

Gabriel Jutke

Backstory

Name: Occasionally people call him 'Gabe'. He asks them not to but if they persist then he won't be demanding about it.

Species: Peryton

Sex: ♂

Appearance: Variegated bronze fur, dark brown feathers, blue/grey eyes, orange feet.

Age: In his 40s

Height: 6ft 3in

Weight: 210-215lbs

Siblings: Sister named Serena (5 years older), brother named William (2 years older)

Affectations: Gestures with his hands a lot while talking, inserts "um" and "uh" into his speech often, as a conscious technique to blend in among 'normal' people. Takes emotional behavioural cues from others around him. Drops these habits when he intends to kill.

Nationality: American

Quotes

[On holding onto possessions, relationships, and the past.]

"It is the holding onto and the stagnation it caused that was the problem with so many. I never burdened myself with such an idiotic condition."

[On whether he considered himself cruel and destructive.]

"Cruel? Cruel is relative. What is cruel to one might be a necessity to another. Destruction? Life cannot move on without destruction. The old must give way to the new. Whether it be a tree, a building or a person. Life is not possible without it. It is the cruel and the destructive who move forward. Besides It is in our very nature to be destructive and cruel. It is why we enjoyed learning about wars, why Christians insisted on a fearful god, why we watched football and wrestling, and demolition derbies. Why the predator fascinates us so. It provided us with a sense of the cathartic."

[On being detail-orientated.]

"It is in the details where the challenge is. And where the challenge is, is where life is to be found. And where life is, there is also death. And that is exactly where I want to be."

[On being part of society.]

"Society is an artificial construction of a herd minded past when we were afraid of the rustle in the grass or the brief darkening of a shadow. Some of us have simply realized it is better to be that rustle, that shadow rather than be afraid of it."

[On his sexual relationships.]

"if you're going to cull a sheep from a herd it made it much easier if they were relaxed around you. Also provided me with the means to the second most pleasurable act after sex, some would say the first, which is eating."

[On the subject of his death.]

"When I'm gone I'm gone. But I'm sure you'll remember me for quite some time as

you're all picking up all the bits and pieces that I may have left behind." *[He smiles.]*
"Good luck finding everyone."

Species / Worldbuilding Notes

Perytons do not have a shadow until they commit their first murder. Then they gain a human-shaped shadow.

Gabriel's universe contains a mixture of anthros, humans, and non-sentient animals. The split is 60% human with a 70/30 split of the other sentient species with the larger portion being 'mundane' animals like lions or rabbits, and the smaller being fantastical species like unicorns, dragons, perytons, and others.

Any species is capable of having offspring with any other, but the offspring inevitably look like one parent or the other. Most turn out perfectly fine. However, between 1 and 10% have characteristics of both parents and are highly likely to have medical complications and mental health issues throughout their lives, and are invariably sterile. Culturally there are many old wives' tales about certain species being sterile when pairing with other certain species, but these are untrue. Medical health professionals put a lot of effort into setting the record straight on these matters.

The presence of non-sentient animals means that products such as leather, sausages, beeswax, gelatine, and other animal-based products exist without the wider population considering them morbid.

Their educational system is similar to ours.

Gabriel is a stand-alone original character who does not currently feature in any stories or other projects, although makes a cameo appearance in the webcomic *Skin Deep*. He is a psychopath and finds power and its dynamics, and the brutal reality of life, death, and the fragile and practical nature of the body, endlessly fascinating. He is successful in living a life free of the suspicion of others.

Gabriel's parents were both professionals with high-flying careers. With US maternity support being the flimsy system it is, Gabriel's mother had less than two weeks of time with Gabriel before she had to return to work or risk losing her job and permanently damaging her career. She loved him but simply couldn't spend much time with him, and instead left him with relatives (including her older children) or babysitters. During the first six months of Gabriel's life, she very seldom looked at him.

Isolated like this, Gabriel almost failed to thrive. He often didn't make eye contact with his carer and didn't settle easily, often tensing up and screaming for longer than a more relaxed infant might. This display of neediness did not endear his siblings to him, and meant that whoever was caring for them all at any given time, he demanded even more time than might be generally expected for an infant.

The parents had already been quite busy with their careers when Serena and William

were born but they hadn't been as busy as they were by the time Gabriel came along, so by then it felt to both of his older siblings that there was less love and attention to go around than ever. This fostered some resentment in his siblings.

Freedom & Self-Determination

(toddlerhood)

As Gabriel became more aware of the world around him he began to respond to the general tension and resentment in the atmosphere. As is natural for toddlers he needed things: food, drink, and toys to keep him entertained. His instinctive, infancy sense that there just wasn't enough resources around for him persisted as his awareness became more surface-level, and he became determined to make sure he got his share.

Given the levels of hostility that Gabriel sensed in his older siblings, he intuited that being cute, funny, or agreeable was unlikely to work. His mother (on the rare occasions that she came home) was forever in a hurry and usually delegated the provision of the things Gabriel needed to somebody else anyway, so being sweet towards her didn't have much potential either. As far as he was concerned she was an angry stranger who sometimes came to the house. His father's attention was more on his mother, and it took Gabriel little time to work out that his father was more interested in supporting his incredibly stressed mother, even at the expense of the children's feelings. The babysitters who worked with the Jutke family were generally unhappy in the role. While Gabriel may not have been aware of the reasons for this, the babysitters were always aware of the tension in the house and the potential for disaster for the children in the long term, and this impacted on the quality of care they provided.

From a logistical perspective: the Jutke family had a rotating roster of 3-4 relatives and 3-4 sitters who they could call on. This they did 1-2 times a week when Serena was born, 2-3 when William came along, and 3-4, sometimes 5 times a week when they had Gabriel.

Sometimes the babysitters tried to compensate for the lack of love and affection the kids' parents were providing, but their kindness was no match for the panic and resentment the kids felt, and these carers were doomed to be pushing a rock uphill on this front.

As such, Gabriel was effectively moulded from the very beginning to see others as a means of getting certain benefits, and not sources of love, affection, and fun. He quickly lost any noticeable desire for these things and began to use his (as yet) strong intuitive sense to read people and to get what he needed from them. Being the youngest sibling, this meant punching above his proverbial weight, so he honed his skills of manipulation, triangulation, and sneakiness.

Being able to influence other people gave Gabriel a considerable rush. As a toddler, he had only just developed the most basic sense of autonomy over himself. Now, in almost no time at all, he found that he could control others. Any time when he found himself not in control, perhaps because there were factors that he hadn't accounted for, he became enraged! To him, losing control of other people felt like being robbed of something that was very definitely his.

Ambition

(young childhood)

When Gabriel got a little bit older he expanded his social net a little: he became more keenly aware of the babysitters and any boyfriends or family members who brought them to the house, and the teachers and other children at school. He learned that the sneaky, antagonistic approach he had with his family simply didn't work with these people, so he tried being more charming with them. He honed this quickly and found that for outsiders, it worked (quite literally) like a charm! However, this didn't translate to developing healthy relationships with these people. He charmed them only if there was something he wanted.

What it did translate to was an easy way to get the things he wanted, or to simply wield his power and influence as a small child in a world of adults. This phenomenon became something of a point of fascination for him.

Being among others of Gabriel's own age exposed him to a whole host of children who saw him as an equal and who wanted to play, fight (usually only as hard as a small child might), and otherwise compete with him. Gabriel took this as a challenge to his sense of self which was at once incredibly strong and incredibly weak (weak because he hadn't been 'there' enough for his carers to notice him and his needs, and strong because he had managed to meet those needs for himself. Or at least, he had been able to catalyse the meeting of those needs by controlling his carers.) He got this way about academic achievements and athletic ones, and did whatever he had to, to win. To win was to exist. To lose was to be obliterated. With every challenge he felt that he must win or be annihilated. Such was his desire to win that he almost always did, and if he didn't, then he attacked the offending child. He didn't lose often enough to relearn healthier habits.

Gabriel's parents had a small, rather tame parrot as a pet, and sometimes this parrot was let out to exercise its wings inside the house. Once, it came close to Gabriel and he caught it. Sometimes he and his family had chicken for dinner. He personally wasn't allowed chicken wings (his dad and the babysitter said they had bones and he might choke on them) but he had noticed that chicken wings were bent funny, differently from how the parrot folded its wings.

He tried folding them 'chicken wing style', and the bird made some noises that Gabriel found interesting. Perhaps his parents or the babysitter heard the sound, perhaps they didn't, but nobody came to see what the noise was about. Gabriel had already been told that chickens were birds, and the parrot was another kind of bird, so it made sense to him that it would taste like the chicken he had had at the dinner table. It didn't.

As it turned out he didn't like the taste of raw meat, however he remembered the taste for many years. His parents and the babysitter of the day were horrified at what he'd done, but he was only three years of age at the time and it was hard to truly hold him accountable.

During his younger childhood his parents also bought a dog, which the family came to love. Gabriel dispatched it. For him it was something of a game, and something that he felt was very important to do, though he would have been unable to explain why at the time. Having killed the parrot he had learned that things tended to scream when he wounded or killed them. So he played a game to see if he could kill the dog completely in secret.

His reasoning was that the family showed love to the dog, and he felt that it was wrong for them to show love to the dog that could have been shown to him. He was also interested in how much trust it had in the family. He also wanted to see what the dog looked like on the inside. The parrot's insides had been complex and interesting, and the dog was an

even bigger animal. The way he saw it, it would be even more interesting.

First he led it into the woods on its leash. He was fascinated with the fact that it followed him with such trust even though he had decided to kill it. Then he used his foot talons to injure it badly enough that it died. After it was dead and he had examined its innards to his heart's content he buried it so that nobody would ever find it. It had produced so much blood that he knew he was a mess, so he did the same thing as he and his siblings did whenever they got muddy or sandy: he washed it off in a puddle.

When he got home he figured that he had to create a story about where it had gone. He figured it was better if they came up with one themselves, and if he left the gate open, they would think all by themselves that the dog had run away. So that was what he did.

They did indeed believe that the dog had run away. His parents had some doubts about whether Gabriel had accidentally left the door open but they decided against asking him about it. They didn't want to blame him and make him feel as if he'd done something wrong.

As far as Gabriel's ambitions went, he didn't see himself in any particular role as an adult, and didn't have any interest in role-playing anything like this. All he really wanted to do was win, whatever victory meant in the currently relevant context.

Productivity

(older childhood)

Gabriel remained as energetic as he had in younger childhood. He was full of vitality and had long-since mastered the art of being charming, even when in competition with others. He still considered victory to always be justly his and made sure he won no matter the cost, but to most people he seemed like a bright, affable young peryton. Nevertheless, he spotted more opportunities to develop great social skills and became as eager a student of those as he did of his academic studies. Before long he developed what many would call good leadership skills. At times he was touted as a 'natural born leader', which he liked very much. He also found that this benefited him directly: being a great leader built others' trust in him, which made using them for his own gains much easier when the time came.

He still didn't have any particular career path in mind, but he began to develop his own belief about society and his potential place in it. As he understood it, most people were ultimately skittish and afraid and sought someone to reassure them that it would be okay. Gabriel believed that he was both the solution to that anxiety, and the one who uniquely deserved the benefits that came with being the predator to such people. To him, a person either ate at the table or was the meal. He intended to be the diner.

Being a good student put him into the good graces of his teachers, and this was his main motivation for doing well in school. As a secondary benefit he found that if he paid attention, then there were many useful things he could learn, such as the implications of the ocean tides.

When Gabriel was six or seven years old he gained his shadow.

His parents had taken him, Serena, and William on holiday. Or rather, his parents had gone on a business trip together to a pleasant enough location that they brought the

children with them so they could have a holiday.

Serena, who was eleven or twelve at this time, had been behaving in what Gabriel considered an imperious way all day. In the evening Gabriel had fancied a swim so had asked to go, but Serena had told their mother that she didn't think he was strong enough to swim, that she was the better swimmer, and that their mother should say no. Gabriel knew how to work about this: he attacked Serena's ego by telling her to prove that she was the better swimmer. Serena accepted this challenge.

William had been in the shower at the time so was not involved in this exchange.

They went to the sea and swam out. Gabriel remembered something he had recently learned about the sea: that the tides had schedules and that even a calm-looking sea could have an undertow (the concept of undertows had appealed to him on an instinctive level. Danger underneath the surface!). He swam more slowly than Serena and feigned being a poor swimmer, and Serena took the bait. She swam much further out to cement her 'victory' – and got caught by a rip-tide. She panicked and thrashed, and the current dragged her under.

Gabriel didn't see her any more after that. Then he remembered that, in his excitement, he'd forgotten something in the hotel and swam back to land to get it. When he got indoors he saw that his brother was out of the shower and watching TV, and got distracted. He sat down with William and watched TV with him.

He developed his shadow while watching TV. His parents noticed this and did all they could to find Serena, but Serena was never found. They rather uncomfortably put Gabriel's new shadow down to an accident and naivete on his part.

Child to Adult Transition

(adolescence)

When he entered adolescence Gabriel noticed how much popularity mattered to his peers, so he used his talent for charm and charmed them into liking him. To an outside observer he was fun and fascinating, but to Gabriel himself the challenge to be popular was just that: a challenge, a task that he was set, so he met it. That isn't to say that he was liked by, or liked everybody. Anyone who tried to humiliate, ignore, or bully Gabriel found themselves on the Hyde side of Gabriel, sometimes soon after the fact, sometimes many years later.

Gabriel was the nearest his 'friendship group' came to a leader, deciding who was in, who was out, and reading members to work out what they wanted, what they were willing to do, and how they could best be manipulated. He played basketball and baseball, and got a place on the Student Advisory Board. He ran for class president a couple of times but changed his mind about this and decided that it would be better to have the class president as a puppet rather than be the president himself.

While most teenagers find puberty an awkward time of life, Gabriel embraced it. Becoming an adult meant that people would listen to him more.

He dated, both boys and girls, and quite a few of them at that, never going steady with anybody. He felt no romantic connection with any of them.

Occasionally a person whom Gabriel tried to control would notice what he was doing and would refuse to succumb to his efforts. Whenever this happened Gabriel would go into a rage – as far as he was concerned other people were his to control, and if they took back control of their own lives they were taking something from him. If they proved to be immune to him (one might say ‘his manipulations’ but Gabriel didn’t consider his behaviour manipulative. He simply considered other people his to control, like puppets) then he would either ignore them completely, or destroy them. Any person so uncontrollable had the potential to be dangerous after all, at least as he saw it, and any such person had to be put down.

As Gabriel aged up through his teens he further developed his talents, and came to believe that it was better to avoid ‘preparing food or disposing of trash in the same place he slept’. As such he learned how to obtain forged IDs, avoid leaving financial trails, learn a very convincing level of skill in mimicking others’ voices, handwriting styles, and mannerisms, and to develop convincing alibis. He wasn’t old enough to use most of these things for the majority of his teens but he liked knowing them, and honed his skills in these skills in readiness for when he became old enough.

Gabriel had continued to take an interest in science, and he saw an opportunity to see a light show when William, now aged 18, took a new job. William’s job was to drive vans delivering oxygen tanks to hospitals, nursing homes, and individuals who needed respiratory help. Gabriel remembered that fire needed oxygen to live, and opened a couple of the tanks so that when William started the van, the ignition would catch light and be fed by the increased levels of oxygen in the air.

There was indeed a light show. William did not survive this.

When he became old enough he found his first job. He had a natural ability for salesmanship and excelled in this line of work. He often succeeded in convincing people to buy more than they had intended, and his employers loved this. He loved the benefits that came with being the team’s star salesman too, as well as the extra skills they taught him about influencing people.

He also went to college. He dropped the sports and took a course in theatre management. He became a very good all-rounder, working on effects, set design, rigging, lighting, and acting work.

Closeness in Relationships

(young adulthood)

Gabriel was in his mid to late 20s when he committed his first deliberate murder. It just seemed like a natural progression and he continued to be fascinated by the extent to which people would allow themselves to be put into deadly situations.

During his adulthood he also developed an interest in culinary arts. He found it fascinating how relatively small differences in preparation or cooking technique could create the difference between the food served at a greasy spoon and at a Michelin-star restaurant. It was the vast difference in quality of output that fascinated him so much.

For a while he dabbled with self-employment as a way of working without having a boss

who he would be answerable to. He chose leather production and butchery, specialising in sausages. He chose these two businesses because they gave him somewhere to dispose of the flesh of his victims. This worked out well for him and he learned that self-employment was more complex than simply being one's own boss: his customers expected to be kept happy. Once again he used his talent for manipulation to make his customers feel that they were lucky to have him serving them, and it worked well. He sold his products on Etsy, Redbubble and other similar online outlets to make setting up his businesses again easier.

For the meat for his sausages he used a combination of goat, pork, and the flesh of his victims.

His pattern of sexual relationships continued in a similar vein to his adolescent pattern: he dated for sexual pleasure, having short-term relationships to achieve this goal, and then moved on. Sometimes he killed his lovers. From there it seemed natural to him to find effective ways of making them disappear. Gabriel considered eating them to be an obvious answer. Sometimes when he was with a sexual partner, his proximity to them and their visceral behaviour got him wondering about what their flesh would taste like, and whether an anthro would taste the same as its feral counterpart.

He found that cooked anthro did indeed taste good, and although he didn't particularly need to be frugal, it was cheaper than buying meat. Before too long the situation flipped and, rather than thinking about killing people he became sexually involved with, he began to lure victims who he wanted to eat, by inviting them for sexual activity.

On one occasion Gabriel thought of something that he considered funny: that having any children would be a miracle. If the immaculate conception was enough to kick-start Christianity then having a child with somebody who had been killed, cooked, eaten, and defecated would be miraculous too, and deserve a religion all of its own. He didn't take this thought seriously however.

Gabriel continued to work in sales, often working his way up to regional manager. He didn't like working as an end in itself, and he definitely didn't enjoy being told what to do. For him, regional sales manager was the best position he could find that mitigated this.

Working in sales also prompted him to pursue a degree in psychology.

He typically moves house every 5 years or so as a precaution to avoid being noticed by the same people for too long. He is conscious that if the police knew of his always-growing body-count then he would spend the rest of his life in prison, so he avoids risking that. He usually has a smallholding at the edge of town where he keeps pigs, as pigs are an effective way of getting rid of his victims' bones.

When he wasn't working he often applied for lead roles on stage or the understudy for lead roles. Often when he was an understudy the person playing the lead role would meet with an unfortunate accident.

Every time he moves house he starts up a brand new business and often gifts the existing ones to friends or employees.

He was directly responsible for thirty to seventy-five deaths over a fifteen-year period

Passing on Responsibilities

(older adulthood)

Gabriel considers it unlikely that he has any children due to his habit of killing his partners. However, he hasn't personally seen to it that none of his sexual partners fell pregnant so cannot be 100% sure he isn't a father. He is curious about whether he has children but feels no warmth towards any hypothetical children he may have.

During his late forties or early fifties, the FBI and a handful of other government agencies caught up with him. Over the years they had noted spikes in numbers of missing persons, and painstakingly noted movements in and out of the areas, A string of very similar cottage-industry leather accessory and sole-trader butchery businesses with similar letterheads had been set up in the same places at the same times. Purchases had been made, analysed, and positively identified as belonging to various sentient species. With enough time they traced the activity down to one individual: Gabriel Jutke, who they investigated.

They found him in the act of skinning his latest victim. He didn't go with them without a fight; he injured and killed several officers and agents. They arrested him, charged him, and put him into a maximum security prison for the criminally insane.

His final body count was between eighty-five and one hundred people.

End of Life

(old age)

For somebody with such a determination to prevail, Gabriel is surprisingly unconcerned about the inevitability of his own death. To him there is little point in being anything other than pragmatic about the issue. He doesn't like the idea of his own inevitable decline and generally redirects the conversation if it turns to this. His legacy is the large number of people he has killed through the years, and the difficulty that the authorities will have in finding them all.

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