

Character Overview – The Surveyor

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Brainstorming Character

Process

- Brainstorm
- First Draft
- Review
- Final Draft

Questions to ask before writing the character

Q: How do you imagine the character? (something simple) / Character one-line explainer?

A: A depressed loner yearning for an end to his pain, who then finds his way into the elusive chakra maya.

Q: What kind of character would appeal to the audience?

A: It's the pandemic, majority of the people are stuck at home, anxious and uncertain about the future. They are unable to go out and mingle with others or do the things they normally do. This is bound to make a lot of them depressed and feel suffocated.

- A character that is stuck in a similar set of circumstances, that's similarly frustrated, anxious and depressed, who over the course of the story finds a way to improve his self and break through his cycle of depression, should be very relatable.

Q: What kind of character do the employers/clients want?

A: Someone that fits the theme of the world that has been created and that gets the players more interested in the world and hence their app.

Q: What do you want to do with the character? / What is the purpose of the character to the story?

A: I want to tell a story that would reinforce the idea that growth/self-improvement can happen for everyone, no matter how ordinary they are, or how difficult of a situation they are in, but also that such change can be difficult and slow(which is fine).

- It's just the matter of understanding the difficulties, accepting change and asking for help.

Q: What is the purpose of the character to the gameplay?

A: The character will be an introduction to the world, the themes and the main driving force behind the story.

Deciding an Archetype

- "The Orphan" archetype fits the character I have in mind for the story.
- A character -
 - that has experienced a lot of failure, and loss throughout their life.
 - that is fearful of abandonment and of the change, but at the same time feels stuck in the vicious cycle of pain and depression.
 - that is ordinary.
- **Main Character Conflict:** This character is caught between their desire to make things better for themselves and sticking to the comfort of what is certain.

Making the Character Unique/interesting

- Mental Conflict = Physical Conflict
 - For our character this dilemma between being stuck in a rut and wanting to be better is compounded by their physiological needs.

- Their body is completely dependent on **Amrit** to survive, but consuming Amrit also harms their body.
- The character doesn't know that they can have at a better life, they think they're stuck with what they were given.
- Traits -
 - The character grew up in a very difficult environment, they had to lie, often manipulate others (even loved one) and use other unhealthy coping mechanism to survive.
 - They think this is normal behaviour and even prefer it.

Visualizing the character



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Inspirations

- Theon Greyjoy/Reek – Game of Thrones
- Imperial Orphans – Star Wars
- Nine – Terror in Resonance

Character Sheet

Basic info

- **Name:** {Player Decides}
- **age:** 26-29 (no one knows for sure, maybe available in the government archives)
- **sex:** {Player Decides} {I will use the pronouns “They/them” to refer to them}
- **Nationality:** Amaravati

Physical appearance

- **Height:** 5'7"
- **Build:** Lanky
- **Face:** Scarred, Gaunt
- **Hair:** White, straight, deshevelled
- **Distinguishing features:**
 - Ponytail
 - Purple-black splotches on his back and neck.

Personality and Traits

- **Key archetype:** The Orphan
- **Reference person:** Theon Greyjoy/Reek
- **Key Traits:**
 - **Flaws:**
 - Melancholic
 - Stubborn
 - Vulnerable
 - Manipulative
 - Paranoid
 - Addictive Personality
 - Apathetic
 - **Strengths:**
 - Curious
 - Empathetic
 - Open-minded
 - Wants to change
- **Likes & Funs:**
 - Consuming Amrit
 - Music
 - Reading (That’s how they become good at surveying)
- **Dislikes:**
 - Working out

- Life in Amaravat (life in general)
- The constant hum of the conduits
- **Fears:**
 - Change
 - Abandonment
- **Things they're proud of:** Nothing, maybe their love for their friend
- **Things they're ashamed of:** not having been able to save their friend
- **Core Philosophy:** keep rowing
- **Political Views:** Apathetic
- **Skills & Abilities:**
 - Surveying Amrit Nodes
 - Can read books and Maps
 - Can play a musical instrument

Background

- Abandoned by their biological mother when they were five, they were left to fend for themselves in one of the lower levels of the city of Amaravat.
- They were taken in with some of the other kids into one of the administrator-run worker-compartments.
 - (Worker-compartments are boarding schools/training facilities where people are trained in one of the trades - surveyors, engineers, miners, Technicians, Operators - to help in Amrit extraction.)
 - (Some of these worker-compartments specialise in taking care of orphaned or abandoned children.)
- They were never very social with the other kids, but they were always curious about the subjects that were taught, and the world around them. This helped them keep out of trouble and also make a few friends.
- Over the years, they grew very close to one of those friends. As they sat through training and classes, they eventually became very fond of each other.
- In beginning, the protagonist had lots of trouble completing their classes, but with their friend's help they were able to pass and join the surveyor department, together.
 - (Surveying is a difficult but rewarding job. Members of the surveyor expeditions get paid well, but the catch is that the on-job fatality rate is quite high. This is owing to the nature of the work, where expedition members are expected to venture deep into the previously unexplored dark crevasses and caves that line the far-outer reaches of the city, in the abyss. There are many dangerous hazards out there, such as cave collapses, gas leaks, falling into gaps that feel like they go on forever, and even becoming victim to the strange and eerie creatures that roam the

abyss. However, most casualties on an expedition are people that go missing. The abyss has something far weirder that encompasses it - the Chakra Maya. It's an illusory field of weirdness that envelops the abyss and everything beyond the city. Anyone unfortunate enough to come under the grasp of this strange warp never returns.)

- However, despite these dangers, the protagonist and their friend made a life for themselves, and somehow always managed to come back. After every successful expedition, they would party all they would earn and then repeat the cycle.
 - (This is where the protagonist would pick up the habit of abusing Amrit.)
- This cycle would continue until the day when only the protagonist made it back.
- They don't take the death well. They try to lose themselves in the functioning of the job but even working day-in and day-out, volunteering for missions more dangerous than the last, doesn't bring any solace to their pain. The grief and the overwhelming pain of loss eventually consumes them and sends them into a seemingly inescapable and spiralling bout of depression.
- It got bad enough that it began to affect their work, and eventually they were kicked out, forcing them to move to one of the lower floors, and surviving only on administrator handouts and working petty jobs.
- They then tried to make the best of their new setting, made friends and found new work, but mistakes and the unending pain forced them back into a corner.
- Moving past the grief had become seemingly impossible, even with a want to do so, they felt like they were hitting an immutable wall, beyond which there was only more death and pain.
- To ease the agony, they fall back into the habit of abusing Amrit. Hacking the ingestion module to deliver close to lethal doses and getting high off the near-death experience. (It's very similar to the one's experience on DPH/Benadryl)
- The cycle of depression feeding on the new-found stagnation and on the protagonist's addiction fuelled paranoia, anxieties and fear.
- Tired, and surrounded on all sides by walls that were closing in, they made a final decision - To enter the warp and look for their friend.
 - Hoping for a way to end their pain, whatever it maybe.
- This is when they come under the influence of the Chakra Maya and end up in the city of Samsara where they find SAI – 0525.
- Significant Life Event:
 - Abandonment by biological mother.
 - Death of a loved one.
 - Pained by grief
 - Amrit addiction
 - Entering the warp
- Education: Surveyor school

- Cultural Influence: Lower Floor Culture
- Religious Beliefs: None

Relationships

- One Key Relationship (friend/enemy/romantic):
 - SAI 0525 - (apathetic friend)
- Family/Friend Dynamics (supportive, estranged, etc.):
 - Biological Mother: Hate
 - Friend: Love, Misses them

Character Arc

Initial Situation (who are they at the start?):

- A broken, tortured soul that is caught between their desire to move past their past trauma, and their inability to leave the sickening comfort of depression. Their perspective is veiled and fouled by its effects and by other emotional pain.
- In the hopes to make it right, and to possibly end their pain, the protagonist decides to enter into the Chakra Maya (warp), either hoping to find their lost loved one, or at the least finding peace in the eternal silence of death.

Challenges/Conflicts (what do they face?):

- When the protagonist enters the Chakra Maya, they are transported to Samsara, where they find themselves in a crumbling city infested with demons.
- They are forced to deal with the situation and survive, but to do so, they need to deal with their fears, grief, and guilt. They need to challenge their perspectives and move past the of seeking peace in death.
- In the confines of the warp and the forlorn city, death doesn't seem to be the easy answer that they were half hoping for, so they try something else.
- At the same time, they are very dependent on unnatural doses of Amrit both physically and mentally.

Growth/Change (how do they evolve?):

- Slowly, over the course of the story, the character is able to improve their condition.
- Both their mind and body are able to free themselves of their respective and metaphorical shackles signifying their independence and self-reliance.
 - The body, by the end, no longer requires Amrit to sustain itself.
 - And the character is able to recognize, accept and finally get past the trauma.
- This growth comes with the encouragement, guidance, and help of the character—SAI 0525.

- **Strengths that help in growth:**
 - Resilience
 - Curiosity
 - Want for change
- **Weaknesses that keep them from growth:**
 - Fear of change, Uncertainty
 - Manipulative liar.
 - addiction
- **What has the character learnt?**
 - Learns that it's okay to ask for help and to depend on someone else.
 - Learns to deal with emotions.
 - Learns to let go of the past and to move on.
 - Learns to harness Amrit in a healthy way.
- **How will they change?**
 - They improve their physical and mental health.
 - They gain a want to help their fellow Amaravatis.

Motivations

- **Motivation at the start of the story:**
 - To find an end to their pain
 - To find a way out of the Chakra Find a way out of the Chakra Maya.
 - To find their loved one.
- **Motivation by the end of the Story:**
 - To activate the shield around the city of Samsara.
 - To survive.
 - To escape and find their way back to Amaravat and bring about change, by helping others realize the same.
 - To get rid of their dependency on Amrit.
 - To find fulfilment and satisfaction in life.

Other info

- **Occupation:** Amrit Node Surveyor
- **Relationship with occupation:** Ambivalent
- **Health ailments:** Suffering from the degrading effects of gamma(high dose Amrit) capsules and Amrit in general.
- **Place in the world:** Lower-class, blue-collar worker
- **Quirks (unique habits or traits):**
 - Collecting memorabilia
 - Restlessness
- **Can they handle spicy food?** No.