

## Theodore Gin

### Backstory

**Name:** Real name is Theodore Templin, but does not like to associate himself with the family name. Sometimes he goes by Teddy.

**Species:** Human

**Sex:** ♂

**Age:** 27

**Description:** Athletic, not muscular.

**Height:** 6ft 2in

**Weight:** 220lbs

**Siblings:** 1 sister named Felicia, 12 years older, believed deceased.



Theodore is an original Dungeons and Dragons character who lives on Miteria, a mostly unexplored fantasy world. **[I usually put a summary of your character here. It's still in blue because I normally finalise it after everything below is completed, checked, and confirmed to be correct by you.]**

### Trust & Confidence

*(newborn)*

**[Felicia: 12 years old.]**

Theodore's parents belonged to the cult of the Temple of the Raven Queen. This put them in a tricky position: while the adherents to this church accepted outsiders and willingly did business with them, many outsiders did not return this attitude, and kept a distance from followers of the Raven Queen. The cold, sometimes actively hostile reaction followers got from outsiders led to them becoming secluded. For this reason outsiders considered the church a cult, while the followers did not.

Prior to his conception, both of his parents were alchemists. They made potions and remedies for anybody who needed them, and this was how they earned their living. They also sometimes made other potions, which they didn't sell: ones to help them hunt the undead and other monsters. Overall, the potions imbued their blood with magic, which they passed on to their child when he was conceived.

In this way, Theo's career path was, to at least a degree, ordained for him before he was born.

While Theo's parents were keen to have more children, they had no specific plans and simply allowed for accidental pregnancies on the off-chance. That was how Theo was conceived.

His parents had already enjoyed having their first-born, Felicia, and wanted to have quite a few more children. However, circumstance prevented this in two ways: firstly, Theodore's father didn't earn enough money to reliably care for too many children, and when Theo was born, there were complications that prevented his mother from having any more children.

The reason they knew about his mother's inability to have more children was this: the magic that Theo's body was imbued with put extra strain on his mother's body, and she gave premature birth to him. Both she, and his father, were knowledgeable enough about their craft to recognise what was happening, so knew never to risk getting pregnant again for her safety. For this reason, when Theo was born, they knew he would be their last child and doted on him to enjoy being a new family again as much as they could.

Felicia had her own reasons for being pleased about Theo's arrival. She had developed into an introverted child, and the intensity of the church and her parents' fervour tended to feel like too much, to her. Her parents had always understood her needs as well as they could, but she had never quite felt as if they truly 'got' her - often they tried to bring her into the various social gatherings that happened within the church. This only led to her feeling socially exhausted and anxious that she wasn't fulfilling what the church and her parents expected of her.

The priests were less understanding and considered her anxiety to be defiance. They often tried to leverage their rank on her to force her to become more accepting of the church's regular gatherings, penalised her for failing to do so, humiliated her in front of others - individuals and groups - and a variety of other abusive tactics. All these generally achieved was to make her feel more anxious, which compounded the problem and left her angry towards the church. Most of this happened when Felicia's parents were not around to see, and she never reported the abuse to her parents, as she felt that they were too devoted to the church and would not believe her.

While her little brother was far more vulnerable than she was, Felicia had her hands full managing the pressure on herself. She wanted to help him get out of the cult as soon as she could, but that couldn't be at this time given how tiny he was and how much care he would need; she didn't believe she could offer good enough care if she ran away with him. She also feared what would happen if she returned in a few years' time to help him escape. Her fear was that the church would press charges for the stolen horse and use that to bring her back into the faith. Therefore, instead of planning to help Theo escape, she planned her own, and only her own.

Theodore's parents could be difficult to read at times. For example, despite the fact that they had reasons to, and reasons not to, have more children, they left it up to chance. They also experienced some contradictions in how Felicia behaved.

The task of undead/monster-hunting required a certain amount of travel. Theo's parents remained at the church to do their brewing for as much of the time as possible, but sometimes they had little choice but to leave for a while to hunt down their quarry. When they did this, they arranged childcare for Theo by having one of the priests look after him.

Several priests cared for him. **[How old was Theo when they first started providing childcare?]** Overall they did a fine job and kept him safe and happy. Two of the priests who cared for Theo stood out to him in particular, and they were:

- William: William had come to the church as an outsider and been welcomed in. A grey-skinned elf and therefore not trusted in most societies, he conducted himself sweetly to help ensure that the people who accepted him enjoyed his company. Due to his disposition he was usually the first to be assigned to the duty of Theo's car if Theo's regular tutors weren't available. His sweet persona was more than an act; he was determined to ensure that Theo would learn to make the world a kinder place, and he taught him to do his part in making the world a kinder place. Later he would teach Theo that, so long as he had a place to stay and food in his belly, he had more than most people did in the world, and that the generosity of others was the greatest gift he could receive - including from himself.
- Edmund: A priest with a stricter disposition, Edmund showed Theodore the weapons and techniques necessary to hunt the undead as soon as he was old enough to hold a weapon. **[Let's see, so that'll be about 5 years old, would you say? I have heard of children in the real world being armed, so that doesn't seem so strange (once you're aware of the real-world equivalent, I mean).]** He was prone to giving out martial discipline, and used the cane on Theo whenever he repeatedly failed to learn specific forms and stances. Ultimately he drove both Felicia and Theo too hard; he played enough of a role in Felicia's decision to leave to be worthy of individual mention, and his punishment of Theo was almost enough to prompt Theo to refuse ever to wield a weapon.

### **Freedom & Self-Determination**

*(toddlerhood)*

**[Felicia: 13-14 years old.]**

Theo's mother spoiled Theo whenever she could. **[I'm interested to know why she spoils him as there could be a few reasons for this. It could be because:**

- **She recognises that she and her husband lead a dangerous life, and that Theo could become an orphan at any time, so she's trying to treasure every moment she has with him, or possibly trying to make sure he remembers her if she dies**

- She's more inclined to spoil her son than her daughter. I noticed you said that she and Theo's father "expected" Felicia to leave, and I'd half expect a cult to want to keep any female children since in some cultures, women are property. Cults aren't known for being forward-thinking in such matters. And yet, it seems like they recognise she'll run away (or disappear?) and don't seem to be focusing on keeping her, which may imply that they don't value her enough to protect her or make her feel welcome. This is a common problem in some cultures where daughters are seen as a liability as they cannot work and will only represent a dowry that has to be paid in the future. So rather than valuing both their children it sounds like they're valuing only one.
- She's trying to make sure her second child loves her because she feels she made too many mistakes with the first one.

Which would you say is the case? Or is it a mix of more than one of the above?

### **Ambition**

*(young childhood)*

**[Felicia: 14-17 years old.]**

Whenever Theo saw other children he would try to make friends with them, and of course he didn't care whether or not they were part of the cult. As a toddler he had no idea what a cult was, and even less so the expectation that he should only be friendly towards fellow cult members.

He developed a passion for reading, to the point that if his parents wouldn't let him climb the bookshelf to get more books he would have a tantrum. **[Oh dear. This doesn't sound like the sort of culture where having a tantrum is easily forgivable - neither is wanting to read books, if they're not the 'right' books. How did that go for Theo?]**

**[You say: "In the current day he's more intelligent then he let's on because of it." There's knowledgeable and then there's intelligent, so can I guess you mean that he learned to think for himself when he read these books? Books that encourage independent thought are often banned in cults, so that suggests he did some secret reading. Did he?]**

**[the priests] also kept up on his schooling even on topics unrelated to the church, however they definitely tried to push the church's beliefs and agenda EVEN MORE than his parents did. Once he got older he started to understand that they were only working so hard to try to make sure he continued the family business like his parents did, and he started to distance himself a bit more. While trying to rebel as much as he could, he refused to call them by name. Simply "Father" "Brother" or "Sister". He'd come to regret it a bit later in life, as they were simply trying to show him what brought light to their**

lives, but this mistake would teach him to listen to everyone's story if they were willing to share it instead of blocking them out for trying to persuade him of something.

### **Productivity**

*(older childhood)*

**[Felicia: 17-23 years old.]**

**[Note: When Theo turns six, Felicia left to become a mercenary. I'll add that in in more detail here when I know more about her circumstances.]**

They pushed the religion on Felicia way to hard and ended up pushing her away. She left to go join a mercenary band at 18, leaving no clues to her family about where she was going and stealing one of the horses from the churches stables. **[Keeping this note here as it's very relevant to the Felicia talk above.]**

**[I moved this note here so that I can incorporate this information at around this time in Theo's life story.]** When she left she wasn't really expecting to join a mercenary band, she didn't have much of a plan at all, but seeing how the more experienced members were like a little family and took care of each other made her want to be a part of something like that. It took a long time for her to get used to that kind of life and killing her first person scarred her for a few weeks, but now she's pretty devoted to that life and considers the other experienced members as her new family.

### **Child to Adult Transition**

*(adolescence)*

**[Felicia: 23-43 years old.]**

**[You said: "and let him spend his early teens figuring out who he is." He was given freedom to do that, rather than being heavily moulded into the person the cult leader wanted him to be? Are you sure?]**

### **Closeness in Relationships**

*(young adulthood)*

### **Passing on Responsibilities**

*(older adulthood)*

## **End of Life**

*(old age)*

## **Credits**

Based on theory by:

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

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~Hayley, The Character Consultancy