

# Ankou

**“The Roasting of the Salmon to the very end of you, six horse loads of grave-yard clay on top of you, may you be mangled and may you not see the cuckoo nor the corncrake, may you be inflicted with the itch and have no nails with which to scratch.” – Traditional Celtic Curse. How much fun is that? Reads awesome, don't it?**

**Quote:** “Knock – Knock! Hey there neighboroonie, can I borrow a cuppa sugar?”

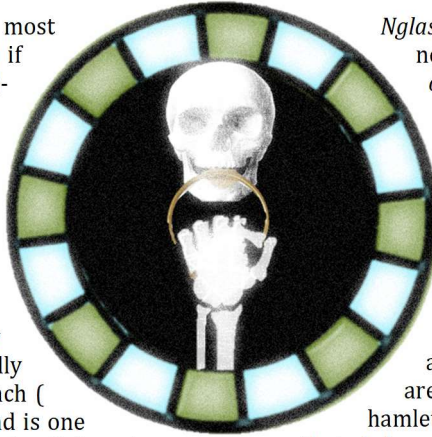
The Ankou characterize the darkest and most disturbing aspect of the Welsh Crimble (Kith) if not the whole of the Celtic Plentyn Newid (Fae)-Tribes. They are in turns both a blessing and a curse upon their mortal friends and families. A Blessing due to their gregarious natures and kindly idiosyncratic values towards life death. Yet a curse due to them being walking, talking, dark manifestations of Death's indiscriminate character.

They are masters of Gallows-humor, making the departure for the next world a happy punch-line to the sick sad joke of life. Traditionally they would ride into town on his big black coach ( the Cóiiste Bodhar- or the silent coach of Ireland is one such tale, but sometimes it's the Irish family of Dullahan that pilots it). Once in town, the Ankou would claim those close to death, knocking on the door, an omen of ill repute, and within one day's time a member of that household would have gone to the next world. The Ankou would by then have ridden to the next town, ready to claim their next soul.

Between those archaic understandings of the Ankou, and their modern context of companionable comrades to those on Death's door, the Ankou lives in both worlds. This isn't *exactly* the case. They do live in the realms of death, but also where Life slows down. They are a liminal family, and one worth knowing.

**Appearance:** In Fisyрнаu Dyni, (Mortal Mien), the Ankou are tragically alluring handsome men and women. They can be politely called heroin-chic, impolitely called skeletally emaciated. They have the high cheekbones and wan smiles, and almost undernourished build of the super-model elite. Their skin is pale, their hair prematurely grey, and their eyes darkly inspiring. In Fisyрнаu Rhaib (Fae Mien) they appear much the same, but their skeletal frame is much more pronounced. Every shadowy grey-vein can be seen in stark relief to their bone-pale skin, and their grinning rictus smiles beam with the cold cordiality of a grave-stone. A note on Ankou fashion is also significant. The clothing in all Fisyрнаus is dark, somber, and unusually stylistic; the jet set couture of a boneyard that only the dying can hope to attain and the departed emulate.

**Lifestyle:** Friendly neighbors with dad-jokes aplenty, super supportive friends of the family, beloved community members with warm hearts and cold handshakes: Ankou are loved by their communities, regardless that they are walking beacons of death. If a new motley needs a new member to go-a-adventuring, they can do no better than to enlist the aid of the local Ankou. Despite the shared knowledge that someone is going to croak, the Ankou prove time and time again that life is good.



*Nglasach Ankou* are fun and flirty, and just now comprehending what their *Knocking on Heaven's Door* frailty means for the friends and loved ones.

*Ddyrys Ankou*, after losing too many friends and family in their unthinking younger years, quickly learn of their arduous responsibility. Or not. They're funny that way.

*Henach Ankou* have the admiration and respect of their communities. They are loved by their little towns, villages, and hamlets, who are in turn, much beloved by their Ankou.



**Glamour Ways:** Ankou gain Rhaib whenever someone laughs (Literally) in the face of death. Death is as much a part of life as living is, and mortals sometimes must be reminded of this. Ankou are there with smiles and pink beach-buckets (to kick of course) when a mortal is on route to the exit.

**Unleashing:** Unleashings of the Ankou are accompanied by waves of misty chilly air. These breezes are filled with the odor of upturned graveyard soil and old moss, and the sounds of shovels being shoved into wet clay... the occasional raven can be heard in the distance, and swarms of moths flock to the scene. For those that really pay attention to it all, these elements don't really seem that scary.

**But Koyoht!** Somebody else wrote Ankou as an Adhene! We know, and they did a swell job of it too. However, just because there's Adhene Ankou doesn't mean that there aren't Kithain Adhene. Perhaps some few of them undertook the Changeling way? Or perhaps these are a hybrid of Sluagh dreams and mortal fear of wraiths? If you feel that the Ankou better fit as Adhene, and you don't like the idea of them as kith, then do what feels right, and bob's your uncle. Or, contrarily wise, you might do as we do, and have both. Whatever you choose, go with our blessings.

**Affinity:** Actor

### Birthrights

**As Moths to Flame (*Fel Gwyfynod I Fflamio*):** The dead and dying flock to the Ankou, whether they will or no. Ankou appear as shining beacons of life and death to the restless Dead known as Wraiths. The sick and dying as well, are drawn to the Ankou without truly knowing why. This also works for the Ankou, with a successful Perception + Alertness roll, the Ankou can see how far away an individual is from death, or even pierce the veil into the realm where everyone is dead.

To gauge the dying mortal is set by a difficulty of how close to death the mortal is, with a difficulty 7 for a dismal dying elder on their deathbed, but a difficulty 10 for a seemingly heathy young buck on the way to a fatal car-crash. A successful roll with multiple 10's might even provide the Ankou with pertinent information about the subject's death, such as how, where, when, why, and who was involved.

To see into the lands of the Dead is whole lot easier. It still takes that successful Perception + Alertness roll but is always set at a difficulty 7. The Ankou must also be actively looking for the Wraiths. Multiple 10's on this roll will provide information on who the Wraith was, and how they died.

**The Black Paths of Balor (*Llwybrau Duon Balor*):** The Ankou is tied by ancient geasa to the lands of the dead, and thus are privy to certain gifts of those dark realms. With a point of glamour spent, the Ankou can turn into a swarm of Moths. These Moths possess no strength rating, nor a stamina rating, but have a +4 in dexterity.

This swarm of Moths also comes with an added blessing, however, in that it can cross over into the Realms of Death known as the Shadowlands. It is a bleak and broken reflection of the Banal world, and a far cry from the color-soaked carnival that is the Dreaming.

It costs no additional glamour to cross over into the Shadowlands, but the Ankou can only do so once in Moth Swarm form. Once on the Other-Side, the Ankou can regain his mortal

form at will. To reenter the Dreaming or Mortal-Banal World, the Ankou must again spend a point of glamour to again form the moth-swarm and reverse the journey.

### Frailties

**Knocking on Heaven's door (*Gan Daro Ar Ddrws Y Nefoedd*):** The Ankou may be manifestations of death, but they also have the nasty habit of bringing it with them wherever they go. In the old days, they simply had to knock on a door to inform the household that somebody therein would die. These days, the knocking may take the form of tapping their feet at a good song, clapping at the end of a performance, snapping fingers at a slam poetry jam, banging on a table to get someone's attention, or – yes- simply rapping at a chamber door. The Ankou also has the nasty habit of sometimes not realizing that they are doing it. (Who keeps track of such things anyway?)

An Ankou must actively pay attention to their actions, or at any time a Storyteller deems appropriate- can say "Roll willpower" (such as tapping their feet, clapping, snapping fingers, banging on a table, rapping at a chamber door). If the willpower roll fails, then someone will die.

Some Ankou (of the more Plant Annwn *Unseelie* persuasion) will relish the idea of killing someone willy-nilly. But an Ankou isn't in charge of who dies. Sometimes it's somebody close to the Ankou, family, friends, dreamers, etc... One day it might just be the Ankou themselves. It is up to the storyteller to decide who gets it in the end. *Literally.*

**Rydell Mac' Awst, Friendly Neighborhood Reaper-Man, giggles a list of his fellow Welshies, and all the derptitude that comes with them.**

**Bendith Y Mamau:** I like good music, you like good music. I like kids, you like kidnapping. Did we just become best friends?

**Coraniaid:** War, good for keeping the population down, right? Nah, just kidding. You guys are assholes.

**Ellyllon:** I respect the druids, but how the hell can they keep their togas so white with all the sex they have with trees? Grass stains, people; am I right?

**Glaishtig:** The Bendith kidnap kids to teach them how to play banjo. These green bitches kidnap kids to turn them into more green bitches. It's weird.

**Grugach:** These guys are a beast-o-philiac double-entendre. The Ellyllon likes the flora, and the Grugach likes the fauna.

**Grwagged Annywn:** You know, I have always expected one of these watery tarts to chuck a sword of great destiny at my noggin.

**Gwyllion:** So much fun. They don't even have to say anything, they just show up and it's great.

**Muryan:** They hang-out in cold water; shrinkage may occur.

**Hinky Punks:** Like pumpkins, but with alcohol and fun.

**Woodwose:** I bet they and the Ellyllon get along really good. (*Because of the Dendrophilia*) heh. Just kidding guys. You're great.

**KirkGrims:** Hah! *Best buds – everyone!* Even if they have a running contest among themselves to see who amongst them can shove the biggest stick up their poopers...

**Shinigami;** I'd prefer not to say, but I've got some stories.

**Wraiths;** Just keep swimming, swimming, swimming.

**Vampires:** There is one solitary, crazy-ass, vampire who runs around with our name. He is powerful – creepily so. He also seems to act as some sort of undead patron saint of serial killers. Is there any relation? I don't know. Why am I telling you all this? I don't know. It's just something I was thinking about.