

New Race: Simulacrons

Life Imitation System (Alpha)

LISA

Why do the simulacrons exist? What are they? Who created them?

There is no easy answer, for nearly every simulacron is a different story. Simulacrons are automatons evolved—they are not merely steam-powered humanoid contraptions, and they are considerably more advanced than the high-functioning fuse boxes. Simulacrons are automatons that rival and often surpass other organic and sentient beings.

While some automatons are steam-powered, electrically-powered, or powered by complex clockwork, simulacrons use the one power source that can make them what they are: essence. Farishtaas have figured out the science for creating synthetic essence, but simulacrons are rarely made using anything synthetic. They are born from pure essence, often harvested from another sentient being, dead or alive.

This essence gives simulacrons something more than other automatons. While an intelligent automaton might seem like it is alive, its ability to learn and thrive are often stymied by its creator. Simulacrons have no such limitations. The essence that powers them gives them the ability to surpass any limits, out-think any barriers, and constantly improve. Simulacrons use pure essence to power themselves, and that power allows them to not only think, but to thrive.

Many simulacrons are alone. Many were born from the whims of crazed creators, and they were their creator's



sole scientific achievement. Some find solace among the other sentient races, while a few are able to find a place among other rare simulacrons. However, every known simulacron is quite nearly a miracle, and the odds of a simulacron finding others like him or her is quite rare. Most people will never meet a single simulacron.

Simulacrons face constant bias in society. While some blend in, acting like subservient and simple automatons, most are unable to lower themselves so far. Most people are terrified of the mere suggestion of a highly sentient automaton, and the world is so full of rogue automatons that the fear is founded in reality. A few simulacrons are able to pass themselves off as human (or at least mostly human). It doesn't make them easily accepted, but it can often help.

Most simulacrons find people who accept them and stay. Many find travellers or adventurers and make their home on the road, never staying long enough for people to become too uncomfortable with the idea of a sentient machine powered with the soul of another person.

Physiology

Looking into the physiology of a simulacron is a vague or difficult study. Every simulacron is unique, as each is a representative of the mad science that led to their creation.

What simulacrons do share is that they are all powered by essence. In some way, essence courses through their mechanical body. While most simulacrons are made of metal components, the essence flows through those components in a mimicry of blood. Simulacrons have a sensory array in their heads, connected closely with their own brainworks. The combination of the brainworks, sensory array, and essence processors is what makes the simulacron alive.

Beyond that basic analysis, simulacrons vary widely. Some simulacrons might have enormous arms with tiny legs, while other simulacrons might have metal fragments sticking out of their body like hellish horns. Some simulacrons have other internal systems, like furnaces or electrical generators, and some have been spliced with organic components.

While simulacrons are immune to diseases, poisons, and most bio-flux alterations, they do bleed and feel pain. The "blood" is not the normal red affair spewed by other naturally occurring creatures. Rather, simulacrons bleed out their own fuel source: their essence. When they lose limbs, some die due to the amount of essence they lose.

Simulacrons require most of the things that humans require. They process most foods in order to absorb the food's essence as well as use the food as fuel; in this way, they eat. At

night, they tire and require rest. Their internal systems require oxygen to fuel their internal fires and keep things cool, and thus they must breathe.

Lifespans: The lifespan of a simulacron depends entirely on how well it was built and how well it is maintained. Hypothetically, a simulacron could live for hundreds of years. Further scientific studies will be necessary to understand the lifespan of simulacrons.

Psychology

Simulacrons do not have easy lives. They are often born with an unusual set of awarenesses. Where humans spend years developing the ways that they function with the world, most simulacrons come with pre-programmed biases that they must either adapt to or replace entirely. While their creators are able to replicate life, they rarely understand it. Because of this, simulacrons are often born into nightmares: dark laboratories, in the basements of factories, or beside the corpses that have been sacrificed to gather enough essence to create the new simulacron.

Simulacrons are often logical beings, but sometimes the logic is a defense mechanism more than a reflection of any programming. Because of how dramatic their births tend to be, many simulacrons become cold and rational about the world at large.

Of the few known simulacrons, some studies have been done trying to link the essence that was used to create them with their personalities. Many people believe that essence is the soul in liquid form, and that using essence to create a new creature will imprint them with memories of the person that the essence was stolen from. Some simulacrons don't understand how their personalities developed or how they can be capable of dreaming, and thus they blame it on the essence that flows within them. It is possible that the original person who provided the essence is still alive, or that it was a large mixture of essences that created the lifeblood for the simulacrons. It is unsure yet if the essence has any effect on the simulacron.

Simulacrons tend to default to referring to themselves by a certain gender, though it is often arbitrary. Some perverse creators will sexualize their creations, at which point the gender tends to be easily determined. Many simulacrons will simply accept being an it, and other more politically-savvy simulacrons will even choose third-gender or intersex pronouns for their own use.

Simulacrons have a rough relationship with the world. Most people distrust them, if not downright despise them. Very few simulacron creators are properly sane or caring (though exceptions exist). Because of this cruel life, many simulacrons earn

people's hatred by performing fully inhumane acts. Among an already rare species, it is a truly unique simulacron that becomes a hero.

Roleplaying Tips

You are a robotic humanoid born from the stolen lifeblood of another creature. Many simulacrons will begin their adventuring days fairly new to the world. You will be akin to an amnesiac, learning the ways of the world and how it works. You might be overly emotional or overly rational. You might be extremely mechanical, having a monotone voice and mechanical movements. Or you might be doing everything that you can to be as human as possible.

When you build a simulacron, you have a lot of options in front of you. You might be tempted to disguise yourself as a normal human, even going so far as to deceive the players at your table. That can be a fun option; just make sure that the narrator is in on the gag.



Necrid

Sample Adventurers

Below are three simulacron adventurers that you can use as inspiration when creating your own.

Art Silexco

Art was the masterpiece of Silex Whittaker, one of the city's premiere weapon manufacturers. The Silex Company had been in a downward spiral since the end of the civil war, and it needed something new to really boost things up. Silex took it upon himself to make the ultimate high-functioning artillery platform. He was so devoted that he began sacrificing his own employees in the scientific pursuit. Their deaths were the foundation upon which Art was born.

Art was an extremely well-armed automaton. His first memory was being unveiled before a line of military defense bidders. He was quickly purchased, and Art spent his first two days in a crate on his way to a military manufacturing plant. A group of bold anti-government terrorists ensured that Art never made it there.

Art recovered from the wreckage unsure of what he was or what to do with himself. He wandered for days before

Why Humans?

Almost all simulacrons emulate or come from human society. While that's not a rule, and certainly the other races would be more than equipped to create simulacrons, most simulacrons tend to come from human society. There is something about the rampant mad science and the perverse essence trade that has made it more likely that simulacrons will appear amid human society.

Some simulacrons will appear outside of human society or come from non-human creators. Farishtaas will make simulacrons from the same forms of essence they use on themselves, often attempting to make a deity of sorts. Satyrs tend to have too much empathy to make a simulacron by accident, so a satyr-made simulacron is often the most well-rounded sort of simulacron.

Gnomes are perhaps the best suited for making simulacron; they just generally have no interest in the essence-gathering required for it. In the event that you are a simulacron that was created by a gnome and are also gnome-sized, you gain the gnomish traits: Small Stature (gaining +1 on Evade rolls), Light Build (suffering a -2 on Brute rolls), have a land speed of 15 feet, and use Smaller Weapons (causing your unarmed attacks to drop by 1 damage class and making it difficult to conceal light weapons on your person).

encountering a farming family that tentatively helped him. But Art could never pass as something human: he looked more like a tank than a man. Their assistance was all because of a little boy who was fascinated by Art. Art spent the next few years helping at that farm until people from the nearby town became too disgruntled—they attacked the town and that little boy died in the attack. Art's revenge was swift, terrible, and unlawful. He had to leave. Now he vows to never settle down again.

Art Silexco would probably have the following specialties: Gunsmith (*under Armsmith*), Itchy Trigger Finger (*under Marksmanship*), and Living Barrier (*under Resilience*).

LISA

LISA is the Life Imitation System (Alpha). She was told that the acronym was a great name for little girls, so she decided that she was probably a little girl. Her creator had slowly been using his own essence to create her, and so LISA's early days were fairly benign for a simulacron. But, after only a few weeks of life, LISA was discarded in favor of creating an even better system: the beta design, LISBET.

LISA found herself tied back down, ready to be dismantled for parts, when she discovered a new emotion: fear. Fear caused her to take actions she didn't fully think through, like breaking her bonds, killing her creator, and escaping the burning laboratory (she doesn't remember setting it on fire, but she must have done it by accident). Now LISA just wants to be a little girl, or—at the very least—forget what she did.

LISA might have the following specialties: Fire Fighter (*under Expertise*), Lucky Number 7 (*under Luck*), and Praise (*under Showmanship*).

Necrid

There is no question: Necrid was born from insanity and death. His creator was an old and especially efficient soul merchant, tasked with the underground trade of finding victims, draining their essence, and selling it on the black market. During a market decline, the soul merchant found himself with an excess of product and no way of moving it. He began experiments, and Necrid was his single success. Necrid was alive for only two minutes before he reached out and crushed the soul merchant's windpipe.

Necrid fed himself on the corpses and rotting food in the laboratory for weeks before venturing out into the world. There he became a vampire, eating people at night and fleeing from them in the day. Eventually, he saw them eating. He stole food and tried it himself. It tasted no different, but it was easier.

Over the months, stories of Necrid began to follow him. He picked up on language and realized that people knew

about him. He had to escape. He had to blend in, somehow. He fled the city, cowered and with enough stolen money to buy off anybody he needed to.

On his travels, Necrid didn't do well with people. He didn't trust them and—though he would never say so—he began to feel guilt for his early murders. He read often, and soon realized the mistakes he had made. He had to fix this. He had to make amends for his sins.

Necrid would probably have the following specialties: Critical Hits (*under Espionage*), Merciless (*under Frenzy*), and Phase Step (*under Agility*).

Sample NPCs

Below are three simulacron non-player characters (NPCs) that a group of adventurers might run into on their travels.

Green Eye

Also known as the Automaton of Downtresh Junkyard, the few people who have spoken to Green Eye know him by that name. The single large green sensor in his head makes it an easy name to remember. Green Eye is not social, and few people know where he came from. People suspect that the old owners of Downtresh Junkyard somehow made him from the trash they had collected. Now Green Eye just watches over the junkyard, tinkering and playing with the random items that come into his possession. But if you're ever looking for something weird, there's a good chance Green Eye knows where to find it. Good luck getting over his incredible shyness.

Mary O'Mary

Everyone loves Mary. Mary is the flower of the town. She always looks lovely, she's always smiling, and she's always quick with a compliment. She has many suitors, but she seems perfectly happy just living alone at the cottage outside of town. The only funny thing about Mary is that she spends her weekends helping out the town mechanic... and she is surprisingly talented with everything.

Nobody knows that Mary is a simulacron (and if they do, they don't live in this town anymore). Mary moved to this town a few years ago after her creator went too far with his fantasies. Now Mary lives a quiet, happy life in a quiet, small town, and she will do whatever necessary to protect her identity and her quiet, simple life.

The Progeny

Many people, whether they like it or not, have dealt with the genius entrepreneur, May Helvenos. May, now nearing her 60s, is unmarried and—with a personality like hers—nobody expects

her to marry any time soon. Yet she has a single son known as the Progeny. He is an essence-powered automaton that she has created purely to be her heir. He fills many roles: he is her silent and intimidating guardian, her constant apprentice, and her one companion. The Progeny is normally quiet, simply standing nearby and observing. Extremely intimidating, his vaguely human appearance is overshadowed by his 8-foot-tall stature and inhuman proportions. And nobody wants to deal with the massive claymore magnetically clung to his back. He is highly protective of his “mother,” and nobody sees her without his say-so.

Traits of a Simulacron

✦ Inorganic Immunities

Bio-Flux Immunity: While you are powered by essence, your essence cannot be altered in the same way that other creatures’ essences can. You cannot be affected by essence manipulation, bio-zappers, bio-invigoration, or other bioflux effects that change organic structures.

Deficiency Immunity: You cannot be affected by medicines, poisons, gases, diseases, or venoms.

✦ **Speed:** You have a 25-foot movement speed. You have a climbing speed of 15 feet, but you cannot swim. You sink any time you are in water.

✦ **Augmentable Body:** Any part of your body can be augmented by prosthetic augments. In effect, every part of your body has 3 empty slots to which augments can be applied. If an augment is placed on you using DIY that is not maintained, it will stop functioning during your next period of downtime. Because of your augmentable body, additional prosthetic limbs can be placed upon you without the use of nerve crafting (which lowers your wounds).

✦ **Metal Body:** You are made primarily of metal. You take damage from electric and similar attacks as if you are wearing metal armor (regardless of the armor you’re wearing).

✦ **Effectively an Automaton:** While you might be as sentient as any human, you are still an automaton. Any ability that affects automatons in a specific way will affect you in that way as well.

Random Racial Traits

1

Armed for Battle: You have a limb or body part that is capable of converting itself into a weapon for 1 action point. This is a standard weapon (such as a melee weapon or firearm) that you would normally be able to have at first level for free. You can place augments on this weapon. You cannot be disarmed of this weapon unless it is amputated (which, if the weapon is part of your torso, can be a rather painful process).

2

Bio-Mechanical Components: You have a slew of organic or semi-organic components that have your essence coursing through them. You have 1 essence slot that can be augmented. You can now be affected by bio-zappers, bio-invigoration, and other forms of bio-flux.

3

Buoyant: You are capable of functioning in water. You no longer sink when you hit water, and you can swim at a speed of 20 feet. Since your internal essence engine requires oxygen to keep functioning, you must “hold your breath” just like any other organic being.

4

Easy Maintenance: Repairing portions of your body isn’t rocket science. You are capable of restoring one of your own wounds during any breather. (Normally you can only restore wounds during downtime.) This does not affect wound effects.

5

Electrical Shielding: You are designed with rubbers and non-conductive metals so that your system does not take extreme damage from electrical attacks. You take damage from electrical attacks like a normal human would. (If you decide to wear metal armor, however, you will suffer regardless.)

6

Engine Starter: You can choose one power source, such as combustion, cold, or electrical. You are able to restart an engine powered by that energy just by touch, which requires 1 action point.

7

Exoskeleton: Your armored exoskeleton keeps you fighting longer. You begin with +4 defense.

8

Heat Generator: You are constantly emitting heat. Anybody who travels in your company is immune to the effects of long exposure to cold. You are also able to remove the negative effects of cold from other organic creatures, such as stuns and frostbite, by touching them for 1 action point. This does not remove actual damage.

9

Humanlike: You do not have a mechanical appearance and can pass for a human in a human society. You likely have some trait that gives you away (such as mechanical or glowing eyes, a monotone voice, stilted walking patterns, or an enormous furnace burning in your right arm), but you can cover that up. People attempting to recognize you as anything other than human must first be suspicious of it, then roll a Tier 2 Cunning to notice that you are actually a simulacron.

10

Illuminating Sensors: You are capable of casting light out from your sensor array. You can shine light forward 25 feet, illuminating your path. You can freely turn your illuminating sensors on and off.

11

Logical Being: You reason through and deconstruct all situations. You can use your Sciences attribute in place of any Spirit resist.

12

Mechanical Knowledge: You know 2 augments, which can be chosen from any crafting skill that you take at first level. If you do not take any crafting skills, you can instead choose to know 2 prosthetic augments at marque 1. You begin with these already built into you, at your discretion.



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