

HOMUNCULUS

Homunculi are artificial humans, traditionally created by an alchemist with a very twisted and horrific process. Modern versions of this procedure have been developed to more efficiently craft a human to precise specifications and during the 19th century a process for reanimating dead tissue was used to some limited success. Creators take great pride in their abominations of nature and usually become a parental figure to them as they grow. Most homunculi cannot function in normal society and become reclusive and introverted. Many are prone to mental disorders and physical disfigurements and often times their existence is so painful they do not survive into adulthood. When they do, they typically feel great resentment toward their creator and begin to cultivate a dangerous and deadly hatred. Because of this, homunculi that reach adulthood generally do it without their creator's guidance.



Physical Description

An artificial human looks, by a loose definition, human. Depending on the creation process, types of contamination and random factors in their conception, they may have physical deformities or oddities. Even when a homunculus is close to perfect, they still look "off". Their proportions are not exactly right and their mannerisms can never quite emulate a normal human. Homunculus always stick out in a crowd but it's often difficult to point out why.

Creating a Homunculus Character

At character creation a homunculus will receive 2 Role Perks instead of 1 and a creation method, these can be chosen from Animal Womb, Reanimation or Test Tube (see Creation Methods below). Other creation methods are possible at the Narrator's discretion. Methods may limit which Role Perks may be chosen and have other special rules. Each method also bestows an Advantage, a Disadvantage and a random Side Effect (either chosen by the Narrator or rolled at random on one die).

Sample Concepts: Compassionate Abomination, Eccentric Lurker, Lumbering Philosopher, Manic Sadist

I find it strange, the way people speak of their family. They talk as though there is a spiritual connection to familiar words or a deeper meaning beyond the literal. It's as if 'mother' was a feeling they got and not just a title. The word 'friend' is traded between people like currency and 'father' seems like some sort of higher being that one must prove themselves worthy to see. I feel no such connection to these words and people can sense that inside of me. My presence is alien to them and it makes them anxious or angry. I know that on a human level I can't relate to their feelings nor they to mine. I hate them for this as I have no place in their world and no world of my own. Moreover, I hate my creator. He promised that they would not accept me and he was right. But knowing this, why bring me into such a world? Hate can be a powerful, calculating demon. It is sometimes efficient and surgical in its precision. The ruin it has caused was liberating and saddening and after it was over, the anger was not sated. Instead, it was like red hot irons still yearning to be quenched. It burns inside me still, mocking my existence like everyone else and for all my strength I am a slave to it.

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Creation Method and Side Effects

Homunculus are scientifically created using a variety of processes both ancient and modern. Depending on the method, the creator has varying degrees of control over what traits the homunculus will have but each also is prone to certain Side Effects. Each creation method has a list of Roles the player can select at character creation, a particular advantage and a list of Side Effects that are rolled at random.

ANIMAL WOMB CREATION

The traditional method for creating a Homunculus using the blood (or other DNA source) of a specimen and grown inside the womb of a cow or horse (or even a human in more dire situations) that is kept in a dark room and fed only blood. With this method, the individual traits of the created are limited to the DNA sample that was used and are prone to disfigurements that further limit Role selection. Players creating a new character may choose any Role Perk then decide their Side Effect which may force them to choose another Role.

Roles

| Any 2 (may need to be switched out due to Side Effect (see below))

Advantage

Apprenticeship: Homunculi that are created with this method typically used as laboratory assistants and tend to follow in their creator's trade, at least in early life. They begin with the Chemistry and Occult skills and may specialize in one of them.

Disadvantage

Unsterile Environment: Due to the unsanitary nature of the techniques used to create this being, homunculus created with this method begin with 2 Side Effects.

Side Effects

- 1) Deformed Hands:** +1 CR to Dexterity rolls, switch out Specialist if chosen
- 2) Faulty Immune System:** +1 CR to rolls to resist disease or toxins, switch Tank if chosen
- 3) Gnarled Legs:** -2 Speed, switch out Specialist if chosen
- 4) Miniature Form:** Small Size, switch out Brute if chosen
- 5) Partial Blindness/Deafness:** +2 TN to rolls involving sight or hearing (randomly selected), hearing/sight range is cut in half (glasses or hearing aid can reduce the penalty to +1 TN)
- 6) Twisted Figure:** Charisma based skill rolls are at +1 CR if visible to target, switch out Smooth Talker if chosen

REANIMATION

With this method, instead of growing a new body, the creator stitches together existing body parts and animates it using electrical current and various mechanical and chemical stimulation. This method requires the body to have substantial muscle mass and durability in order to stay together. Once animated, the body parts begin to fuse by growing large grotesque scars where the stitching came together. Some homunculus created this way have limited dexterity or mental capacity.

VIEWS

Outlook: I just try to live my life. At least the torturous, agonizing existence that passes for life.

Bokor: I tried to talk to one of these guys once. They talk in circles and confuse me, agitate me...

Cabal: I've heard legends and tales. I put as much stock in these as stories of Atlas holding up the Earth.

Claimed: I'd gladly sell my soul if I thought it had any value at all.

Humans: I've been told many times that I am human, but I've never felt like one.

Kheprian: They believe in reincarnation. I shudder to think what I did in a past life to be reborn as this.

Loa: I was excited to figure out what this was. Excitement quickly turned to rage when they refused to speak to me like everyone else.

Lumenos: So full of anger. I can relate to this, although I don't see what they have to be so angry about.

Religion: Some people say they find solace here, but I receive only pity and charity

Vampires: Not sure if these guys are for real. They pay pretty well but I don't know if it's worth the condescending looks and dismissal.

Werewolves: Another group of wackos, this city is full of them.

Witch Hammer: Always hunting me, for what I don't know.

Roles

Must choose Brute and Tank

Advantage

Extra Durable: Due to the extreme sturdiness required to reanimate a body, these homunculus get +2 DR against all physical attacks, except for fire.

Disadvantage

Blank Slate: Homunculi created this way have no memory from their brain's previous owner and start play with only 2 skills.

Side Effects

- 1) Botched Surgery:** Charisma based skill rolls are at +1 CR if visible to target
- 2) Phobia:** Choose a Phobia (Moderate) for a mundane and common item or occurrence (see Mental Disorders)
- 3) Shamble:** -1 Speed, cannot select the Fleet of Foot Talent or use more than 1 Action Die for movement in combat
- 4) Slow Healing:** Natural healing takes 2 times longer than normal
- 5) Speechless:** Cannot speak except for grunts and groans, +1 CR for rolls involving verbal communication
- 6) Tin Man Syndrome:** +1 CR for Agility based rolls



TEST TUBE CREATION

This is a modern scientific take on the traditional methods using a sterile laboratory and high tech equipment. It has the same flexibility of animal womb creation but reduces the risk of contaminating a specimen, though subjects tend to be born with serious mental issues.

Roles

Any 2

Advantage

Bolstered Immune System: Immune to all common diseases and toxins, +2 dice to Stamina Tests against a disease or toxin

Disadvantage

Mental Instability: See Mental Disorders

Side Effects

This type of homunculus will start life with a Moderate Mental Disorder (other than Mental Instability, which they receive automatically as their disadvantage). See chapter on Mental Disorders for more information and a system for determining a random Mental Disorder.

Restless Aura

A homunculus is always in a state of discontent. Their body is uncomfortable to them and their presence makes others uneasy, paranoid and impatient. The sight of a homunculus, even one of quasi-normal appearance, can put a person into a bad mood. Interactions between human and homunculus often become rude and aggressive. There is no real system for determining what happens when a homunculus mingles with the normal people but Narrators should always have NPC's react less favorable in social settings even to the point of aggression or malice. It's not to say that every person they meet should attack them or hurl insults but at least NPCs should be very short in conversation, want to get away from them and become rude or aggressive when the homunculus presses an interaction past their comfort limit (which is very small to begin with). Additionally, any time a homunculus would try to calm or sooth anything or anyone, their CR is raised by 1 level or more depending on the situation and at the Narrator's discretion.