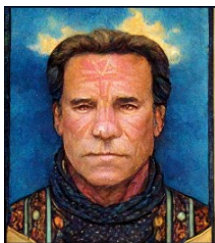
*Just before Oberon undertook the repair of the Pattern, he asked Benedict, Caine & Julian (in case it killed him) to take over the duty of watching over the Prison containing Finndo (Oberon's Eldest Son). Until then it was believed that Finndo had just disappeared, but Oberon explained that Finndo had actually gone insane and was a danger to himself and to all of creation.*



*Oberon and Dworkin built a prison to hold him (hoping that a cure would later be found). Centuries passed and it seems Finndo created a Pattern of his own, drawn in blood, INSIDE the prison cell. Dworkin's magic was still sufficient to contain everything.*

*The Prison is in a Shadow called "Brittania". A magical Cell inside a mountain. The Mountain was rigged to collapse if the Cell was ever breached. A small guard post is nearby and one of the guards has Caine's Trump for emergencies. He reported that the Mountain had collapsed so Caine was concerned the magical wards may have been breached. After the Feast (3 nights ago) Caine went to investigate, he hasn't called in yet and Benedict has been too busy to follow it up.*

Benedict has to end the call as he's involved in suppressing a rebellion in the Courts of Chaos between House Sawall led by the elderly Lord Gramble and his new young wife Dara, who are vying for the Throne of Chaos with the incumbent House Swayvill (supported by Benedict's Peacekeeping Force).



Cassie uses Gerard's Trump to call him (he's at sea, leading a small Armada, re-opening Sea Ways between the Golden Circle Shadows) to ask him what he remembers about Finndo. Gerard is astonished to learn that Oberon may have locked his eldest son up. Apart from a very hot temper, he didn't consider Finndo to be insane – at least no more than half the family.

Next, Fiona tried to call Caine to see what he had found in Brittania. The Trump call won't connect. She's fairly sure, from the feel of the card, that Caine isn't dead, so he's either blocking the contact by an effort of will or it is being blocked by someone or something else.

Fiona decides to continue her library research into the Pattern Fluctuations and is happy to leave the next steps in the investigation to Esther and Cassie.

After a night's rest they plan to inform King Random and then possibly try to force Trump Contact with Caine or try Shadow-walking to locate either him or locate the Brittania Shadow. It's also possible that Julian might know more about Brittania.

Among her small (mostly useless) deck of Trumps, Esther still has one for Finndo, so they also have the option of trying to contact him.

They seem no nearer to understanding their visions about aggressive human-faced monkeys pursuing Cassie through crumbling ruins.

