

Galvanized Hybrid Organic-Mechanical (Post-Vital) Servitors

[TL 5+2*] [0 pt]

Yes, 'Galvanized Hybrid Organic-Mechanical (Post-Vital) Servitors' is a mouthful, but only the people making them use the full title. Everybody else says 'ghompov.' Aside from being shorter, the name also has the benefit of sounding creepy to English speakers, without being specifically tied to any one particular horror folk legend. Which is good, because ghompovs will soon feature prominently in any number of new horror folk legends, once people realize what they're *actually* dealing with.

Ghompovs are, strictly speaking, revenants instead of zombies. They're full-fledged Abominations of Science, or perhaps Abominations of Engineering: the process takes a fresh corpse, riddles it with various wires and mechanisms and batteries, and eventually shocks the flesh back into Unlife. The new ghompov is then trained extensively in one particular skill, and then sold to a buyer. Ghompovs are put in jobs considered too dangerous (either physically or politically) for living humans, and generally only that; attempts to set up ghompov-staffed assembly lines invariably end up having the factories burned down, to

remarkably little hue and cry. As for ghompov soldiers: any country that tried to assemble even a regiment would probably have all of its neighbors declare war on it on the spot.

The companies that make ghompovs claim, loudly, that the revenants are safely brain dead, but carefully avoid explaining why ghompovs can talk and read the languages they knew in life. This is because the ghompovication process doesn't actually wipe the brain clean of the corpse's living personality; it merely induces total amnesia, while admittedly degrading the brain's higher functions. It normally doesn't matter, because a ghompov isn't going to have its hidden memories triggered while it's down in a mine, or tilling a field; but if somebody was able to ghompov a loved one, then kept him or her around in a familiar setting, the ghompov might eventually start remembering details from his or her living days. Usually to the smug, and quite secret, delight of the ghompov's theoretical new owner.

'Theoretical' was tacked on there because the firms that construct ghompovs are notoriously reluctant to sell them to private individuals, including **rich** private individuals. This is mostly treated as being an understandable policy to avoid what might be described, primly, as *indelicate*

situations; and that's even probably accurate. But the creators of ghompovs undoubtedly know what they're creating. At least, somebody in those firms does, only they're all keeping quiet because they don't know what to do.

In the classic fashion.

Ghombovs [0]

Attributes: ST+4 [40]; IQ -2 [-40]

Secondary Characteristics: Basic Move +1 [5]

Advantages: Damage Resistance 3 [15], Intact Corpse [40]; Lifting ST 3 [9]

Disadvantages: Amnesia [-25]; Restricted Diet (Electricity) [-10]; Reprogrammable [-10], Slave Mentality [-40]

Skills: 16 points in skills. This is usually done either as one mental Average skill bought at IQ/Per/Will +4, or two physical Average skills bought at DX/HT +2 [16]. Combat skills are *strictly* forbidden, by law and international treaty.

Features: Won't Become a Rotting Corpse.

Note that ghompovs do not have the usual disgusting dietary habits, vicious behavior patterns, and/or propensity towards violence that more typical zombies do. The horror

that they engender is reminiscent of what one the editions of **GURPS Horror** said about the Caribbean *zombi*: people are not scared of ghompovs so much as they are scared of **becoming** one. This will only become more widespread if it comes out that ghompovs can recover at least some of their living memories and personality traits.

Of course, more **direct** horror scenarios are possible. A ghompov that regains its memories and personality will still have the Programmable and Slave Mentality traits, which means that it will unquestionably and uncreatively follow orders given to it by its owner -- but it will also have its complete skill set. This can become a major problem when the ghompov in life was a criminal or bandit. Or Jack the Ripper.

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