



The Pool: Amsterdamned

2019 — In chaotic multicultural Amsterdam, supernatural events and sightings are a daily occurrence. The culture of high-excess partying of the city allows most to rationalize these events as psychedelic visions caused by bad tripping. On social media, **#amsterdamned** is trending, thanks to conspiracy theories and discussions of these sightings. And at University of Amsterdam (UvA), brilliant comparative history student Eleanor "Ellie" Bixby has suddenly stopped attending class and answering her phone, leaving her friends Alina and Bartosz worried about her safety.

Eleanor "Ellie" Bixby, Recently Disappeared



Nationality: British

Major: Comparative History

Social media handle: @bigs.bee

A well-behaved high-achieving student during the day, she loves to party hard and let loose at night. While generally polite, she is assertive and always gets her way.

Ellie is popular on campus, and considered to be exceptionally attractive; she often draws unwanted attention.

- **Alina** is in love with her, but she's straight. There is some tension between them.
- **Bartosz** likes her intellectual side and they spend time studying.

Ellie's Friends

Alina and Bart are two of Ellie's friends in Amsterdam. They joined UvA together with her and met at orientation, and have been hanging out for the last 3 years.

Alina Zweers



Nationality: Dutch

Major: Digital Art

Social media handle: @flowergwen

Alina paints in her free time and draws an independent webcomic. Everyone knows her as generous and good-natured, but also dippy and naïve. She is floundering through university looking for her true calling.

Bartosz “Bart” Krzaklewski

If you're wondering, his name is roughly pronounced “Bartosh Kzhaklevski”. ㄱ(ㄹ)ㄷ



Nationality: Polish

Major: Aerospace Engineering

Social media handle: @bartk97

Bartosz is brilliant, introverted and possibly on the autistic spectrum. He wears noise-cancelling earbuds everywhere.

To the disappointment of his teachers, he doesn't strive for excellence at school and prefers to spend time as an EDM producer and fledgling DJ.

Make up Your Character

Your character must be a student at UvA and a relation to any or all of Ellie, Alina, or Bart — e.g. friend, family, lover, rival, mentor, tutee. You don't have to use your character story (see below) to mention this, but their names don't count towards the word count.

Alternatively, write your own version of Alina or Bart — you can change anything about them except for what is said on Ellie's description.



If you're not playing Alina or Bart, use one of the pictures above, either as it is or for some similar person, or obtain an equivalent picture and use that.

Character Story: Write 50 words or less to describe anything about their appearance, their status, their origin or background, what they can do, their gear or resources, their relations or companions, or what they want.

- Do not use superlatives or generalized terms.
- Make up and include other characters or past events if you want.
- Underline words or short phrases to define Traits, as many as you can or want.
- Give the character a name, a major, and a social media handle. They do not count toward the 50 words.
- Assign bonuses to one or more Traits. It is OK for Traits not to have bonuses.

You have 15 dice. You may spend up to 14 of them for Trait bonuses.

+1 Bonus costs 1 die; +2 Bonus costs 4 dice, +3 Bonus costs 9 dice.

The remaining dice become your starting Pool.

Rules of Play

The GM plays the backstory and the physical qualities of situations in play. Players' knowledge and backstory input is restricted to content in their characters' stories. Unless stated actions by players intercede, the GM begins new situations including cuts in location and time. The GM plays all non-player characters including those listed in characters' stories.

Conflicts (dice rolls) are identified by anyone in play based on what's happening or on what they're about to do. The scope of a given roll and potentially damaging or lethal effects are identified by the GM.

Everyone involved picks one (just one) of their applicable Traits to use, receives 1-3 Gift dice from the GM, and decides how many of their remaining pool dice they want to gamble.

Roll a number of dice (d6s) equal to: [1-3 Gift dice] + [dice equal to the bonus for one Trait] + [Pool dice they choose to gamble]. If at least one die shows a "1", the roll is a success.

- If the conflict is failed, the GM narrates, and all gambled Pool dice are lost.
- If the conflict succeeds, the player chooses whether:
 - the GM narrates minimally and the player **adds one die** to their Pool, or
 - the player narrates (take a **monologue of victory**) with greater latitude for effects and consequences.

Describe the success or failure, including ordering, causal events, actions, effects, and characterizations.

Whether the GM or player narrates, they should keep in mind that the effects of the roll should be as decisive as possible within the scope, in the sense that a clear change in the situation happens. Players should keep in mind they can't add new information to the backstory; they can only use elements that have already been established. The GM should keep their narration as basic and minimal as they can, while the player can be more extravagant.

Later Development

During play or between sessions, assign or increase bonuses to Traits as you desire using the same method as above. Bonuses may not be traded back into Pool dice.

After each session, add, remove, or modify 15 words from your Character Story.

The Pool Complete Rules

[https://s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/secure.notion-static.com/3fef5f2b-f793-44dd-8eb9-96b1673376cb/The_Pool_\(James_V._West_2001\).pdf](https://s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/secure.notion-static.com/3fef5f2b-f793-44dd-8eb9-96b1673376cb/The_Pool_(James_V._West_2001).pdf)