



Fig. I: The Weeping Woman at the water. House-style plate.

CRYPTID № 4

LA LLORONA

The most widely told ghost in the Americas, a mother who drowned her own children and cannot stop searching for them. The series' first boss, and two ways to loose her on your table.

"She is grief that outlived the griever, guilt that would not stay buried."

THE LEGEND

Somewhere tonight a parent is calling a child in from the water, because she is out there, and she is still looking. La Llorona, the Weeping Woman, is the most widely told ghost in the Americas, and one of the oldest and the saddest. A woman, beautiful and poor, loved a man above her station and bore him children. When he left her, something in her broke, and in a single black hour of grief and rage she drowned them in the river. She understood what she had done the instant they slipped under. She died there on the bank, and she was turned away from heaven until she could bring her children back. So she walks the water every night, weeping, and she never finds them.

The story has teeth. She takes children. A child out too late near the water is one she might mistake for her own, or seize as a replacement, or simply pull under because drowning is the shape her grief takes now. Parents across Mexico, the Southwest, and half of Latin America have used her for generations to call their kids home before dark. The old warning is that her voice lies to you: when she sounds far away she is near, and when she sounds near she is already behind you.

The legend is old enough to have watched an empire fall. Spanish chroniclers wrote it down in colonial Mexico, but its roots run back past them, into the world before the conquest. In the years before the Spanish came, the Mexica recorded omens foretelling the end of their world, and one of them was a woman heard weeping in the night streets of Tenochtitlan, crying out for her children, grieving a people not yet destroyed. There is no cryptid to trap here. La Llorona is grief that outlived the griever, guilt that would not stay buried, the exact dread of deep water and small children and the dark.

For D&D 5E

STAT BLOCK

La Llorona

Medium undead, neutral evil (boss)

Armor Class 15

Hit Points 150 (20d8 + 60)

Speed 40 ft., swim 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12	18	16	12	16	20
(+1)	(+4)	(+3)	(+1)	(+3)	(+5)

Skills Perception +6, Stealth +7

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16

For Every Other
Game

CREATURE
CARD

La Llorona

No stat lines. Just what she is and how to point her at your players, whatever system you run. The ghost of a mother who drowned her own children and cannot stop searching, bound to the water, deadly to the young and the guilty. Far more tragedy than monster, and as a boss she is meant to cap a night, not fill a corridor.

Defenses. Resistant to acid, fire, lightning, thunder, and nonmagical bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing; immune to cold, necrotic, and poison; immune to the charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, prone, and restrained conditions.

Incorporeal Movement. She can move through creatures and objects as difficult terrain, taking 5 (1d10) force damage if she ends her turn inside an object.

Water-Bound. She is bound to one body of water and its banks. She always knows the location of any creature touching that water, and has advantage on attack rolls while within 60 ft. of it.

Sorrow's Lure. Her weeping seems to come from the wrong place and pulls the living toward the water. When a creature starts its turn able to hear her within 120 ft., she can force a DC 16 Wisdom save; on a failure it must move toward the nearest water by the safest route and will not willingly move away from it until its next turn.

Legendary Resistance (2/Day). If she fails a saving throw, she can choose to succeed instead.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. She makes two Spectral Grasp attacks.

Spectral Grasp. *Melee Spell Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 18 (4d6 + 4) cold damage, and a Large or smaller target is grappled (escape DC 16). She ignores difficult terrain and moves at full speed while dragging

HOW IT BEHAVES

- **Heard, then feared, then seen.** Her weeping arrives first, from the wrong direction, always closer than it sounds. Let the party hunt a crying they can never quite locate before she is ever on screen.
- **She pulls people to the water.** Her lure is the danger as much as her hands. The horror is watching a charmed friend walk calmly toward the black river while everyone screams at them to stop.
- **She cannot simply be beaten.** Hurting her buys time; she does not die on an initiative count. The win condition is understanding her, not out-damaging her.

WAYS TO USE IT

- **The drowning-river boss.** The climax of a haunted-water arc: a night at the canal or the flooded quarry where the party must survive her long enough to do the one thing that frees her.
- **The cautionary tale made real.** Children have been vanishing from a riverside town. The adults blame the old ghost story. The adults are right, and the party has to prove a bedtime warning is a crime scene.
- **The mercy quest.** No fight at all: the party pieces together who she was, finds what she lost, and gives her

a grappled creature, including through water.

Drowning Pull. She drags a creature she is grappling beneath the surface. Until the grapple ends, the creature is restrained, cannot breathe, and takes 13 (3d8) cold damage at the start of each of her turns as she holds it under.

Wail of Grief (Recharge 5-6). The cry that never stopped. Each creature within 60 ft. that can hear her makes a DC 16 Wisdom save, taking 33 (6d10) psychic damage on a failure (half on a success); a creature that fails is also frightened of her for 1 minute (repeat save each turn to end).

Legendary Actions (3 per round). At the end of another creature's turn she can take one: **Drift** (move up to her speed, no opportunity attacks, through water and objects); **Weep** (1 action: one creature within 60 ft. that can hear her, DC 16 Wis save or 7 (2d6) psychic and disadvantage on its next attack); **Cold Grasp** (2 actions: one Spectral Grasp).

peace. The monster turns out to be a soul to save.

- **Cut it loose from the river.** Forget Mexico and the Southwest. A grieving, luring, drowning water-ghost fits any haunted water you run: a well, a flooded mine, a ship's flooded hold, a drowned village under a reservoir. Keep the weeping and the water; leave the map on the shelf.

DIFFICULTY DIAL

- **Scarier:** make it clear early that damage does nothing lasting, so the players feel the ground drop out from under the usual plan.
- **Safer, and more moving:** put the way to free her within reach, so the encounter can end in mercy instead of a body count.

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