**Species Profile: Humans (Including Sisterclan Subspecies)**

### **Humans**

**Average Height:** 5'5" (Range: 4'0" to 6'2")  
 **Average Weight:** 110–220 lbs; varies significantly by lifestyle and region  
 **Lifespan:** 60–85 years  
 **Pigmentation:** Skin tones skew toward rich brown and bronze hues due to widespread genetic blending. Pale and dark tones do exist, though not in extreme ranges. Eye color is typically brown or hazel. Hair is most often dark brown or black, with red and blonde occurring infrequently. Hair textures and facial features vary widely.

**Noteworthy Traits:**

* Humans in Halferth have undergone genetic homogenization due to limited continental drift and a history devoid of Earth-style racial divisions.
* Moderate melanin levels and absence of rigid biological race structures.
* Highly biologically and culturally adaptable.
* Populated every region of Halferth, filling a broad range of societal roles and living conditions.
* Physical differences such as hair texture, facial structure, and stature exist but hold no cultural significance.
* Identity is based on cultural, ideological, or economic affiliation rather than ancestry.

**Summary:** Humans are the most culturally and biologically adaptable sapient species in Halferth. With no innate magical or biological enhancements, they nonetheless thrive due to their generalist physiology and social flexibility. Homogenized pigmentation and features reflect a long history without rigid racial division, making cultural affiliation the dominant axis of identity. Humans have established themselves in every major political and ecological zone of Halferth, and their societies range from bureaucratic to anarchic. Their shared identity is rooted in language, labor, and survival. By sheer presence and participation, humans are the baseline against which all other sapient variation is understood.

### **Cultural Exposition: Humans**

The most populous sapient species in Halferth, humans display notable phenotypic diversity, though far less stark than on ancestral Earth. With no continental separation equivalent to Earth’s historic divisions, Halferth’s human gene pool has trended toward a broadly brown-skinned, brown-eyed, brown-haired majority. Paler or darker skin tones exist—generally reflecting climate and region rather than ancestry. Those born in the High Circle tend to be lighter-skinned; those nearer the Veradian and Lowhere often possess darker pigmentation. Hair color and texture can vary widely, with red, blonde, straight and coiled types found throughout the continent. Eye color other than shades of browns and hazel are fairly rare, though not impossible.

While these traits exist, Halferthians assign them little to no sociopolitical meaning. The concept of “race” as once known does not meaningfully exist here. Cultural distinctions, profession, and place of residence carry far more social weight. Someone may be called “sunskinned” or “snowskinned” (denoting origin or exposure), but not “black,” “white,” or any other Earth-tethered labels. To be human is to be within the broader shared identity of survival and community, genetic diversity goes mostly unnoticed and is replaced by attention to cultural adherence instead. Humans belong to, originate from, and participate in a wide variety of cultures throughout Halferth. No singular, dominant 'human culture' exists beyond certain baseline norms of language and community structure. Humans are the most culturally diverse species by far, adopting and adapting to local traditions, economies, and values with ease. This includes the offshoot culture of the Sisterclan, a matriarchal society whose members are genetically human but have culturally and physically diverged. By sheer population density, most humans can be found living within the systems and customs of the Twisting City and the Parcels.

### **Human Subspecies: The Sisterclan**

*While genetically identical to true humans, the Sisterclan have diverged enough culturally and physically to be mentioned separately.*

**Average Height:** 5'5"–6'2" (Females); 6'0"–6'6" (Males)  
 **Weight Range:** Varies widely; Sisterclan males tend toward large, muscular builds. Females range from stout to extremely obese in upper castes.  
 **Lifespan:** Comparable to other Halferthian humans, depending on class and labor role.  
 **Pigmentation:** Similar to other Halferth humans (brown-spectrum), though some populations exhibit pallor due to limited sun exposure. Eye color is typically dark; hair varies.

**Noteworthy Traits:**

* Sisterclan males are selectively bred for strength and protective instinct, ritually emasculated, and trained in unarmed martial arts specific to their caste.
* Males are nonverbal, communicating through the Sisterman’s Dance—a rich, physical language second only to Netterling sign-speech.
* Exhibit hyper-feminine behavior and ornamentation.
* Males appear cherubic, lacking hardened musculature due to castration, with soft features and rounded bodies.
* Females are dominant, large-framed, often bearded, and socially authoritative.
* Males are categorized into labor, warrior, dancer, messenger, breeder, or servant roles. Reproduction is ceremonial and controlled by the female caste.

**Summary:** The Sisterclan are a human subspecies defined not by genetics, but by profound cultural and physiological divergence from mainland norms. Originating from a rebellion of female slaves who founded an isolated matriarchy, the Sisterclan developed a strict caste system. Male offspring are castrated or silenced and raised to serve, protect, and express devotion through martial discipline and artistic movement. Females lead all aspects of civic and reproductive life. This deeply structured society fosters roles based on ritual, obedience, and physical symbolism. While often misunderstood or reviled by outsiders, the Sisterclan remain autonomous and stable by their own traditions.

### **Cultural Exposition: The Sisterclans**

The Sisterclan are a matriarchal, caste-driven society occupying an isolated island off Halferth’s western coast. Their history begins with catastrophe: three slave ships filled with female prisoners were wrecked in the strait between the Heartlands and the unnamed island that would become Sisterclan territory. The survivors overthrew their captors, reclaimed the wrecks as the founding Greathalls of each future clan, and carved out a brutal, self-determined culture from the island’s unwelcoming wilderness.

Initially, the slavers-turned-prisoners were used for labor and (often accidental) reproduction, but within a generation they had become no different than any other bedraggled settlement. After an unspecific act of male-on-female violence—often referred to as *the Night of Teeth*—a swift and final cultural shift cemented: the complete subjugation and transformation of male roles through ritual, castration, and caste control. To this day, all but specific breeding stock Sisterclan males are rendered sterile (or otherwise non-reproductive), with strict roles assigned based on physicality, docility, and skill.

Sisterclan society is governed by layered caste structures and defined by deeply eusocial behavior, reminiscent of insect colonies. The island is divided into three matriarchal Clans, each maintaining a different ecological niche:

* **Cliffclan** occupies the mountainous Highward region, living in caves and cliffside homes. They fish and manage small herds of hardy livestock.
* **Woodclan** resides in the island’s central forests, producing tools, lumber, and hardy plants.
* **Fieldclan** farms the low grasslands and grows staple vegetables and grains, as well as weaving textiles.

Despite their independent customs, all three remain interdependent and interlinked through ceremonial exchanges, seasonal convocation, and shared myth. Internally, the clans form a cooperative Parliament where senior women of each region confer and make decisions.

Females rule all aspects of civic life and reproduction. Males, known as Sistermen, are trained in obedience and physical expression, and are not expected to speak. Most are nonverbal, either through ritual tongue-removal or cultural suppression. Communication occurs via an elaborate bodily language known as the Sisterman’s Dance—a sophisticated system of motion, poise, and rhythm, often considered second only to Netterling sign-speech in complexity and nuance.

Sistermen are raised to be emotionally expressive with extreme reverence for women. They are bald except the tops of their heads, ornamented, and beautiful by Sisterclan standards—their muscular frames and cherubic faces striking a strange balance between the imposing and the pitiful. They shave their bodies, braid their hair, and often wear woven feathers or beads as decoration. Their beauty is culturally dissonant for outsiders: admired by some, but evoking discomfort or pity in many others across Halferth.

Sistermen are divided into labor, ceremonial, artistic, or protective castes. They are not considered equals, but neither are they chattel—their roles are integral, ritualized, and honored within the internal logic of Sisterclan society. Males mate under ceremonial supervision, and lineage is traced strictly through maternal lines.

Sisterclan women, by contrast, lead lives of near-total leisure. Their cultural role is managerial, reproductive, and ceremonial. They rarely leave the island, preferring to direct their society from high Greathalls built into the remains of the original shipwrecks. Some are carried in palanquins, and are known to range from thick and broad to medically obese. They do not dance; they do not labor. They rule.

Though self-sufficient, the Sisterclan trade sparingly with the Keepers and Hiveland settlements, rarely requesting more than what they cannot make themselves. Occasionally, they dispatch male emissaries to the Heartlands to observe and gather knowledge. These emissaries are often misunderstood—and often violently received—due to their appearance, behavior, or zealous protectiveness toward female travelers.

While strict and brutal by most standards, the Sisterclan see themselves as protectors of balance and feminine autonomy. They are simultaneously feared, mythologized, and dismissed by most of Halferth’s cultures. Stories abound of the Sisterclan’s cruelty toward their own men. But within the bonds of their island’s society, many see it not as cruelty—but as the repayment of a historical debt. One they insist the rest of Halferth never had the courage to collect.

Outside the island, the Sisterclan are viewed with unease, contempt, or morbid fascination. The majority of Heartland society—especially its male population—regards them as barbaric mutilators, and their men as pitiable husks: mute, gelded, and broken. Some see the Sistermen as little more than docile farm animals with only the illusion of dignity. Feminine observers from the mainland tend to express more nuanced opinions—ranging from empathy to admiration, and in some cases, a quiet envy of the societal reversal. To non-Sister humans, the Sisterclan are a mirror turned backward: one they’re uncomfortable looking into for too long.