

Andrew Ur

Backstory

Species: Canine/velociraptor hybrid

Sex: ♂

Age: 37 years

Height: 6 feet

Weight: 149 lbs

Siblings: No biological siblings; one adoptive brother, Benny (2 years older)



Andrew is an original character from *Hainfeld*, an RPG. He hails from Germany. He is eccentric and loves to draw attention to himself. As a 'fashionable' half-velociraptor he experienced a variety of medical complications growing up, which inspired him to become a reconstructive surgeon, specialising in similar issues to his own. At one point in his career an eldritch god began speaking to him, and in time began to offer him its own flesh to use in his work...

Trust & Confidence

(newborn)

Andrew was grown in an artificial womb. His creation was ordered by a newly rich couple who both worked in creative industries and wanted the 'perfect' baby. At around the time Andrew's creation was initiated, velociraptor or half-velociraptor children were fashionable, so Andrew was half this, and half canine (he inherited the canine half of his heritage from the husband of the couple who had ordered his birth).

His mother was an unknown velociraptor who donated her egg anonymously.

Andrew had several health complications from the moment he was born: he was deaf and his feet were malformed. Given the respective natures of the two species that had been used to make him, he was naturally inclined to be active, however, his poorly-developed feet hampered his movement, at least to a degree - he was still capable of hobbling. He was also prone to aggression.

His parents had private health insurance, so they had all of these issues treated: the doctor fitted him with leg braces, his milk teeth were partially pulled so that he wouldn't do any damage when he bit anything or anyone, and he was taught sign-language.

Needless to say, infancy was a tough time for him. His parents' expectations of a perfect baby were not met so they didn't get the fairytale ending they had hoped for. While Andrew was indeed seen as a fashionable baby, it simply hadn't occurred to them that he would be energetic and aggressive. Having him created had exhausted them financially, so during these early days they found him difficult to care for; his many medical bills, plus his unruly behaviour when they showed him off to their friends and contacts, made his infancy a strained time for them, too.

Given his reptilian origin, Andrew's infancy was short, from a psychological standpoint as he spent almost no time as an immobile newborn. It took no time at all for him to move onto toddlerhood, a time of mobility and exploration for children everywhere.

Freedom & Self-Determination

(toddlerhood)

Andrew started differentiating himself from his mother early. In addition to this, his sensibilities were clearly influenced by his reptile heritage from early in his life: he was practical and a natural realist.

He felt deeply controlled by his parents, by the limitations of his body, and by the design of the house he lived in. His parents kept on trying to make him behave like the 'perfect baby', but he wasn't docile enough to do that. If he acted up in front of his parents then they would withhold affection for a while as punishment. Despite being half-reptile, he was canine enough to desire the affection of his family, so this hurt.

Andrew learned how to read the room so that he could work out what people - including strangers - wanted from him. He learned that hiding his true, aggressive self, and playing up to these strangers, got him far more of what he wanted and needed than letting his unmoderated self show.

Ambition

(young childhood)

Andrew's parents took him to kindergarten. The one he went to had a policy of allowing both able-bodied, and disabled, children, so long as their disabilities weren't assessed as being too serious. Due to the system being flawed - as many social systems are - Andrew's poorly-developed feet, leg braces, and deafness were not considered serious enough to qualify him for a specialist kindergarten, despite their fairly devastating impact on him.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, he had problems there from the beginning. As a deaf child he found being in an environment full of running, screaming children chaotic, and the other children were often not mindful of his deafness or didn't understand it at all. He became jumpy, and given his natural inclination towards aggression, acted out aggressively to the other children and teachers.

In time he graduated from kindergarten and started attending primary school. However, he missed a lot of it due to his constant need for medical attention with his legs and ears. He had the benefit of a good paediatrician throughout this, who made him feel comfortable with all of this medical attention, but the prevailing medical approach to conditions like Andrews was, "leave it alone for now and see if it fixes itself", so as a result, little was truly fixed during this period of his life.

His problems at school never ceased, and over time his parents became less and less enthusiastic about having him in their lives. During this time period one of Andrew's leg braces began to cut his leg, which the teachers noticed. However, his parents didn't attend to the problem for several weeks. Eventually one of his teachers called Child Protective Services to report this.

As a result of this, Andrew was interviewed about his experiences and life situation, and what he wanted. He found this confusing, strange, and frightening, so perhaps it is a mercy that his tendency towards realism prompted him to answer their questions frankly, so these sessions ran their course quite quickly. In very little time he was removed from his parents' home and taken to live with a set of foster parents instead.

His foster parents were a pair of barn owls. Their family name was Berg; the father's name was Stefan and the mother, Doris. They were a middle class couple, with Stefan working as a mechatronics engineer and Doris as a stay-at-home mum. They had a

young son of their own, named Benny, who at this time was seven years old, and had fostered Andrew because they wanted a second child but couldn't have one for medical reasons.

Benny was two years older than Andrew. At first the two struggled to accept each other. For both boys, this was their first experience of having a sibling with whom they had to share their parents' attention. For Benny, he suddenly had not just a new brother, but one who was deaf and who startled easily, so he had to always be mindful not to scare Andrew. As a seven year old this was hard to remember and as a result of this, he felt rather put-upon. He also found it irritating to constantly have to repeat himself whenever Andrew failed to hear him properly.

Andrew's deafness had an impact on the overall family from another perspective, too. As stated before, the Bergs were barn owls. Barn owl hearing is exceptionally sensitive. Because Andrew couldn't hear very well, he was prone to shouting. The Bergs had to wean him off of this habit for the sake of their comfort.

Being in a new environment was scary for Andrew, but as time progressed and his new parents showed him patience and loving attention, he came to relax more. Being half-reptile, and with reptiles being similar in many ways to birds, he felt as if he fitted in in this family more so than he had with the canids with whom he had started his life. He didn't feel like he fitted in entirely, but it was an improvement.

He started attending primary school on a much more regular basis than before. Andrew had missed out on so much of it by this point, that he needed extra help to catch up, so the Bergs provided him with an out of hours teacher to bring him up to speed. This was successful and eventually the extra hours were stopped.

Occasionally his new parents would arrange a visit with his old parents - always in a controlled environment. His original parents' opinion about the whole situation was that he had ruined them - being taken away by CPS had made for bad publicity, and they wanted somebody to blame for that.

This didn't fall as hard on Andrew's shoulders as it might have done. While he didn't like to hear about himself being scapegoated like this, he didn't really understand the concept of publicity and what could possibly make it good or bad. He was also learning that his new family's love for him was far less conditional than theirs had been, and that publicity seemed entirely unimportant to his new parents. Over time these visits

stopped happening entirely and this, in itself, contributed to helping Andrew settle into his new life.

As a small child Andrew fantasised about being a doctor. He had had the same paediatrician throughout his young life, and that paediatrician had been good at making him feel safe and welcome at the practice. As Andrew settled into his foster-home he also developed an interest in Stefan's line of work, so he imagined himself as a mechanic too.

Productivity

(older childhood)

As Andrew grew a little bit older he underwent a series of corrective medical procedures. First and foremost his legs were straightened so that he could walk without braces. He still couldn't run, as he had never developed good enough coordination to run safely, but he deeply appreciated being free of his braces. His ear canals were opened up enough to physically improve his hearing somewhat, and to allow for an internal hearing aid. While this too didn't completely fix his hearing problems, it significantly improved them so that he no longer felt particularly excluded. His adult teeth had begun to come through and he wore loose braces for these, too.

Andrew started to attend a gymnasium (meaning 'high-quality school' in German culture, and not directly associated with physical education as it is in other cultures) school. His talent for level-headedness helped him get ahead in the sciences; he loved them. His twin talent for reading the room and for playing up to it in a way that (usually) delighted people helped him to make friends.

Not everybody found him easy to get along with - he had a habit for delighting some and alienating others with his quirky behaviour. Some of the children who didn't like him called him a geek. Andrew didn't find this hurtful. In fact, in the resourceful way that was starting to become his signature characteristic, he accepted it and started to play himself up as a 'mad scientist'.

It was at around this time that Andrew recalled the comments his birth parents had made about publicity and his role in their business, and realised what they had meant. He went through a stage of resenting them specifically for this. Externally he reacted to it by telling his classmates about it and laughing with them about his birth parents' exploitation of him. He wasn't particularly aware that he was talking to the offspring of

his parents' potential clients and therefore damaging their professional reputation, but to the extent he was, he didn't care. He just liked having an outrageous story to share.

When team projects came up Andrew would often take on as many roles as he could - so long as it was in a subject that he had an affinity for. He felt that the other kids would hold him back. That was fine so long as the others were happy to sit by the wayside, chat among themselves, and let him do most of the work. However, gymnasiums could be competitive places and sometimes, he would find himself in a team with a more competitive child who didn't want to be side-lined. Sometimes Andrew's personality made up for this, and sometimes it made the whole situation worse.

Child to Adult Transition

(adolescence)

Andrew had already proved himself to be marvellously resourceful. However, given his unusual genetic heritage, puberty was not kind to him. The worst of it for Andrew was his growing pains. He ached a lot as a result of his growth spurts, especially in his legs.

Andrew developed a love of vintage bodily aesthetics at this time, and his unconventional body clashed with his. The body ideal for the period he was interested in was of an upright posture with a straight back. As a half-velociraptor, he was naturally inclined to lean forward, using his neck and tail as counter-balances. In practice he tended to hunch over. He was also gaunt, more so than the aesthetics he desired idealised, and his legs were covered in scars (also not ideal given the impeccable nature of the standards he was trying to copy).

He tried training his body by wearing braces and corsets, and they caused him great pain, but to him, it was better to do that than give in to the shape his body insisted on. Pursuing 'the body beautiful' nearly caused him to break a rib at one point, and this prompted the Bergs to sit him down and talk with him properly about his attitudes towards his appearance. He stopped wearing them for a while due to this, and this discussion became his wake-up call to be kinder to his body.

On the surface of it, Andrew would put a brave face on his suffering, but his relationship with his body image and the pain he was in, both naturally and self-inflicted, was more complicated than that.

There were two issues at play here. The first was his taste for extremity. Andrew's life had always been extreme, and as he grew (and as his neurology began to change from that of a child to that of an adult) he found himself seeking out extreme experiences. He felt alive when these happened, and he periodically 'dosed himself up' with them. Since he was disliked by some of his classmates, this led to some rather nasty teasing, and this helped to put him off his desire for extremity.

Those of his classmates who liked him spoke up, too. They wanted to alleviate his pain if they could, so they offered solutions and moral support. This was cathartic to Andrew, as nurturing felt to be at something of a premium for him. Bear in mind that his first two mothers (the velociraptor who had donated her eggs and the wife of the canid couple who had ordered Andrew's birth) had both used him to make a profit, and disregarded him. To feel cared-for was an immensely powerful experience for Andrew and something he felt inclined to hoard, even though he already had a steady supply of it at home.

Overall, Andrew was outward-looking and eager to experience life, especially with regards to testing his own abilities. He had many role models, from his foster-parents (although they could be described as straightforward, humble people, they were naturally curious and Andrew admired curiosity greatly. He came to see ignorance as a huge disadvantage), to several historical surgeons and doctors, including Harold Gillies.

He barely dated during his adolescence. Indeed, the only person he went on a date with was another boy whom he would later marry.

Closeness in Relationships

(young adulthood)

Andrew was eager to study medicine, especially in the realm of corrective and cosmetic surgery. He applied for, and attended, medical school with a view to becoming a surgeon.

He took a particular interest in a field known as Aesthetic Remodelling. This allowed surgeons to perform surgery on themselves.

Andrew's social life was more limited than one might expect of someone with such an outgoing personality. His family was the center of his social network. He and Benny had overcome their difficulties and were getting along beautifully by this point.

Aside from this he had a few buddies, but wasn't particularly close with any of them. Ultimately, Andrew still didn't feel comfortable with his physical form, and was determined to work on it until he looked the way he wanted to before he'd be happy to be seen by others. This meant that he developed very few friendships, but this isolation dovetailed so nicely with his intense focus on his studies, so he saw little reason to change it.

As an adult, Andrew was ready to feather his proverbial nest and consider having children. Andrew didn't love the idea of having children, but neither did he hate them, so ultimately he decided against having them.

He qualified as a Master of Surgeries and began his career in earnest. Andrew was eager from the beginning to punish the company who had created him: he didn't want anyone else to suffer as he had done, and the compensation would provide him with a helpful financial boost too, so he focused on achieving that. He knew that having a caseload of 'designer-baby' clients to support him would strengthen a lawsuit against the company, so he took a residency that would allow him to build one up.

A few years later he had his caseload and filed a lawsuit - with the support of a handful of other people. They were successful and Andrew was one of the many who were awarded a generous payout. With this done, Andrew took the next step in his career to improve the lives of designer babies everywhere: to build a clinic of his very own. He went in search of a plot of land to build it on.

Andrew found a particular piece of land that seemed perfect. Objectively, it wasn't head-and-shoulders better than any other piece of land, in fact, there were a couple of reasons that it was not quite optimal, but Andrew found that as soon as he saw it, his heart was set on it. He bought it.

During all of this, he became reacquainted with the boy he had dated in school, who had also graduated from college. Known to most as Dr. Bosch, he was a human - an unusual species in the world by this time. The two began dating when Andrew was 32 years of age, and married.

Andrew had his specialist clinic constructed and began work there. He felt drawn to work long hours and felt excited just to be there. To Andrew, this felt indistinguishable from the strong work ethic he had had for many years already, so he attributed this

hyper-focus to the pleasure of having his own clinic that he had almost literally built from the ground up.

The clinic had a basement, and sometimes when Andrew went down there he felt a presence. He didn't question it as much as he might have done, and became used to it. Yet, something about it seemed seductive and this dulled his normally skeptical attitude.

Unbeknownst to him, an eldritch god lived in the ground directly beneath the clinic. It had made a mental connection with him and called him back to the clinic every time he left.

That isn't to say that Andrew could understand what it said, and they didn't talk in any conventional way, not even telepathically. It sent Andrew raw information. The information went straight to his subconscious, bypassing his rational brain, so that he understood its capabilities and accepted its perspective in the same way as one does with dreams. In time Andrew's conscious and subconscious minds melded in a way that persisted even while he was awake, which gave the god 24-hour control over him.

Over a course of 6 months its 'voice' became more pronounced until Andrew began to experience it with crystal clarity.

One day, he went into the basement and saw that the very structure of the building had changed. The basement, which had been built just like any other building - in a cuboid shape - had been added to. Tunnels had opened up, connecting to chambers. It all looked as if it had grown rather than being built.

Andrew was not shocked by this - his subconscious, so closely linked with the eldritch god, accepted it, and that bypassed his conscious mind, which would undoubtedly have been horrified to see what had happened to his clinic. He explored, eager to see what this addition to his clinic was, and what he might find within.

During one of his forays into these tunnels he found the god itself. He began to worship it, which fed it.

As more time progressed the god began to influence Andrew to treat the clinic as the headquarters for a cult. It didn't reach out to his staff personally, but it did as much as it could to extend its web of influence to them. It inspired Andrew to design an outfit for himself and for his staff.

Andrew's cult outfit was extremely intricate, with beads, thongs, and strips of fabric throughout. He started to wear this outfit, either in part or in full, during the occasional work-day. His aesthetic - including his taste in clothes - was already known to be eccentric so his staff thought little of it. While he was in the process of making his own outfit, he designed a much more subtle outfit for his team. The end result looked much like a regular lab coat, but different enough as to look unique.

Overall, his staff loved them! These outfits made them feel unique yet part of a team, beautifully turned-out, and proud to be a part of the clinic.

His, and their, outfits were based on a theme of 'opening and closing'. They involved lace-up elements and buttons. This may have been influenced by the god itself, for which 'opening up' the subconscious and allowing it to 'close' afterwards to ensure that the conscious mind didn't notice and revolt, were deeply important themes.

Sometimes, finding suitable biological tissue for Andrew and his team to use in their surgeries was a problem, and the god provided a solution for this. It called Andrew into the tunnels in the basement and met with him personally. It offered - or rather, subconsciously implied - that Andrew could use its flesh when he couldn't find a suitable donor. This is how Andrew began harvesting the god's flesh to use in surgery.

This allowed the god to travel beyond its burial site in the bodies of Andrew's patients. It contacted its hosts' subconscious minds, although it never took them over. Instead it used the intrapsychic channels that the patients were already very used to: old habits, beliefs, moral values, and traumas, most of which had derived from their relationships with their parents. It appealed to these or antagonised them in order to camouflage itself as it resided within them and communicated with them.

The god benefitted from this by learning how mortals thought, felt, and behaved. Often, mortals managed to use their individualism to defeat, or otherwise overcome gods, so to understand individualism by living it through Andrew's patients helped it to learn more about them.

Andrew was so involved with the god by this time that he didn't hide his use of the eldritch tissue from Dr. Bosch. Bosch found this completely unacceptable and they separated.

Passing on Responsibilities

(older adulthood)

Andrew has not yet reached this life stage. He doesn't have children but has already left a significant professional legacy - for better or worse. While he is not a parent, he has played a part in allowing the god to extend its influence to more people.

End of Life

(old age)

Andrew is still alive in the 'current' day *Hainfeld*. He fears death, mainly because he had such a difficult start to life, and it took him so much time and effort to reach a point in his life where he was comfortable and happy, that he doesn't want to lose all he has gained.

Credits

Based on theory by:

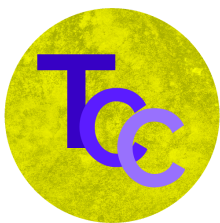
Erikson, E., (1951) 'Childhood and Society', W.W. Norton & Company, Inc. chapter 7.

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~ Hayley, Founder of The Character Consultancy

hello@thecharacterconsultancy.co.uk | thecharacterconsultancy.co.uk