

Wheylaid

[0]

Stat Modifiers: ST +5 [50], IQ -5 [-100], Per +10 [50]

Advantages: Combat Reflexes [15], Danger Sense [15]

Disadvantages: Easy to Read [-10], Social Stigma [Valuable Property or Unfortunate Victim] [-10], Unnatural Features 5 [Distinctive smell] [-5], and one of Curious, Gluttony, or Odious Personal Habit [no sense of space] [-5]

Unfortunate Victim: Society recognizes your condition, and makes allowances for it. You are not *formally* property, and you have all the protections against mistreatment or exploitation that the uninfected have; but you are **not** a citizen, cannot vote, own property, marry, testify in court, or indeed be allowed to just wander around without supervision. You have a caretaker who **must** accompany you at all times; if he is absent, you will likely be detained. This Social Stigma persists even if you raise your IQ to sapient levels; people will subconsciously continue to react to your unique smell, even if they're not really trying to.

'Wheylaid' refers to both the disease and its victims; a variety of more open, cheese-derived epithets are regrettably common, if not considered socially acceptable. This particular infectious disease can be anything from a hazard of the adventuring life when dealing with dungeon clearance to the next zombie plague. Wheylaid is a bacteriological-based disease, and it operates in classic cinematic fashion by attacking higher brain functions (except for perception) while improving physical strength. The end result is a human being that is about as strong as a gorilla -- and slightly less intelligent. They also smell distinctively of cheese; even strong colognes and regular washing doesn't mask the smell for long.

Note, by the way, that a variety of disadvantages are **not** included in this template. Bestial was explicitly excluded, as was Amnesia, Cannot Learn, Innumerate, Mute, or Non-Iconographic. The Wheylaid may have had their mental facilities reduced to that of animals, but they **can** learn IQ-based skills; likewise, they can talk, but at the level of a toddler (previously-learned behavior and muscle memory is retained, so a Wheylaid can reasonably be expected to be able to dress himself, brush his teeth, and use the toilet). Exceptionally high-intelligence victims can

even retain sapience, although that seems arguably crueler to the victim in question.

Certain repressive societies would consider this disease to be perfect for making super-soldiers: strong, observant, literally incapable of scheming and plotting, and still able to fire guns and drive tanks. Other societies consider the deliberate infection of someone with Wheylaid to be a war crime, and are not slow to execute anybody that they catch doing it. But very few if any societies will voluntarily allow the Wheylaid to function on their own.

The writeup assumes that Wheylaid is a permanent condition; either because it's difficult and/or pointless to treat, or because certain societies like the effects (at least, when the effects are inflicted on the bottom rung of society). Wheylaid is probably **not** suitable for a beginning character, although it certainly could be contracted by a PC as part of an adventure. If so, and if reversal of the disease is simple -- or even replicable -- be aware: your players *will* keep a live bacterial culture handy, and *will* infect themselves with Wheylaid in order to gain a tactical advantage. Admittedly, this may prove amusing under the right circumstances.

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