

===In the Shadows===

Axel Campbell has been in the Shadows of the Baltimore Crabs for as long as the team has existed. As such there is little information available before this event, and Campbell has only ever described this part of his life as being a time when he was “an aspiring baseball player”.

While he declined to provide any details on his time there and exactly what the Shadows were like, Campbell did admit to making a deal for the ability to understand the Shadows on a deeper level. As such Campbell possesses a keen understanding of the world below the [[Crabitat]], as well as deep knowledge of the game of baseball itself. Campbell has reportedly been able to discern all sorts of things that [[Player Attributes|we are not meant to know]] using sigils and designs carved into, painted on, or otherwise attached to people, places, and things around him.

During this extended stay in the shadows however, Campbell’s existing low vision began to worsen, requiring him to expand his existing navigation techniques as he lost nearly all of his vision in both eyes. He quickly developed enough familiarity with the limited space of the shadows to get around without his cane, which he used when venturing further out.

====A Return====

When the Baltimore Crabs returned from their ascension, the ILB opened up access to the Shadows, shedding light on the people and places that had rarely seen any action. This significant shift in routine combined with the effort he would expend gleaning information from his sigils caused disruptions to Campbell’s existing pacing methods from his chronic fatigue. Now that he was traversing much more space than he could in the shadows, the Crabs management assisted with getting Axel connected to a local guide dog training center where he received a guide dog, Russet.

Subsequently, Campbell spent another 8 seasons off the active roster, as [[Jacoby Podcast]], [[Lorcan Smaht]], [[Parker Meng]], and [[Montgomery Bullock]] were all pulled onto the roster from the shadows before Campbell was able to get a chance to play. This resulted in Campbell working even harder at his baseball skills, becoming an accomplished replacement player either for the rotation or the lineup. Because of this, Campbell also picked up some strange training strategies and routines, including his alleged “solid only diet.” According to reports by his annoyed teammates, he refused to even drink water, choosing instead to chew on cups of ice..

This was also the time when Campbell first made contact with [[Enid Marlow]] who spent a considerable number of seasons in the Crab’s Shadows. The two of them made a surprising friendship as they shared notes on magic deals with unintended consequences.

===On the Crabs===

In season 20, Axel Campbell finally entered active play, becoming a rotation pitcher for the Baltimore Crabs. His initial relationship with the rest of the team was tense as he was caught between the excitement of finally seeing active play, and the team that he thought of as having kept him from active play all this time. The team however seemed to take this somewhat in

stride, as this was when the Tunnels were finally opened up for active play in the many ballparks of the ILB. The other members of the Crabs rotation made quick work of stealing away runs to prevent Campbell from being sent back into the shadows, with a stolen run from [[Adalberto Tosser]] being notably being all that stood between Campbell and the fax machine in at least one lateseason home game.

This relationship extended further still with fellow shadow player turned active player [[Lorcan Smaht]] who had once usurped Campbell's potential place in the rotation when the fax machine was first installed. Campbell, however, found it difficult to remain bitter towards Smaht, noting that ey were "really sweet and an all around fun person". Smaht did eir part in stealing runs away from the opposing team when Campbell came up to pitch.

====A Master of the Tunnels====

While the addition of the tunnels may have been seen as a boon to protect Campbell, he was quick to find a way to weaponize them against the opposing team. While Axel was a skilled navigator of these forgotten spaces, Russet, his guide dog, did not enjoy this change in environment. As a result, Axel recruited a second dog from Baltimore's many street art dogs, which existed along the walls and tunnels of the city. While Yukon Gold was not as well trained as Russet had been, Gold was quick to don a vest and try and learn from the best as she helped her charge navigate the streets and tunnels of Baltimore.

Now, even when he's not in active play, it is common to see Campbell appearing from unsuspecting places on his way through the Crabitat, and indeed any other stadium in the Crab's regular away series.

====Return to the Shadows====

In season 21, less than a full season after his debut, Campbell gave up 10 runs against the Philly Pies and returned to the Crab's shadows, returning very briefly as a pitcher when he was faxed out, gave up 10 runs in 3 plays against the [[Chicago Firefighters]], and returned to the shadows with a record breaking ERA of 286 for the season. Later that same season he was added to the Crab's roster as a batter and maintained a solid performance before being swapped out for [[Zeruel Kramer]].

What Campbell found the most frustrating about the experience was the way that the many intricacies of the Expansion Era had interfered with his "ability to just throw the damn ball". Thanks to his earlier dealings for forbidden knowledge he was extremely aware of what did and did not matter in this new era of blaseball. His pitching was often inflated by the newest suns, and his batting frequently brought frustration; because he was followed up by [[Subtractor]] [[Kaz Fiasco]], most of his runs counted negatively. After his stints in active play, Axel made a point to stay ready to be called up to the team. For the most part this took the form of practice with his fellow shadow players, oftentimes recruiting [[Bevan Underbuck]] so they could both work to improve their skills.

===Back in the Game===

Finally in season 24 Axel returned to active play for the Crabs just as the world was coming to an end. However due to the often catastrophic nature of blaseball, the day-to-day workings of the team would not stop for such an event. Campbell was surprised to find himself invited out to dinner with team captain [[Kennedy Loser]] to discuss the state of the team, with Loser inconspicuously asking Campbell about the running practices, how he thought the team was doing, and what improvements he could think of for their group cohesion, morale, and training. It took until Campbell was organizing a separate [[Enid Marlow/IF-52.105|"knife hitting" class]] to keep [[Enid Marlow]] happy for him to realize that Loser was subtly preparing him to start taking part in captaining the team.

While Campbell was originally opposed to the idea, when [[Adalberto Tosser]] began cautioning Campbell against it "for his own good" Campbell started taking some more responsibilities for himself, taking a lead in the team's regular practices, keeping an tabs on any requisitions the team might need, and using his insight into the splort to pinpoint problem areas for players to work on. One of his more popular training interventions was the addition of [<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A1pjs0TWK0I> Beep Blaseball] to help build trust and confidence between sets of players on the field, though Campbell has been accused of "intentionally hitting the ball in the bay to try and get people to chase after it". Campbell has denied that this is the case, and insists that it is a complete coincidence that most of the other players are drenched by the end of the practice.

==Towards the Event Horizon==

As the team approached the end of the era, Axel Campbell found himself uncharacteristically uncertain about the team's future. Beyond being able to predict the Crab's instability over the second week of the season, (and cursing out [[Finn James]] for taking a game where the team was unstable in a solar eclipse to nearly 40 minutes of play time), Campbell was as surprised as anyone with the events of the season.

As the Horizon expanded Campbell found himself feeling an excitement he wasn't expecting, for as terrifying and unknown the future was, this time he could face it side-by-side with both halves of his team.