



Monster of the Week

The Lump Hag

A NEW MONSTER FOR USE WITH THE PATHFINDER® ROLEPLAYING GAME

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The Monster of the Week

The Monster of the Week product line takes its inspiration from the television trope of the same name: a convention by which a weekly television production might introduce a new freak, villain, or beastie in every episode, allowing the episode's themes and topics to revolve around the latest "big bad." Monster of the Week aims to arm GMs with creatures and villains perfect for such a role. Whether you're looking to populate a memorable encounter or a villainous story arc, our Monster of the Week is made for maximum creep-factor and memorable "wow" power!

Within this installment's pages you will find the true and terrible description of the lump hag – a twisted crone with tragic origins. Disquieting and gruesome in the extreme, the lump hag makes an excellent choice for horror-themed adventures and encounters, as well as those designed to illicit feelings of uneasiness in your players. The lump hag might also serve well for certain sorts of mystery adventure, as each hag might incorporate elements of local history into the truth of her own origins. Take a seat by the fire and read on, my friends, and hear the tale of a once-lovely lass turned mindlessly-miserable, hunchbacked old crone; a tragic hag whose doom she inherited from her equally-monstrous mother...

The Lump Hag

A slack-jawed crone stands hunched forward, quivering with palsy. Spiders dribble and dangle from her wretched frame, and upon her stooped spine lurks a mound of decrepit flesh – a tremendous hunchback.

LUMP HAG

CR 7

XP 3,200; CE Medium monstrous humanoid

Init +1; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18 (+1 Dex, +8 natural)

hp 85 (9d10+36)

Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +7

Immune poison

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 claws +13 (1d4+4)

Special Attacks clinging spiders, rend (2d4+6)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th, concentration +9) constant—*detect poison*, *pass without trace*, *sympathy* (arachnids, DC 18), *tongues*

at-will—*charm spiders* (as *charm animal*, affecting only spiders and spider-like creatures), *delay poison*, *warp wood* (DC 12)

1/day—*longstrider*, *rusting grasp*, *soften earth and stone*, *vomit swarm* (spiders only) ^[APG]

STATISTICS

Str 19, Dex 12, Con 18, Int 11, Wis 13, Cha 10

Base Attack +9; CMB +13; CMD 24 (30 vs. trip)

Feats Alertness, Blind-Fight, Combat Casting, Great Fortitude, Intimidating Prowess

Skills Bluff +6, Intimidate +13, Knowledge (arcana) +2, Knowledge (nature) +2, Perception +11, Sense Motive +6, Stealth +10, Survival +10

Languages Aklo, Common

SQ death throes

ECOLOGY

Environment temperate forest or marsh

Organization solitary or coven (3)

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Clinging Spiders (Ex) A lump hag subconsciously attracts spiders wherever she goes, the creatures nesting and living both upon and within the crone's decrepit body. Whenever an adjacent creature strikes the lump hag with a melee weapon, or whenever the lump hag deals damage to a creature with a natural attack, that creature must succeed at a Reflex saving throw (DC 15) or find several biting spiders clinging tenaciously to his limbs. A creature so affected may become poisoned, as though by a spider swarm (see the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary*). The save DC is Dexterity-based.

Death Throes (Ex) One full round after a lump hag is slain, the crone's enormous hunchback bursts open with a sickening crack, flinging spiders and cobwebs in all directions. A spider swarm (see the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary*) crawls from the ruptured corpse, agitated and



crawling mindlessly toward the nearest threat. Additionally, creatures within 10 ft. of the lump hag's corpse when it bursts must succeed at a Reflex saving throw (DC 18) or be covered with biting spiders (see the clinging spiders special attack, above). The save DC is Constitution-based.

SPIDER SWARM POISON

Type injury; **Save** Fortitude DC 11

Frequency 1/round for 2 rounds

Effect 1d2 Str; **Cure** 1 save

Many kinds of hag are fond of using might or magic to create offspring with handsome human

men. The progeny of these damned unions are known as "changelings" – the always-female descendants of such mad trysts. Typically tall and comely, a changeling otherwise resembles her father's race (human, more often than not) save for eyes of mismatched colors and an uncommonly fair skin tone. Dropped on doorsteps by their hag-mothers and left for others to raise, changelings most often adopt the cultures of their fathers. Upon reaching puberty, a changeling receives "the call," a psychic voice or vision of hypnotic power, which beckons the girl to undertake a quest: to travel to the woods and wilds, to discover the truth about her heritage, and to meet her monstrous mother. Some changelings at the conclusion of this quest are seduced by promises of power, undergoing

awful rites and rituals and becoming hags, themselves. Others find themselves tangled in the machinations of their scheming hag-mothers, played as pawns by this magical new matriarchal figure. Others still make lifelong adversaries of their mothers, forsaking their hexed heritages and setting out on their own paths to power.

But what of those changelings whose monstrous mothers meet their ends in the years between their prodigal daughter's abandonment and her inevitable "calling" back to the wilds? After undertaking the quest to answer the visions that each receives on adulthood, most changelings naturally assume that the source of that hypnotic calling is attributable to their hag-mother's magic. The truth, however, is more complicated: "the call" may well originate from some otherworldly place or entity – something akin to the patron powers that speak to witches through their familiars and grant covens of hags their supernatural gifts. Thus, a changeling's monstrous matron need not remain among the living in order for her unwitting daughter to feel compelled to seek her out. And if such a changeling's hag-mother is truly no longer among the living? Well...

Some unfortunate changeling daughters in exactly this situation find nothing in the wilds – there is no end to their quest, no destiny to discover. A few, perhaps, stumble upon their mothers' graves, or the sites of their demise. Most find nothing at all – only the forest, the swamp, the overgrown wilderness and the lonesome silence that holds sway over such places. Compelled and commanded, still – summoned to search for the answer to a question they know not, these motherless daughters meet a fate worse than the revelation of some monstrous matron: madness. The calling haunts and compels these doomed few for the rest of their days, never-remitting visions and voices urging the hag-spawned wretch to seek and search and quest and comb. In time, these hypnotic apparitions take root in the changeling's mind, causing a physical transformation reflective of the mad, ragged compulsions that now dominate the wretch. Such are the so-called "lump hags," who are also called the "nennmóðir" in the tongues of giants. Supernatural vitality suffuses the changeling's body even as she appears to wither, rot, and sag, her posture and form twisting to reflect the warped and ruined mind underneath. The most notable of these transformations is the gruesome development of a large, tumor-like "hump" upon the crone's back. Hollow on

the inside, the lump hag owes her folk-name to this grisly growth. So too is the hag's personality and temperament hollowed out: her existence becoming one of mad, senile distractedness, as though ever listening for a voice she cannot clearly make out.

Most natural creatures avoid these doomed hag-spawn instinctively – but not spiders. Lump hags cannot beget changeling daughters of their own, though the hag's motherly instinct may be partially responsible for the sympathetic, telepathic enchantments that attract spiders to her. Just as an animal familiar whispers spell secrets to a witch, so too are spiders said to speak to a lump hag. Perhaps the spirits of the crones' hag-mothers speak through them, or perhaps the dark and lonely wilderness itself sees fit to communicate to such wretched creatures through its most lowly of servants. Whatever you believe, it is certain that a lump hag is further transformed by the creeping, crawling creatures it attracts, gaining a suite of disquieting magical abilities even as their physical bodies are ravaged, poisoned, and withered by the arachnid hosts that come to call it home.

Lump Hags in Covens

Though a lump hag shuns other hags and is ill-suited by temperament to join a coven, a trio of lump hags may rarely form a coven among one another. Such gruesome covens are virtually always the result of the deceased hag-mother having borne more than one daughter before perishing – some covens have even been known to consist of triplet sisters. A coven of lump hags may work together to produce the following spell-like abilities, in addition to those normally afforded a coven of hags: *commune with nature*, *dominate spider* (DC 16, as *dominate animal*, affecting only spiders and spider-like creatures), *giant vermin* (spiders only), *poison* (DC 17), *summon swarm* (spiders only), and *web* (DC 15).

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