

Dullahan

All these, however, were mere terrors of the night, phantoms of the mind that walk in darkness; and though he had seen many spectres in his time, and been more than once beset by Satan in divers shapes, in his lonely pre-ambulations ...

The Legend of Sleepy Hollow – Washington Irving

Quote: Malcom O'Reilley, I come for thee!... I mean it. I come for thee. Come on, dude, just get your Keister in the car, I gotta escort you to the underworld...

Everyone knows the Headless Horseman, and a fair number even know of the Dullahan- the Hibernian Tribe of Undead Fae that counts that Horseman among their number. But how many ever celebrate this dark Hibernian family of Death-Fae? Also called, Dullaghan or more simply Gan Ceann, (Irish for "without a head") these monsters are more feared by their fellow Kithain than welcomed.

The Chrysalis starts when a kinain is violently decapitated. Picking themselves up, dusting themselves off, they pick up their head and figure out what to do next. The Dark Celtic Gods of Death put the new Dullahan on speed dial, and thus starts the bitter-sweet life of the newest Dullahan in the Tribe. Crom Cruach, Balor-Ardry, Bres the Beautiful, even the Great Queen Morrigan-herself; there are quite a few dark Irish Gods still poking around the country-side. And they still make their presence known to the Dullahan, who serve as messengers and go-fers, and any number of odd jobs.

When not playing fetch, however, there are plenty of jollies to be had. The Dullahan by dint of their violent and morbid thrust into both the Dreaming and Death, (don't kid yourself folks, they are in fact dead) has gifted the Dullahan with a love of gallows humor and a bitter-sweet sense of Irony. This is important though. Because once a Dullahan's life as a Changeling ends, so does their life altogether. But that's not for a while now, so drink up!

Appearance: The Appearance of the Dullahan is hard to gauge. At least as far as one's noggin is concerned – seeing as their head and face is always being replaced. Sure they always have their first head but seeing as that's separated from their body – it rots pretty quick. They can try that enchanted cannonball - or even an enchanted volleyball painted with a face (WILSON!). Those enchanted balls always look stupid though. The Fae mien has that stupid volleyball on it. Or a pumpkin. Or a cannonball. Or if unseelie - *somebody else's head.*

In Fae mien, their skin grows grey-green on the body, and the eyes of the original head glow like fire-light, but that's about the extent of the change.

Lifestyle: The life of a Dullahan is a relatively bleak one, considering the decapitation and what-have-you. But soon everything perks up. They pick their head up, they are

ORIGINAL HEAD:

The First head of the Dullahan is the one they had prior to chrysalis, and the only head that stays together for any real length of time. All other Noggins picked up eventually rot or rust away into nothingness. The first head simply rots. It serves as a kind of hourglass, as when it does start to rot away into nothingness, the Dullahan knows that they aren't much longer for this world.

According to folklore the Head "glows the color of old cheese with flashing eyes that dart around the sockets looking this way and that." There is never any glamour or seeming or mien to mask this head's appearance (unlike any other heads picked up along the way) and anyone who sees it (mortal, fae, or other) is well aware that something is amiss.

A Dullahan is particularly attached (pun intended) to their original head, and while there are no mechanics for losing it (aside from the first time that is) they will stop at nothing until they get it back. It was their first, after all, and something like that can't be replaced.

summoned by a dark-god summons, and they are eventually charged to go and collect souls. *Fun stuff.* The Dark-Gods are around less and less more often, so they don't even call that often.

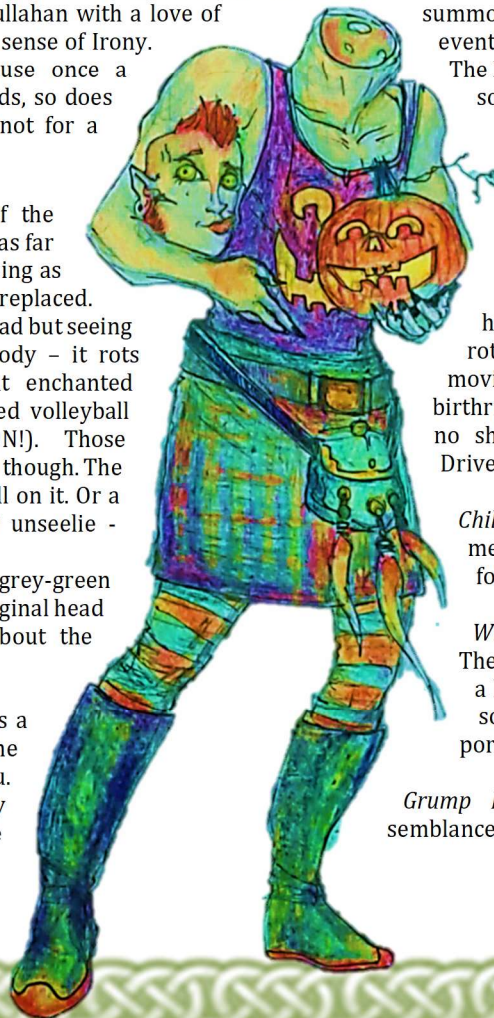
The rest of the Hibernian Kith are awesome and most times a Dullahan can even score free drinks at the local freehold (mostly due to them local Kithain being a deathly a-feared of Dullahan, but so it goes).

As far as mortal lives are concerned, it's hard to go back to the life before, (being headless and all) and with the original head rotting away such as it does, it is best to keep moving. Luckily, as their Death-Cab-Cuties birthright allows them crack-driving skills, they have no shortage of occupational opportunities; Limo Driver, Cabbie, Uber... the skies the limit.

Childing Dullahan are thankfully rare, the morbid means of chrysalis would be a horrifying ordeal for anyone, let alone a wee child.

Wilder Dullahan tend to grow into their roles. There is something oddly comforting about riding a large steed on moonlit nights and announcing someone's death. The Dullahan may be grim portents of death, but it could be a lot worse.

Grump Dullahan and their heads, begin to lose semblance. As their one true head rots away into



nothingness, they ride slower. Their hearts just aren't in it as much. Riding just isn't the same, collecting death just doesn't do for the heart what it once did, and soon they and their noggin will just fizzle out into nothing. Until then, however, they'll just keep on riding.

Revelry: The Dullahans regain glamour by scaring mortals nigh right out of their skulls (no pun intended). Foggy Nights, full moon, lonely highway, scared hitchhiker. It can't get any better, can it?

Unleashing: Cantrips cast by the Dullahans are accompanied by the darkening of the scene with flickers of red firelight that play across the scene. A cold mist rises from the ground and wafts around the legs of onlookers, seemingly of its own accord. There is the sound of faraway hoof beats and the waft of something that may or may not be burning pumpkin. *OOOH, Spooky.*

Affinity: Actor

Birthrights:

Pick of the Heads (*Roghnaigh Na Cinn*): Upon chrysalis (I.e. Death by decapitation) the Dullahan finds themselves surrounded by options. They can go the Seelie way out and use a pumpkin or cannonball or volleyball painted up to look face-ish. The Dullahan's Fae nature will glamour those round objects into something vaguely face-ish, but just enough to convince mortals (though it won't be winning any beauty contests). Inevitably these round-head- things will rot (pumpkin), rust (cannonball), or deflate (WILSON!).

If they want to go the Unseelie way and just pick a better handsomer head from a good-looking mortal. This is a grisly affair of course. They'll be pretty for a while, but rot sets in quicker than it should however.

The Original head (the one that was worn before death by decapitation) will last as long as the Dullahan. Keep in mind however, that there is no glamour that will show the original head as anything less than what it is... a rotting leering cheese-colored rictus mask of Death.

It probably shouldn't be mentioned (but I guess I just did) that a Dullahan cannot be killed by chopping their head off. In addition, whatever Head a Dullahan picks up, gains a +3 to any perception rolls involving sight (even if the head has no eyes at all). This perception also extends into the night, as any heads worn can see in pitch black darkness.

Death Cab Cutie (*Carr Báis Grá*): The Dullahan are meant to ride and ride they do. Whether the Dullahan is familiar with the steed or vehicles is moot. Any rolls to ride, steer, drive, pilot or other - any horse, car, boat, plane or other, is always at a -2 difficulty.

Frailties:

Things Fall Apart (*Titeann Rudai Óna Chéile*): The heads of a Dullahan will fall apart. That is the way of it. For starters, those fake heads -cannonball, pumpkin, volleyball, other- will degrade



supernaturally quick (never for more than a couple of weeks tops). These fake heads can never have an appearance of higher than 1, though the glamour makes them passably human.

If actual heads are used (either from fresh corpses or taken from bodies - well, that would make them corpses too I suppose) the same. They will quickly spoil and sour and rot away into an ugly fleshy mess. Though they may have an appearance of higher than 1 (depending on the head's appearance rating in life) they will lose a point of appearance a day, and after it reaches 0 appearance, it will rot away into nothingness.

The only head that doesn't fully rot away is the original head (always kept around of course). This head will last as long as the Dullahan is a Changeling.

Allergic to Gold (*Ailléirgeach Ór*): Perhaps due to a curse laid down by Celtic gods of summer, or perhaps due to a geasa about not getting paid, the Dullahan are deathly allergic to gold as much as they are cold iron. Just a touch of the precious metal burns like fire.

Samhain Jackie leans out of the tour-bus he's driving, and lets you in on some juicy Hibernian secrets.

Bánánach: Unsurprisingly, many of our number were caused by them. Their Great-Queen sends them our way, and well... you know the rest.

Bullywug: Hah! The little Toads that couldn't. Good kids, if a little whiny. But aren't we all?

Cailleach: Nothing keeps the old noggin fresher than permafrost. Too bad there's nothing permanent about it.

Enfield: I'm sure we share a history. We're both creepy, right? I'll be darned if I know what it is though.

Fachen: Take their crutch and kick them over. Once they stop squirming and cussing give them a hand up. A little humility does all of us some good now and again.

Fear-Gorta: Our best buddies, regardless of their weirdness. Fir Deargs: I hate to say it, but I can't tell the difference.

Gancanagh: I'd hate to have a mortal enemy, but if'n I did, it would be these twinkly bastards. There are far better ways to go than heart-ache.

Killmoulis: Big? Any nose is bigger if the one you got rots away, am I right? They're good kids. Let em to their own.

Leprechaun: Again, I hate to say it, but I can't tell the difference.

Roane: Who? Oh. You mean the Selkies?

Clurichaun: You know there's three of them, right? That I can't tell the difference of?

Thallain: I hear that they and the Adhene are at the beck and call of the Fomor. I don't know about any of that. I've gotten an Early A.M. text from a beast called Bres once, and I know for sure that I'm neither Thallain or Adhene. I'm me, thank you very much.