

Husks

[0]

Stats: ST +1 [10], DX +1 [20], IQ -5 [-100], HT +2 [20], Will -3 [-15], Per -3 [-15], Basic Speed 6 [5]

Advantages: Doesn't Breathe [20], Doesn't Eat or Drink [10], Doesn't Sleep [20], Eidetic Memory [10], Elastic Skin [20], Hermaphromorph [5], Immunity (Metabolic Hazards) [30], Injury Tolerance (Homogenous) [40], Magery 0 [5], Unaging [15]

Disadvantages: Automaton meta-trait [-85], Magic Susceptibility 5 [-15]

In their natural form, Husks look like sexless humanoids with short head hair and eyebrows. Left to themselves, Husks simply wait wherever they were placed last; they have no inherent skills of their own (including survival skills), but then again they last indefinitely. Strictly speaking, they're not even alive. Certainly they don't have organs or blood as we understand the term. They reproduce by budding, but it requires the active intervention of somebody sapient to start the process.

The most frightening thing about Husks is that they very much were not designed by **evil** mages. Indeed, the idea was a good one; since it was wicked to possess sapient humanoid creatures against their will, why not create a *non*-sapient humanoid creature, and possess **that**? And, to be fair: the average Husk is not sapient. It is designed to be readily possessed, then have its form and even sex altered to conform to the wishes of the possessor; it does not resist because it cannot resist, and Husks lack even the self-awareness necessary to conceive of the **concept** of resistance.

There is, of course, a complication: every so often a Husk is 'budded' that doesn't have the Automaton meta-trait and the hefty penalties to IQ and Perception (the Will penalties typically remain). Said Husk is now a 200 point, fully-sapient character with significant advantages, but a potentially-crippling vulnerability towards being possessed. However, a self-aware Husk somehow remains aware of the thoughts and actions of a mage possessing it -- including whatever spells that mage casts. A self-aware Husk, in other words, can teach itself magic (and other skills) if it gets possessed often enough.

This has led to unfortunate situations. The mages that first create Husks actually do their best to keep a lookout

for signs of sapience; when they find a Husk that is self-aware, that Husk is cut out of the herd and -- properly socialized, mostly. The weakness to magic and willpower is a problem, to be sure, but even the highest-minded mage's circle can find a use for a face-changing magic user who is immune to most mortal frailties. Alas, sometimes the Husk isn't discovered in time, and after it finally has enough and escapes, then there's ...an unhappy face-changing magic user who is immune to most mortal frailties on the loose.

That's when smart mage's circles call in specialists to resolve the problem.

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