

FLOOD SEASON

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MONSTER MANUAL II
CREATURES

“Flood Season” uses several monsters from *Monster Manual II*. To conserve space, their complete statistics were omitted from the adventure text, but that information has been provided as a service here to accommodate those readers who do not own *Monster Manual II*. We highly encourage those readers who have not yet picked up a copy of this supplement to do so, as the information provided here is skeletal, at best—intended only to provide you with the minimal information necessary to run the adventure.

➔ **Kopru:** CR 6; Medium Monstrous Humanoid (aquatic); HD 8d8; hp 36; Init +2; Spd 5 ft., swim 40 ft.; AC

15, touch 12, flat-footed 13;

BAB +8; Grap +10; Atk

+10 melee (1d6+2, tail

slap), +8 melee

(1d4+1, 2 claws),

and +8 melee

(1d4+1, bite); SA

constrict 3d6+3,

dominate person,

improved grab; SQ

darkvision 60 ft.;

AL CE; SV Fort

+2, Ref +8, Will

+9; Str 15, Dex 14,

Con 11, Int 11,

Wis 12, Cha 10.



Skills: Concentration +11, Escape Artist +11, Move Silently +10, Search +8, Swim +10. *Feats:* Iron Will, Multiattack.

Languages: Common, Aquan.

Constrict (Ex): With a successful grapple check, a kopru can constrict a grabbed opponent, dealing 3d6+3 points of bludgeoning damage.

Dominate Person (Su): Once per day, a kopru can produce an effect like that of a *dominate person* spell (caster level 10th; Will save DC 14), except that the range is 180 feet and the duration is eight days.

Improved Grab (Ex): If a kopru hits an opponent that is its own size or smaller with a tail attack, it deals normal damage and attempts to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity (grapple bonus +17, including a +7 racial bonus on grapple checks). If it gets a hold, it also constricts on the same round. Thereafter, the kopru has the option to conduct the grapple normally, or simply use its tails to hold the opponent (–20 penalty on grapple check, but the kopru is not considered grappled). In either case, each successful grapple check it makes during successive rounds automatically deals tail and constrict damage.

➔ **Spawn of Kyuss:** CR 5; Medium Undead; HD 4d12+3; hp 29; Init –1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 11, touch 9, flat-footed 11; BAB +2; Grap +6; Atk +6 melee (1d6+6 plus Kyuss’s gift, slam), or +6 melee touch (create spawn), or +1 ranged touch (create spawn); SA create spawn, fear aura, Kyuss’s gift; SQ curative transformation, fast healing 5, turn resistance +2, undead traits; AL CE; SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +4; Str 18, Dex 9, Con —, Int 6, Wis 11, Cha 15.

Skills: Hide +5, Jump +10, Move Silently +5, Spot +6. *Feats:* Toughness.

Create Spawn (Su): Once per round as a free action, a spawn of Kyuss can transfer a worm from its own body to that of an opponent. It can do this whenever it hits with a slam attack, but it can also make the transfer by means of a successful melee touch attack or ranged touch attack, hurling a worm at a foe from a distance of up to 10 feet.

Each worm is a Fine vermin with an AC of 10 and 1 hit point. It can be killed with normal damage or by the touch of silver. On the spawn’s next action, the worm burrows into its host’s flesh. (A creature with a natural armor bonus of +5 or higher is immune to this burrowing effect.) The worm makes its way toward the host’s brain, dealing 1 point of damage per round

for 1d4+1 rounds. At the end of that period, it reaches that brain. While the worm is inside a victim, a *remove curse* or *remove disease* effect destroys it, and a *dispel evil* or *neutralize poison* effect delays its progress for 10d6 minutes. A successful Heal check (DC 20) extracts the worm and kills it.

Once the worm reaches the brain, it deals 1d2 points of Intelligence damage per round until it either is killed (by *remove curse* or *remove disease*) or slays its host (death occurs at 0 Intelligence). A Small Medium, or Large creature slain by a worm rises as a new spawn of Kyuss 1d6+4 rounds later; a Tiny or smaller creature quickly putrefies; and a Huge or larger creature becomes a normal zombie of the appropriate size. Newly created spawn are not under the control of their parent, but they usually follow whatever spawn of Kyuss created them.

Fear Aura (Su): A spawn of Kyuss continuously radiates a fear effect. This ability functions like a *fear* spell (caster level 7th; Will save DC 14), except that it affects all creatures within a 40-foot radius. Any creature that makes a successful saving throw against the effect cannot be affected again by the fear aura of that spawn of Kyuss for 24 hours.

Kyuss's Gift (Su): Any creature hit by a spawn of Kyuss's slam attack must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 12) or contract a supernatural disease. The incubation period is 1 day, and the disease deals 1d6 point of Constitution damage and 1d4 points of Wisdom damage (see Disease in the *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide*). These effects manifest as rotting flesh and dementia. An affected creature gets only half the benefits of natural and magical healing, though a *remove disease* effect removes the affliction.

Curative Transformation (Ex): One *remove curse* or *remove disease* effect, or a more powerful version of either of these effects, transforms a spawn of Kyuss into a normal zombie.

“FLOOD SEASON” MOOKS

The thugs and Alleybashers make many appearances in “Flood Season,” but their statistics are only printed once. They've been updated reproduced for your convenience here, so you always have a quick and easy reference when they show up in a fight.

♣ **Thugs, Male and Female Human Ftr2:** CR 2; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 2d10+4; hp 23, 20, 18, 17; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 18, touch 11, flat-footed 17; BAB +2; Grap +5; Atk +7 melee (1d8+2/19–20, masterwork longsword); AL CN; SV Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 16, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills: Climb +1*, Jump +1*, Swim –4**. **Feats:** Great Fortitude, Lightning Reflexes, Quick Draw, Weapon Focus (longsword).

*Includes –6 armor check penalty, –12 for Swim.

Languages: Common.

Possessions: Chainmail, masterwork large steel shield, masterwork longsword, *potion of cure moderate wounds*.

♣ **Alleybashers, Male and Female Human Rog2:** CR 2; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 2d6+5; hp 18, 14; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 13; BAB +1; Grap +1; Atk +3 melee (1d6+1/18–20, masterwork rapier) or +4 ranged (1d6/×3, shortbow); SA sneak attack +1d6; SQ evasion; AL LE; SV Fort +1, Ref +6, Will –1; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 8, Cha 13.

Skills: Bluff +6, Climb +6, Disable Device +8, Escape Artist +8, Hide +8, Listen +4, Move Silently +8, Open Lock +8, Search +7, Spot +4, Tumble +8. **Feats:** Improved Initiative, Toughness.

Languages: Common, Gnome, Halfling.

Possessions: Studded leather, masterwork rapier, shortbow with 20 arrows.

CLERICS OF ST. CUTHBERT

The PCs aren't the only ones who gain experience in the course of this campaign. Jenya Urikas (the new high priest of St. Cuthbert in Cauldron), has gained a level by the onset of “Flood Season.” She should continue to gain levels as the campaign progresses (as long as she's alive), although probably not at the same rate as the PCs (about 1 level per adventure). So by the end of “Flood Season,” feel free to level up Jenya once more. Her stats for the duration of this adventure are provided below.

Sarcem Delasharn, the now deceased high priest of the church of St. Cuthbert, doesn't make a living appearance in the adventure. But if the PCs manage to resurrect him at some point in a later adventure (*raise dead* won't work since his tongue has been cut out and eaten by Tongueater the werebaboon), refer to the statistics provided below.

♣ **Jenya Urikas, Female Human Clr6 (St. Cuthbert):** CR 6; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 6d8+6; hp 37; Init –1; Spd 30 ft. (20 ft. in armor); AC 17, touch 9, flat-footed 17 with armor with *magic vestment* spell; BAB +4; Grap +4; Atk +5 melee (1d8, masterwork heavy mace), or +5 melee (1d6+1 plus 2d6 holy, +1 *holy light mace*)* or +3 ranged (damage varies, ranged touch); SA turn undead 5/day; AL LN; SV Fort +6, Ref +1, Will +8; Str 10, Dex 8, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 16, Cha 14.

*Jenya carries Sarcem's +1 *holy light mace*—the church's badge of office for its high priest—if the PCs return it to her in “Flood Season.”

Skills: Concentration +7, Diplomacy +10, Heal +12, Knowledge (history) +4, Knowledge (religion) +7, Listen +3, Spellcraft +7, Spot +3. **Feats:** Brew Potion, Leadership,

Scribe Scroll, Skill Focus (Heal).

Spells Prepared (5/5/5/4; base save DC = 13 + spell level): 0—*detect magic, guidance, light, mending, purify food and drink*; 1st—*bless water, command, divine favor, magic weapon, sanctuary**; 2nd—*bull's strength*, hold person, lesser restoration, owl's wisdom, shield other*; 3rd—*create food and water, magic vestment*, remove disease, searing light*.

*Domain spell. *Domains*: Protection (*protective ward* 1/day), Strength (feat of strength 1/day).

Languages: Common, Dwarven.

Possessions: +1 *holy light mace* (only if the PCs return it to her), masterwork chain mail (+1 with *magic vestment* spell), large steel shield, masterwork heavy mace, 2 scrolls of *cure serious wounds*, brown robe, 2 vials of holy water, keys to temple, holy symbol of St. Cuthbert.

☞ **Sarcem Delasharn, Human Male Clr 9**: CR 9; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 9d8+9; hp 46; Init -1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 19, touch 10, flat-footed 19; BAB +6; Grap +7; Atk +9/+4 *melee* (1d6+2 plus 2d6 *holy*, +1 *holy light mace*); SA *spells, turn undead*; AL LN; SV Fort +7, Ref +2, Will +10; Str 13, Dex 8, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 19, Cha 14.

Skills: Concentration +13, Knowledge (religion) +6, Spellcraft +6. *Feats*: Brew Potion, Combat Casting, Craft Wand, Empower Spell, Weapon Focus (light mace)

Spells Known (6/6/6/5/4/2; base save DC = 14 + spell level): 0—*create water, detect magic, purify food and drink* ×4; 1—*command, divine favor, endure elements, obscuring mist, protection from chaos, sanctuary**; 2—*bull's strength, consecrate, endurance, lesser restoration, shield other*, zone of truth*; 3—*create food and water, magic circle against chaos*, remove disease, speak with dead, water breathing*; 4—*control water, order's wrath*, sending, tongues*; 5—*spell resistance*, summon monster V*.

*Domain spell. *Domains*: Law (cast Law spells at +1 caster level), Protection (*protective ward* 1/day).

Languages: Common.

Possessions: +1 *banded mail*, medium steel shield, +1 *holy light mace*, *ring of protection* +1, *periapt of wisdom* +2, 2 *potions of cure serious wounds*, *potion of bull's strength*, silver holy symbol, clerical vestments.

Sarcem Delasharn is a barrel-chested man with flinty gray eyes, well-groomed black hair, and impressive sideburns. He takes his position as high priest of the Church of St. Cuthbert

in Cauldron seriously . . . almost too seriously. He runs a tight ship and expects nothing less than perfection from those under his charge. Tradition bound and loyal, he has become nothing less than enraged of late at the lackadaisical attitude that most of Cauldron's other churches have adopted over the last several years toward the Flood Festival ceremonies, and he secretly hoped that the Church of St. Cuthbert had a chance this season to single-handedly turn back the flood waters with the *wands of control water*. In particular, nothing would please Sarcem more than to see the public image of the church of Wee Jas become tarnished; he has long had a running feud with that church's high priestess.

Although early events in "Flood Season" result in Sarcem's untimely demise, you can still use these statistics for any 9th-level cleric of a lawful deity that the party might encounter in your campaign. In addition, there's a good chance the PCs decide to return Sarcem's body to Cauldron for a proper burial. Eventually, the PCs may have enough resources to have the high priest brought back to life.

A more sinister use for these statistics presents itself if the PCs opt to leave Sarcem's remains at the Lucky Monkey, especially if they claim his equipment as loot. In this case, Sarcem's spirit may be troubled enough to rise as a ghost or another undead creature. Some people even believe that a person slain by a lycanthrope rises as a vampire after death; since Sarcem was killed by just such a creature, perhaps he does just that (although this may be difficult if the PCs return to Cauldron with his head but leave his body behind). Should this occur, you can simply apply the appropriate undead monster template to these statistics to create a unique adversary for the group. Naturally, if Sarcem rises as an undead menace, anyone returning to the Lucky Monkey finds his body missing.

EXTRA ENCOUNTERS

These two encounters can help broaden the scope and feel of "Flood Season." Neither event advances the actual plot of the adventure, but they can add a wealth of detail and intrigue to an ongoing campaign set in Cauldron. These encounters might also help if the PCs are just shy of 3rd level and need a few more experience points before they're

STRIDERS OF FHARLANGHN

The Striders of Fharlanghn is a neutrally aligned organization dedicated to the destruction of the Cagewrights, an evil society intent on bringing their lords—the demodands of Carceri—to the Prime Material Plane to rule for eternity. Many of the Striders worship the deity Fharlanghn, but not all of them do; some, like Meerthan Eliothlorn, simply share the organization's view con-

cerning the Cagewrights, seeing them as a threat to the balance of power in the realm. A half-elf wizard himself, Meerthan is in town posing as a dwarven merchant named Tyro Amberhelm; he currently stays at The Drowning Morkoth Inn. Meerthan is the point contact for the Striders in the Cauldron region, and both Fario and Fellian (from issue #97's "Life's Bazaar"), as well as Shensen Tesseril report to him.

powerful enough to face the challenges of “Flood Season.” Likewise, each of them can be the start of a recurring location or theme for an ongoing adventure in the area. Players will no doubt want to return to Skie’s Treasury often during the campaign, and they might end up butting heads with the Stormblades for many sessions to come.

EVENT 1: A TRIP TO SKIE’S (EL 8)

Eventually, the PCs are going to want to either sell or buy magic items. This might be the most logical encounter to start the adventure with if you’re continuing with the same group that ran through “Life’s Bazaar.” After emerging victorious from the perils of the Malachite Fortress, they probably have a lot of loot to pawn off.

Numerous stores in Cauldron sometimes sell magic items and gear, but only one of them makes its sole business buying and selling magic items to adventurers: Skie’s Treasury. Skie is a retired gnome adventurer who spent much of her youth exploring the catacombs and chambers below Cauldron. She is quite knowledgeable about the creatures, traps, dangers, and general geography of these tunnels and is always eager to share some of her tips and knowledge with paying customers. You can use Skie to give PCs helpful hints or bits of advice as they continue to adventure in the region. She’s had enough of the adventuring lifestyle, however, and won’t agree to join any new groups for any price.

Read or paraphrase the following when the PCs arrive at Skie’s Treasury:

You have come to a modest building crafted from blocks of volcanic stone. The façade of the building bears dozens, if not hundreds of symbols and sigils that have been carved into the face of the stone with chisels. One door and a pair of tiny windows face the road and overlook the lake below. Above the door, a sign proclaims the establishment to be Skie’s Treasury, but more impressive are the numerous items of treasure—rings, coins, wands, necklaces, rods, potions, scrolls, and more—that seem to slowly orbit the sign and shine with soft golden light. Every now and then, two of the items bump against each other, ringing softly like a windchime.

The treasure orbiting the sign is a *permanent image* that was placed there not long after Skie purchased the building to set up her business. The runes on the façade of her store are in Gnome, and are in fact the names of various adventuring parties that have, throughout the years, patronized Skie’s store enough that she offered them a special “Adventurer’s Discount” in return for their loyalty. Some of the names include The Greenswords, The Unhumans, The Singers of

Ehlonna, and Varmint Patrol. A successful Spot check (DC 20) by someone who understands Gnome notices one rune that reads, “The Last Laugh.” This is the name of one of the Cauldron thieves’ guilds, as a successful Knowledge (local) or bardic knowledge check (DC 20) reveals.

Skie doesn’t give out the Adventurer’s Discount to just any party that comes in off the street; in order to qualify for this discount, an adventuring group must fulfill the following criteria:

- They must introduce themselves to Skie by name and by adventuring group, and must display strong bonds of friendship.

- They must patronize “Skie’s Treasury” at least once a month; transactions on these monthly visits are not required, but they are appreciated.

- On each visit, Skie likes to hear a story of the group’s recent accomplishments. She prefers to hear heroic tales and has little taste for mayhem and cruelty. Evil adventuring parties are never given the discount.

- Finally, the group as a whole must sell no less than 25,000 gp worth of magic treasure to Skie. She keeps detailed records of all transactions, and once a group has sold more than this amount in magic treasure to her (over any amount of time), and assuming that up until this point they have followed the first three points above on previous visits, she offers the group the Adventurer’s Discount.

The Adventurer’s Discount allows the lucky group to sell magic items at 60% market value, rather than 50% market value. Similarly, when they purchase items from Skie, they receive 10% off the market value of the item in question. Skie appreciates customer loyalty, and has no problem taking a hit to her income to reward those customers she values.

Finally, once a party gains the discount, Skie uses her *wand of stone shape* to rearrange the runes on the front of her store and add in the Gnome translation of the new party’s name to the façade.

Inside, the store’s shelves are fairly sparse, but never empty. Skie sells enough magic to keep herself in comfort, and has no real ambition to make a fortune at the job. Each of the items on her shelves is kept in a glass cabinet under lock and key, and each item is displayed on a silk pillow with a small placard that describes the item’s history, powers, and what party sold the item to Skie. She doesn’t allow shoppers to handle or physically inspect items unless they are beneficiaries of the Adventurer’s Discount.

You can handle transactions at Skie’s Treasury in two ways. The simplest is to just assume that she can afford to buy anything the party might find, and has for sale any magic item worth 3,000 gp or less. For an ongoing campaign set primarily in one region, though, where the PCs are likely to return to the same store again and again, this isn’t the most realistic choice. The preferred method of han-

dling transactions (although it takes a bit more paperwork) is the method presented below.

At any one time, Skie's Treasury has approximately 50,000 gp worth of magic items for sale, although no single item at this time is worth more than 3,000 gp. At the start of this adventure, the following items are for sale here (unless otherwise noted, all weapons and armor are sized for Medium creatures).

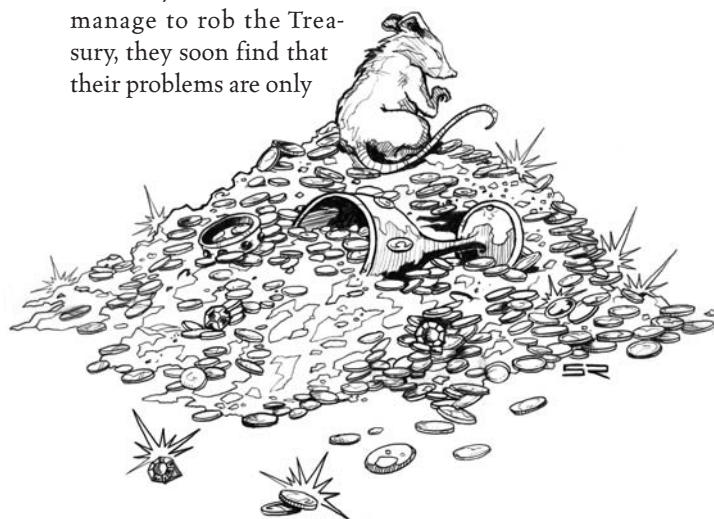
Item	Price	Discount Price
+1 <i>banded mail</i>	1,400 gp	1,260 gp
+1 <i>chainmail</i>	1,300 gp	1,170 gp
+1 <i>dagger</i> (Small)	2,302 gp	2,072 gp
+1 <i>kukri</i>	2,308 gp	2,077 gp
+1 <i>heavy steel shield</i>	1,170 gp	1,053 gp
+1 <i>leather armor</i> (2 available; one Small)	1,160 gp each	1,044 gp each
+1 <i>light mace</i> (Small)	2,305 gp	2,075 gp
+1 <i>longsword</i> (2 available; one Small)	2,315 gp each	2,084 gp each
+1 <i>scimitar</i>	2,315 gp	2,084 gp
+1 <i>spiked chain</i>	2,325 gp	2,093 gp
Arcane scroll of <i>flame arrow</i>	375 gp	338 gp
Arcane scroll of <i>ice storm</i>	700 gp	630 gp
Arcane scroll of <i>levitate</i>	150 gp	135 gp
Arcane scroll of <i>mirror image</i>	150 gp	135 gp
<i>Bag of holding</i> (Type 1)	2,500 gp	2,250 gp
<i>Cloak of resistance +1</i> (2 available)	1,000 gp each	900 gp each
Divine scroll of <i>dispel magic</i>	375 gp	338 gp
Divine scroll of <i>lesser restoration</i>	150 gp	135 gp
Divine scroll of <i>raise dead</i>	6,125 gp	5,513 gp
Divine scroll of <i>silence</i>	150 gp	135 gp
Divine scroll of <i>speak with dead</i>	375 gp	338 gp
<i>Golembane scarab</i> (flesh)	2,500 gp	2,250 gp
<i>Hat of disguise</i>	1,800 gp	1,620 gp
<i>Heward's handy haversack</i>	2,000 gp	1,800 gp
<i>Potion of cure light wounds</i> (8 available)	50 gp each	45 gp each
<i>Potion of cure moderate wounds</i> (3 available)	300 gp each	270 gp each
<i>Potion of haste</i>	750 gp	675 gp
<i>Potion of owl's wisdom</i>	300 gp	270 gp
<i>Ring of feather falling</i>	2,200 gp	1,980 gp
<i>Ring of protection +1</i>	2,000 gp	1,800 gp
<i>Rope of climbing</i>	3,000 gp	2,700 gp
<i>Sleep arrows</i> (2 available)	132 gp each	119 gp
<i>Wand of cure light wounds</i> (25 charges)	375 gp	338 gp
<i>Wand of cure moderate wounds</i> (22 charges)	1,980 gp	1,782 gp
<i>Wand of Melf's acid arrow</i> (10 charges)	900 gp	810 gp

As the campaign progresses, feel free to alter the list of magic items for sale as you see fit. Remember to keep track of anything that the party sells to Skie as well. As a general rule, each month there is a cumulative 25% chance that an item is sold to an NPC. Once an item is sold, if her total inventory value is below 50,000 gp, there's a cumulative 20% chance each week that some new item is purchased to replenish stock. At any one time, Skie tries to keep about 10,000 gp and 1,000 pp in the large safe in the back room to make purchases with. Additional funds over this amount she usually converts to gemstones; she usually keeps another 10,000 gp in gemstones in the safe as well.

Skie's Treasury may seem a ripe location for some burglary to greedy characters, but the store is quite well guarded and likely beyond the capability of a low-level party to rob. Skie herself is an accomplished sorcerer and can probably handle a group of four low-level adventurers herself. In addition, she keeps several guards on staff to protect her inventory; two of these guards are always on duty in the Treasury. The glass cases that contain the inventory are all locked with good quality locks (Open Lock DC 30); she wears the only key around her neck on a silver chain. When the store is closed, Skie relocates her entire inventory into the safe in the back room.

This safe consists of a lead-lined solid steel box set in a 5-foot-square hole carved directly into the stone floor. The door of the safe is huge, nearly 3 feet across, and is set into the floor of the room like a trap door. A narrow ladder descends into the safe, and a small dumbwaiter used to transport items from the room above is set in one corner of the safe. When the door is closed, it is nearly impregnable. The safe door is amazing quality, and cracking it requires 3d6 minutes of focused work and a successful Open Lock check (DC 40).

Finally, if someone does manage to rob the Treasury, they soon find that their problems are only



beginning. As inferred by their rune on the façade of the building, the Last Laugh has an interest in Skie's Treasury. Skie has extended the discount to all members of this guild of thieves, and in return, they have promised to leave her store alone. In addition, Skie pays a monthly stipend to this guild; in return, they have vowed to track down and return any objects stolen from her store should such an affront be brought to their attention. A character who steals from the Treasury and remains in the region can expect to receive nightly visits from members of the Last Laugh as long as they remain in possession of stolen goods.

◆ **Skie Aldersun, Female Gnome Sor6:** CR 6; Small Humanoid (gnome); HD 6d4+12; hp 29; Init +2; Spd 20 ft.; AC 16*, touch 12, flat-footed 15; BAB +3; Grap -1; Atk +4 melee (1d4+1, +1 dagger) or +5 ranged (1d4+1, +1 dagger) or +4 ranged (damage varies, ranged touch); SA spells; SQ gnome traits; AL NG; SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +5; Str 11, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 17.

*Includes +4 armor bonus from *mage armor*.

Skills: Concentration +11, Craft (alchemy) +13, Knowledge +8 (arcana), Listen +2, Profession (shopkeeper) +5, Spellcraft +11. **Feats:** Craft Wondrous Item, Lightning Reflexes, Still Spell.

Spells Known (6/7/6/4; base save DC = 13 + spell level): 0—*arcane mark, detect magic, disrupt undead, mage hand, mending, ray of frost, read magic*; 1st—*identify, jump, mage armor, magic missile*; 2nd—*detect thoughts, levitate*; 3rd—*fly*.

Languages: Common, Draconic, Elven, Gnome.

Possessions: +1 dagger, stone of alarm, wand of stone shape (20 charges).

Skie Aldersun retired from the adventuring lifestyle nearly a decade ago when she accidentally awakened a slumbering wyvern while attempting to steal some of its treasure. The enraged wyvern managed to slay the rest of her party (including her familiar, a cat named Newt) before she managed to strike a killing blow. The experience traumatized her, and she swore never to meddle with monsters again. But the adventuring lifestyle was still in her blood. Skie decided to open a store that catered to other adventurers, and since that day has lived vicariously through the tales of her clientele. She still maintains a terrible fear of all dragons and has never summoned a replacement familiar for her beloved Newt.

◆ **Treasury Guards, Male Human Ftr5 (2):** CR 5; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 5d10+10; hp 39; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18, touch 11, flat-footed 17; BAB +5; Grap +8; Atk +10 melee (1d10+6/19-20, +1 bastard sword) or +7 ranged (1d8/x3, masterwork longbow); AL LN; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +2; Str 16, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Climb +9*, Jump +9*, Swim +7*. **Feats:** Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Lightning Reflexes,

Power Attack, Run, Weapon Focus (bastard sword), Weapon Specialization (bastard sword).

*Includes -2 armor check penalty (-4 for Swim).

Languages: Common.

Possessions: +1 chain shirt, masterwork heavy steel shield, +1 bastard sword, masterwork longbow with 20 masterwork arrows.

◆ **Safe (lead-lined steel):** 6 in. thick walls, 5 cubic feet volume; Hardness 10; hp 180; break DC 35; amazing lock (Open Lock DC 40).

Ad-hoc XP Award: If the PCs manage to earn the Adventurer's Discount, give them a CR 3 experience award.

EVENT 2: UNWANTED ATTENTION (EL 7)

Word of the party's adventures in and below Cauldron, and the role they played in putting a stop to the kidnappings, begins to slowly spread. Every once in a while, a commoner or shopkeeper should recognize the group and thank them profusely for their work; some shopkeepers might even go so far as to give them small discounts on their merchandise. Unfortunately, not everyone in Cauldron is pleased with the party's growing fame.

One group in particular, a band of adventurers calling themselves the "Stormblades," has taken a particularly foul view of the PCs. The Stormblades are comprised of four local adventurers who are also all members of various noble families in Cauldron. These four young aristocrats decided to form an adventuring party to get some excitement, fame, and extra cash several months ago, and have spent those months exploring some of the less dangerous catacombs and lava tubes below the city. In particular, they recently wiped out a large tribe of pesky kobolds that had taken up residence in some old lava tubes below the southern section of Cauldron.

In any case, the news of the PCs' triumph over the slaver ring has all but eclipsed these admittedly less impressive accomplishments, and the Stormblades aren't happy about it. Rather than seek greater glories for themselves, however, they have started to obsess about the PCs, and begin to keep tabs on them as this adventure starts. As time progresses, the PCs may hear rumors that some people have been asking about them. They also might catch a glimpse of members of the Stormblades stalking them.

Eventually, the entire group confronts the PCs as they relax at a tavern (perhaps at the Tipped Tankard) or busy themselves at market or somewhere similar; stage the timing for this event at a time when the interruption is obnoxious but not dangerous—sometime before **Event 3** happens. The Stormblades merely want to harass the group and mock them publicly in an attempt to sully their prestige and reputation. The Stormblades hope to goad the PCs into

attacking them. If they're successful, the Stormblades fight back to defend themselves, but strive to do subdual damage unless the PCs raise the stakes by doing lethal damage. The city watch responds quickly to the public disturbance; within 2d4 rounds (the Stormblades take care to stage their plan in a place where the city watch is never far away) a patrol arrives to put the disturbance to an end.

Once the battle is over, assuming the Stormblades survive, they continue to harbor a grudge against the PCs. If they lost, the humiliation of being beaten down in a public place further enrages them; if they won, their success emboldens them and convinces them that the PCs' fame is even more misplaced. If any members of the Stormblades are wounded with real damage or killed, the survivors vow to see the player characters thrown in jail. Each member of this group is the child of an influential member of Cauldron's nobility, and the Stormblades' parents are more than willing to fund legal action against the PCs on behalf of their children. If all four members are killed, their parents and the guard defiantly press for the imprisonment and possible execution of the PCs. The extent of such legal actions are beyond the scope of this adventure, but they can haunt the party throughout their entire career in Cauldron if they don't handle the situation well.

Although the Stormblades could pose a fairly dangerous threat to a group of four 4th-level characters, they are an intrinsically chaotic group of thugs and it won't take much to make their practiced, almost choreographed fighting teamwork fall apart if the party manages to separate them or goad one of the members into doing something foolish.

☚ **Annah Taskerhill, Female Human Ari1/Brd3:** CR 3; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 1d8+1 plus 3d6+3; hp 17; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16*, touch 11, flat-footed 15*; BAB +2; Grap +1; Atk +5 melee (1d6-1/18-20, masterwork rapier) or +4 ranged (1d2 subdual, masterwork whip) or +4 ranged (1d8, masterwork light crossbow); SA bardic music, countersong, *fascinate*, spells; SQ bardic knowledge, inspire competence, inspire courage +1; AL CN; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +5; Str 8, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 16.

*Includes +4 bonus from *mage armor*.

Skills: Bluff +10, Diplomacy +16, Forgery +9, Gather Information +11, Knowledge (local) +9, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +9, Perform (sing) +10, Sense Motive +7. **Feats:** Exotic Weapon Proficiency (whip), Weapon Finesse (rapier), Weapon Focus (rapier).

Spells Known (3/2; base save DC = 13 + spell level): 0—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *light*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *read magic*; 1—*charm person*, *cure light wounds*, *expeditious retreat*.

Languages: Common, Elven, Gnome.

Possessions: Masterwork rapier, masterwork whip, masterwork light crossbow with 20 bolts, light steel shield, *wand of*

cat's grace (15 charges), *wand of mage armor* (30 charges), 2 *potions of cure light wounds*, noble's outfit, masterwork lute, gold ring (80 gp), leather pouch containing 40 gp.

Annah is the leader of the Stormblades, if only due to her remarkable gift with words. She has a knack for knowing how to say exactly the right thing at the right time, and it's a rare event indeed that she is forced to pay for her own meal or room while out on the road. The other members of the Stormblades all look up to her, and without her leadership it is likely that the group would quickly fall apart. Annah is tall and strikingly beautiful, with smooth dusky skin, long black hair braided into numerous cornrows, sharp features, and a great sense of fashion. She prefers to hang back in combat and encourage her three friends to fight for her with her bardic music, supporting them with her crossbow or whip as she gets the chance. Her actual feelings for the other members of the Stormblades is coldly mercenary; she sees them as little more than minions, but maintains the charade of friendship to further encourage their support of her. Her parents are some of Cauldron's most important nobles, and her father is reportedly a close personal friend of the Lord Mayor.

☚ **Cora Lathenmire, Female Human Ari1/Ftr3:** CR 3; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 1d8+3 plus 3d10+9; hp 33; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 18, touch 11, flat-footed 17; BAB +3; Grap +5; Atk +7 melee (1d6+2/18-20, masterwork rapier) or +4 ranged (1d8/×3, composite longbow); AL CN; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +2; Str 14, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 12.

Skills: Appraise +4, Bluff +5, Handle Animal +7, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +4, Ride +10, Sense Motive +3. **Feats:** Blind-Fight, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Quick Draw, Weapon Focus (rapier).

Languages: Common.

Possessions: Masterwork breastplate, +1 *light steel shield*, masterwork rapier, *potion of bull's strength*, composite longbow with 20 arrows, noble's outfit, leather pouch containing 12 gp and 10 sp.

Cora is the most quiet and bloodthirsty of the group. Quick to anger, most of the Stormblades' fights start when Cora imagines an insult directed at her or her lover, Zachary. Although she's taken pains to practice the graceful rapier fighting style used by her allies, after a few rounds of combat she always loses her patience and starts using Power Attack to lash out with wild abandon. She has short red hair, numerous scars (mostly on her hands and forearms), and a swaggering gait. She dotes on Zachary, but thinks Todd is a coward and would like to teach him a thing or two about combat the hard way if given the opportunity. Her parents are well-known weapon traders, and they employ a number of smiths in town; characters who anger

her parents may find that many of Cauldron's weapons and armor dealers start charging them inflated prices.

☛ **Todd Vanderboren, Male Human Ari1/Rog3:** CR 3; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 1d8+1 plus 3d6+3; hp 22; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14; BAB +2; Grap +3; Atk +7 melee (1d6+1/18–20, masterwork rapier) or +6 ranged (1d6/×3, masterwork shortbow); SA sneak attack +2d6; SQ evasion, trap sense +1, trapfinding; AL CE; SV Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +3; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Appraise +6, Bluff +4, Forgery +7, Disable Device +8, Hide +9, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +5, Knowledge (local) +8, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +6, Listen +7, Move Silently +9, Sense Motive +4, Tumble +9. **Feats:** Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse (rapier), Weapon Focus (rapier).

Languages: Common, Dwarven, Gnome.

Possessions: +1 studded leather armor, masterwork rapier, masterwork composite shortbow with 20 arrows, 3 *sleep arrows*, *potion of hiding*, *potion of glibness*, noble's outfit, masterwork thieves' tools, leather pouch containing 34 gp and 4 pp.

Todd is the only truly evil member of the Stormblades, but he keeps the true extents of his depravity well concealed. His goal is to someday take command of the Stormblades and found a criminal syndicate. Unfortunately, he has a horrible habit of insulting anyone and everyone, and then cackling loudly and mockingly at their discomfort. He's a little too thin for his frame, and his weak chin and long face make him look a bit like a weasel. His eyes are watery and his hair short and brown; his clothes are well made but he wears them without grace. He doesn't really like any of the other members of the Stormblades except Annah, with whom he's been in not-so-secret-lust for many years. He endures Zachary and Cora's presence only because Annah seems to prefer their company. Todd's real parents are dead; his adoptive parents have little time for him and if he gets in trouble, they only respond because society demands it. If he were to disappear, they wouldn't be broken hearted.

☛ **Zachary Aslaxin II, Male Human Ari1/Rgr2/Clr1:** CR 3; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 4d8; hp 18; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14; BAB +2; Grap +3; Atk +3 melee (1d6+1/18–20, masterwork rapier) and +2 melee (1d4, masterwork kukri), or +6 ranged (1d8+1, masterwork mighty composite longbow [+1 Str]); SA combat style (two-weapon fighting), spells, favored enemy (humanoid—reptilian +2); SQ turn undead, wild empathy; AL CN; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +7; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 8, Wis 14, Cha 13.

Skills: Concentration +6, Diplomacy +4, Heal +5, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +3, Survival +8.

Feats: Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (kukri), Track, Weapon Focus (rapier)

Spells Prepared (3/2+1, base DC = 12 + spell level): 0—*guidance*, *mending*, *purify food and drink*. 1—*cause fear*, *entropic shield**, *shield of faith*.

***Domain Spell.** **Domains:** Luck (reroll 1/day), Strength (feat of strength 1/day).

Languages: Common.

Possessions: Masterwork chain shirt, masterwork rapier, masterwork kukri, masterwork mighty composite longbow [+1 Str] with 20 masterwork arrows, *wand of cure light wounds* (10 charges), *wand of light* (35 charges), *pearl of power* (1st level), noble's outfit, silver holy symbol, leather pouch containing 7 gp.

Zachary is probably the most level-headed member of the Stormblades, perhaps because of his newfound faith in Kord. Although he has yet to fully embrace the teachings of the deity, in time he might repent his callous ways and turn to a less troublesome life. He has been with Cora for several months now, since before the Stormblades were founded, but lately he's been finding her rough nature tiresome and annoying. Annah has increasingly caught his eye of late, and before long he plans to dump Cora and try to court the bard. Zachary is tall and ruggedly handsome, with a well-trimmed beard and curly dark brown hair. His parents run a high-class inn named "The Coy Nixie" near the eastern gate of Cauldron; if he comes to harm, they are the most likely to hire assassins to seek vengeance.

Ad-hoc XP Award: Award full experience points to the party if they manage to roleplay through a confrontation with the Stormblades and avoid getting into a fight with them. Naturally, if they later attack and defeat the Stormblades after this, they should not receive XP points for the combat since the threat had already been neutralized.

