

HEADLESS

A 5E PLAYER RACE BY DM TUZ



HEADLESS

"The weight of an ancient sin is always with us."

The Headless are an enigmatic and rare people who bear the scar of a long-forgotten sin. Their existence is marked by an everlasting punishment, a cosmic sentence passed down through generations. A punishment delivered upon their ancestor whose actions demanded this absolute retribution—a beheading so profound in its purpose that its mark remains tethered to their lineage. Though no concrete records survived to shed light on the nature of this ancestor's crime, it is said to be one of unspeakable betrayal or corruption. Regardless of the truth, its reality endures and manifests in the Headless themselves.

The Headless are a haunting sight, most recognizable by their defining characteristic: their severed heads, which are still alive and fully functioning and the mark of their forefather's sin. This severed head is commonly carried under the arm or securely fastened to the neck of the Headless individual. The Headless understand all too well that losing it entirely could bring about terrible consequences and thus guard their heads vigilantly. Therefore, unsurprisingly, trying to steal or harm a Headless' head is to invoke their ire. Born under the weight of an ancient curse, they bear an innate gloom—a shadow draped over every thought and deed, leaving them somber and prone to haunting ruminations on fate and loss.

Both their proclivity to introspection and the looming shadow of their curse draws them to mysteries, forbidden knowledge, and arcane secrets; the pull of the occult to the Headless is ever so alluring. Perhaps they have a subconscious desire to uncover their origin's mystery, understand their forefather's sin, or find a way to lift their curse. However, not all Headless see the curse as something that should be removed. Even though the weight of their legacy haunts each Headless, the ways in which they choose to carry this burden are numerous.

THE LOST SIN

A tale every Headless knows, the Lost Sin: the crime that first brought the curse down on their bloodline. The details have long since blurred. Some believe their ancestor tried to slay death itself. Others speak of a betrayal so profound that no single life could bear the punishment. Whatever happened, it was enough to reach past one person and mark every descendant that followed. The ancestor is gone. The curse is not. Headless carry the Lost Sin differently. Many take up rit-



Dullahan
Artwork by Ceehaz

uals of penance—committing to service, to humility, to guarding and advising others—hoping their suffering chips away at the debt for future generations. They treat the curse as a warning; proof of what pride, ambition, and treachery cost. It gives their burden meaning, or at least the shape of meaning. Others want nothing to do with that. They refuse to answer for a crime they had no part in, and turn instead to arcane arts and forbidden lore, picking at the edges of the mystery in hopes of finding a way out. These Headless don't want absolution. They want an exit. The Lost Sin is not just an origin story. It is a fault line running through every Headless life, and through the relationships between them. Two Headless can look at the same curse and see completely different things — a deserved burden, or an inherited injustice. Both walk the same road. Neither can put the weight down. The mystery at the center of it has never been solved, and that absence pulls at them whether they chase it or not.

HEADLESS TRAITS

Ability Score Increase. Increase one ability score by 2 and increase a different one by 1, or increase three different ability scores by 1.

Creature Type. Your creature type is humanoid.

Size. Your size is Medium.

Speed. You have a walking speed of 30 feet.

Languages. You can speak, read, and write Common, and another language of your choice.

Headless. Decapitation cannot kill you. Additionally, you have advantage on saving throws against being blinded or deafened. Only a *Wish* can return your head. If the spell *Reincarnation* or a similar spell changes your race, your new race gains the **Headless** and **Dullahan's Curse** traits.

Curseborn. You are resistant to necrotic damage.

Subraces. Choose one of the following subraces: Dullahan, Gan Caenn, or Object Head.

DULLAHAN

The Dullahan are the most common Headless. Cursed, they carry their severed heads. Known for their somber demeanor and resolute will forged by the burdened path they walk. They guard their heads obsessively, in fear of the terrible fate that befalls all who lose their heads. Dullahans keep to lonely roads and are often accompanied by a foreboding aura, for the curse they bear makes them adjacent to the undead. Though they carry the weight of their curse, some take pride in the fact that they endured for as long as they did, wearing their very existence as a kind of grim badge.

Dullahan's Curse. Your head is not attached to your neck and is a tiny object that typically weighs 10 lbs. You must either hold your head in an empty hand or have it fastened to your neck. If you are not holding your head in your hand, it is considered an item you carry. You are always aware of where your head is if it is within 120 ft. of yourself. If it is further than 120 ft. away from you, you know the general direction of where your head is as long as it is on the same plane of existence as you are.

You continue to speak, see, and hear through your head, and potions can be consumed either by your body or your head. You can cast spells through your head as if you were in its position if you are within 100 ft. of one another. If the spell requires only vocal components, there is no limit to that range. If you don't carry or hold your head, it can become targets for attacks. Its AC is equal to 10+ your proficiency bonus. Any damage dealt to your head is dealt to you, and any effect that targets your head targets you, as if you were the same entity. If the area of an effect targets both you and your head, you are only affected by one instance of the effect.

Dullahan Ward. As long as you

hold your head in one of your hands along with a weapon or spell focus that is not a shield, you gain a +1 bonus to your AC and dexterity saving throws. If you carry your head this way, it is considered a shield.

Howling Head. When you take the attack action on your turn, you can replace one of your attacks with launching your head at a target within 30 ft. of yourself. The target must succeed a dexterity saving throw or take 1d6 + your proficiency bonus cold, fire, or necrotic damage and your next attack roll before the end of your next turn against the target has advantage. The DC is equal to 8 + your Constitution modifier + your proficiency bonus. After the attack, your head magically returns back into your hand. When you gain this trait, choose which damage type your howling head deals. To use this action, you must either hold or carry your head. You can use this action an amount of times equal to your proficiency bonus before you have to finish a long rest to use it again.

Gan Caenn
Artwork by Ceehaz



GAN CAENN

The Gan Caenn are what become of a Dullahan who loses their head—the fate most dreaded among the Headless. Where the head once sat, raw accursed energy bleeds from the neck, and with it comes madness. Most are consumed by it immediately, driven into uncontrollable rampages, hunting relentlessly in a desperate bid to replace what they lost. Chasing the escape from their broken state one decapitation at a time.

Not all are claimed by the madness permanently. Some regain their senses and some never fully lose them—though neither comes without a cost: These lucid Gan Caenn find themselves stranded between life and death, their senses dulled, their emotions wrung out. The world doesn't go away. It just stops reaching them. That hollowness becomes a constant, pressing them into a somber state of perpetual and suffocating numbness.

Violence is the only thing that cuts through it. With each life they take, the grey lifts—briefly, just enough to feel something before it closes back in. But that relief is a trap. Too much of it and the mania that once claimed them returns, along with it the frenzy that controlled them. So they must practice restraint, always. Haunted by what they've become and wary of what they could slip back into, they wander the line between the two extremes—never quite free of either.

Reaping. When you hit a creature with an attack you can deal an additional 1d6 necrotic damage. Once you do so, you can't use this trait again until you have finished a Short or Long rest. The first time in a turn a creature within 30 ft. of yourself dies you gain a bonus use of this trait until the end of your next turn. You can only have one bonus use of this trait at a time.

Undying. When you are reduced to 0 hit points, you can choose to not fall unconscious. You still make death saving throws at the end of your turn. As soon as you fail one death saving throw, you fall unconscious. While you are dying and not unconscious, you have disadvantage on attack rolls and can't use reactions. If another creature within 30 ft. of yourself dies while you are dying, you regain 1 hit point at the end of your next turn.

DON'T LOSE YOUR HEAD!

As an optional rule you can choose to add another layer of threat for your Dullahan character: the danger of losing your head. Your character's head can be either destroyed or lost for good. In that case your Dullahan Headless would transform into a Gan Caenn Headless. When your character transforms, they lose all traits they gained through their subrace (and feats exclusively available to their subrace) and gain the Gan Caenn's **Reaping** and **Undying** trait (any feats you list can be replaced by feats that you qualify for).

You can lose your head in one of the following ways:

Damage. If an effect or attack targets your head (without including your body) and deals an amount of damage equal or higher than your maximum hit points, roll a D20: on a 9 or lower, your head is destroyed or lost.

Misplacement. If you lose possession of your head and do not reclaim and touch your head before the next new moon (or within 28 days) your head is lost. When your head is lost it immediately decomposes to a skull.

Cosmic Separation. If your head lingers on another plane of existence apart from your body for more than 24 hours, your head is lost. When your head is lost it immediately decomposes into a skull.

RECLAIMING YOUR HEAD

If your Headless character ever were to lose their head (see Don't Lose your Head!) or want to offer a Gan Caenn Headless character an opportunity to gain a new head, consider the following options:

Quest For Your Head. When you lose your original head, its decrepid remains still exist. If you manage to find your once lost head and perform a ritual (the nature of the ritual is up to the Dungeon Master's discretion) you reclaim your head and you transform into a Dullahan Headless, replacing your subrace traits with the Dullahan traits and choosing a new feat if you had a feat exclusive to the Gan Caenn subrace.

Wish. You use the *Wish* spell or call upon other divine intervention to grant you a new head and transform you into a Dullahan Headless (as discribed in Quest for Your Head).

Object Replacement. You heed the call of the Object Head and replace your head with a suitable object. You must bind with this object over the course of an uninterrupted 1 hour ritual during a new moon. At the end of that ritual you transform into an Object Head, replacing your subrace traits with the Object Head traits and choosing a new feat if you had a feat exclusive to the Gan Caenn subrace.



Check out these other Player Races!

Aside from the Headless, I also have created many other monster girl inspired player races such as the [Dolls](#), innocent simulacrums who must learn what it means to be alive and the [Living Weapons](#), sentient weapons who left the hands that once wielded them.



OBJECT HEAD

Object Heads are Headless who have chosen to replace their missing heads with objects, a workaround rather than a cure. It looks like freedom at first, but alas, it is no remedy; for the curse merely adapts. Most Object Heads develop eccentricities such as obsessions, irrational fears, fixations that dig in and erode. At worst, the mind fractures entirely, hallucinations and delusions filling the new thing they call head. A significant number end up barely functional, undone by the strain of their folly.

Some take that risk anyway. For them, the chance at freedom outweighs what it might cost. Those who hold themselves together are odd even by Headless standards: strange mannerisms, stranger outlooks, a way of moving through the world that puts people off without quite explaining why. They don't fit anywhere. Among their own kind they're curiosities. Among the rest merely tolerated or shunned at worst.

So they meander. They follow whatever pulls at them— esoteric pursuits, strange fixations, roads that go nowhere in particular. The object on their shoulders is as peculiar as the path they walk, and they've long since stopped trying to explain either one. And yet they found a kind of freedom in their odd existence, but at the cost of being forever adrift in the world and their thoughts alike.

Replacement Head. Your head has been replaced with an object. Over the course of an uninterrupted Short Rest you can replace your head with another object, which is then magically bound to the stump of your neck. The object must weigh 2 or more pounds and be reasonably large enough to serve as a replacement head (at the Dungeon Master's discretion). Even without visible orifices, you can see, hear, smell, and speak through the object that replaces your head.

If you are decapitated, you must replace your missing head with an object. Until you do so, you are blinded and deafened for the duration.

Weird Magics. You learn the *Color Spray* spell and can cast it once, requiring no material components, and regain the ability to do so when you finish a long rest. When you gain this trait choose whether Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma is your spellcasting ability for this spell. Whenever you are bloodied and can use a reaction to cast *Color Spray* using this trait.

Optional Rule: Instead of *Color Spray*, you can learn another 1st level spell that requires an action to cast that matches the the object you used to replace your head (at the Dungeon Master's discretion). For example, using a tea kettle to replace your head would allow you to learn *Fog Cloud* instead, as steam would emerge from the spout. If you replace your head with another object, you then must change your spell to another if it no longer fits the object.

Weird Mind. You are resistant to psychic damage and have advantage on saving throws against effects that read your mind or otherwise invade it.



Object Head
Artwork by Ceehaz

ECCENTRICITIES

Object Heads are notorious for their peculiar quirks, often shaped by the strange influence of their chosen head. To add unique flavor to your Object Head character, roll on the table below and discover an eccentricity that reflects their unconventional nature. Each result offers a glimpse into the unusual behaviors and obsessions that set Object Heads apart and offer more flavor to add to your Object Head.

OBJECT HEAD ECCENTRICITIES

d6	Eccentricity
1	You tend to treat inanimate objects like they are living beings, assigning them names, feelings, and personalities.
2	You end your sentences with an onomatopoeia related to your head.
3	You often stop mid-conversation to adjust or “fix” your object head, like repositioning or polishing it.
4	When addressing people you often accidentally speak to a nearby object, mistaking it for them.
5	When excited you like to chant terms related to your object head.
6	You frequently spout random, obscure facts about objects similar to your head.

HEADLESS UNIQUE FEATS

MARK OF THE SINNER

Prerequisite: Headless (Dullahan), Level 4+

Through intuition or research, you have inched closer to the truth behind the Lost Sin. As you approach the truth of your ancestor's deeds ever so slightly, your curse changed and began to... empower you out of all things? You gain the following boons:

Ability Score Increase. Increase one ability score by 1, to a maximum of 20.

Cranium Catapult. The range of your **Howling Head** trait is increased by 60 feet.

Flying Head. Your head has a flying speed of 30 ft. and on your turn you can move your head up to its flying speed. As an action you can double the distance your head can move until the end of your turn and it can move without provoking opportunity attacks. Your head cannot move further than 60 ft. away from you with this movement.

When you are within 60 ft. of your head, you can use an action or bonus action to magically conjure your head into your hand.

Floating Dodge. Your head now adds your Dexterity or Con modifier to its AC and no longer automatically fails Strength and Dexterity saving throws. When it is forced to make a Strength or Dexterity saving throw, it uses your statistics.

HEADHUNTER

Prerequisite: Headless (Gan Caenn), Level 4+

After experiencing the Gan Caenn's madness yourself and overcoming it, you learned to harness its power. You channel the thirst for heads against your foes to turn you into a lethal and resilient combatant. You gain the following boons:

Ability Score Increase. Increase your Strength score by 1, to a maximum of 20.

Life Drinker. Your **Reaping** trait's additional damage increases by another 1d6 (2d6 total) if your target is bloodied (below half its maximum hit points).

Additionally If you use your Reaping trait and kill a creature with the attack, you can gain an amount of temporary hit points equal to the additional necrotic damage dealt which fade at the end of your next turn.

Relentless Pursuit. Whenever your **Undying** trait triggers, you gain a bonus use of your **Reaping** trait until the end of your next turn.

MOONCALF LOGIC

Prerequisite: Headless (Object Head), Level 4+

As your mind adjusts the push and pull between your peculiar head and your curse, you not only tap deeper into the unexpected power resulting from this interaction, you unlocked a strange new perspective. You harness the dissonant thoughts and logic that come with your new head to view the world through an unorthodox gaze. With whimsy, mystery, and a touch of madness, you perceive what lies beyond the ordinary, sensing what others overlook or cannot understand. You gain the following boons:

Ability Score Increase. Increase your Charisma score by 1, to a maximum of 20.

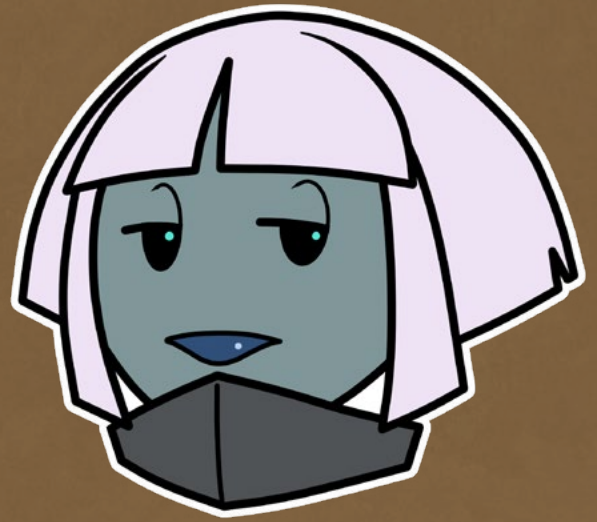
Even Weirder Magics. You can cast the spell granted to you by your **Weird Magics** trait an amount of times equal to your proficiency modifier before you have to finish a long rest to use it again. Additionally, whenever you finish a short rest you regain one expended use of your **Weird Magics** trait.

Never Again. Once per turn when you fail an Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma saving throw, you can expend a use of your Weird Magics trait to add 1d6 to the result, possibly turning a failure into a success.

Alternatively, when you make an Insight, Investigation, or Perception check, you can expend a use of your Weird Magics trait to add 1d6 to the result.



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