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## FOR TYRANNY OF DRAGONS



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## **Springboard Adventures**

#### FOR TYRANNY OF DRAGONS STORYLINE

This guide helps a Dungeon Master review the adventure books from the Tyranny of Dragons storyline, take an inventory of key elements and re-use the material for new and interesting encounters. In addition, this guide provides eight Departure Points to start your new adventures from the storyline and provides a baker's dozen worth of outlines for Springboard Adventures.

#### **BY TROY E. TAYLOR**

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What adventure books are on your bookshelf? EXPEDITION TO THE RUINS of Return to the Temple of Eleme MONSTER MANUAL **PLAYER'S HANDBOOI DUNGEON MASTER'S GUIDE** HOARD OF THE DRAGON QUEED HE RISE OF TIAMA Do not let VILLAIN DESIGN HAND DUNGEON MASTER'S GUID VEVERWINTER" CAMPAIGN SETTI ITEN REALMS" C them collect PLAYER'S HANDB MONSTER MAN dyst. Consider using ntal Evi Hem again!



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PLAYING DUNGEONS AND Dragons requires a considerable expense. Setting aside the costs for the

core rule bo.oks, a Dungeon Master who ran *Tyranny of Dragons* from its two adventure books had to dig deep *Hoard of the Dragon Queen* and *The Rise of Tiamat* are both 96page hardcover adventure books. Each retailed at \$29.95 in the

United States.

#### **Months of Fun**

Now, I'm not saying the expense wasn't worth it. My group got months and months of play out of each, going from Greenest to the Well of Dragons. It was great fun. We shared a lot of laughs and were thrilled by our characters' heroic deeds.

But you know what? You can still squeeze some more value out of the books. That's right. Before you put that \$59.90 worth of tomes on your shelf to collect dust, consider utilizing them for **Springboard Adventures**.

#### What's a Springboard

#### **ADVENTURE?**

A **Springboard Adventure** takes a theme, an unexplored aspect or even a reskinning of some portion of an already published adventure, and as the name implies, build additional adventures from it.

Usually it's thought of as a continuation of the storyline. Most published adventures usually conclude with a few paragraphs making suggestions on how the storyline can continue.



In the case of *The Rise of Tiamat*, for instance, now that Tiamat has either triumphed or failed, the DM provides the next chapter: What's next?

While that is one kind of **Springboard Adventure**, it's not really the focus of this product.

To fully utilize the wealth of playable material in these two books, most of what we're going to explore as **Springboard Adventure** opportunities involve encounters for a new group of characters. Maybe they start out at first level, perhaps a few levels higher. That's up to you. The thing is, to make good use of these books again, the characters should be in the power range the books were written for in the first place.

## Check it out

For an example of a sequel-styled Springboard Adventure, check out **DM's Kit: Calimport and the Cult of the Dragon**, that will soon be released on the **DM's Guild** <<u>dmsguild.com</u>>. It's an adventure for 16th level player characters who've just finished **The Rise of Tiamat** adventure. Look for it during Spring 2016.

#### **BENEFITS TO THE "NOVICE"**

#### **DUNGEON MASTER**

Some Dungeon Masters are more comfortable running out of a published adventure than creating one from scratch. I certainly fall into that category.

Or perhaps you started *Tyranny of Dragons* as a novice Dungeon Master, and the first place you turned was to a published adventure. As Fifth Edition was a new set of rules, that's natural. Congratulations for taking that step. Being a Dungeon Master is a rewarding part of play.

By using *Tyranny* as a **Springboard**, a "novice" DM (though anyone who has run *Tyranny* can no longer rightly be called a true "novice") need not feel like they have to start fresh. The books provide support material — a lot of it, in fact.

Don't know how to create a random encounter chart? That's OK. Use the one on Page 7 of *Hoard* and expand on it. Never made a magic item before? Take the *Wand of Winter* on Page 94 and tweak it. There are relevant suggestions in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* on how to do those things.

Let the adventure books serve as guides on how to construct **Springboard Adventures** of your own. It's a good way to grow your skills and confidence.

#### A TIME TO HEAL, A TIME TO PLAN

Everything has its season, so says the poet. And that's just as true regarding a roleplaying campaign as it is other things in life. There's really no need to **Springboard** straight from the



conclusion of *Rise* into the adventure we will devise.

It's probably a good thing to let a little time pass. Players will need time to digest the consequences of the campaign. They may even have an appetite for a different sort of adventure. Absence makes the heart grow fonder, after all.

Make good use of the time in the interim to survey the two books, find the bits you want to use. Be as thorough as you can.

And after the players at your table have gone off to fight space battles, explore the Underdark or dodge a certain vengeful vampire lord, then they might be longing to revisit the Sword Coast and confront its many dragon-allied nemeses.

Then is a good time to unveil this sequel or spinoff to the original *Tyranny of Dragons*. They will even thank you for anticipating their desire.

## A tradition of replay

The approach I'm exploring in this product, re-using a published adventure, is far from new. A whole generation of Dungeon Masters once took adventures such as **In Search of the Unknown**, **Keep on the Borderlands, The Isle of Dread** and **Castle Amber** and mined their contents again and again for new play opportunities. And those modules were no larger than 32 pages.

But their approach, making the most of those modules' component parts and using them to launch new adventures, remains tried and true.



THE FIRST OBLIGATION IS to review the adventures for unused material.

Perhaps it was one of the side quests from "On the Road" in Episode 4 of *Hoard* or perhaps a whole chapter, such as "Mission to Thay" in Episode 8 of *Rise*. It could also be NPCs, monsters or magic items that you didn't encounter or use. Perhaps it was a random chart that didn't seem to fit. Only you, as a DM, can answer that question.

Basically, anything that your group skipped over is fair game for the

**Springboard**. Use the chart on this page to list anything and everything that didn't get used the first time.

It's not that all we will be doing is stringing together a kitbash of unused things to make an adventure. Some of the things on your list may still go unused. That's up to you. It is a good idea to know the elements your players haven't seen.

(It's also a good idea to make a list of your players' favorite things, and use them again.)

## Unused adventure elements

From Hoard	Page	From Rise	Page

#### THE MAPS

The next thing to get a handle on is the number and kind of maps at your disposal. For convenience, I've made a list of them. While looking at that, I made a notation on each one's possible re-use. For maps, count among your resources those maps printed in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. Specifically, I am going to call out the unkeyed settlement map on Page 115 and the maps in Appendix C starting on Page 310. Don't hesitate to consider their future use.

Map Survey for Hoard	Page	Possible new use
The Sword Coast	4	Lots of blank spaces to place own base town, encounter areas
Greenest	10	Can serve as a generic town or as a rebuilt Greenest. lots of unmarked buildings to key as you would wish
Raider camp	16	Any valley or hollowed out settlement.
Dragon Hatchery	23	Basic cavernous retreat re-keyed
Carnath Roadhouse	41	Can stand for any roadhouse along the Trade Way
Castle Naerytar, ground level	51	Fortress and surrounding swamp
Castle Naerytar, Level 2	55	Can serve as 2nd floor or as an underground dungeon map
Castle Naerytar, Level 3	58	Can serve as 3rd floor, as as a dungeon map
Castle Naerytar, Dungeon	60	cavern complex; clearings near a lake/glade
Hunting Lodge, ground floor	66	any sort of border fortress, remote school
Hunting Lodge, upper floor	70	same
Parnast	73	Hamlet map
Skyreach Castle	76	Another sky city or possibly a mountaintop fortress.

Map Survey for Rise	Page	Possible new use
Arauthator's Iceberg	31	Any dungeon, any dragon or monster's lair
Tome of Diderius	40	Dungeon or mining complex
Neronvain's Stronghold	51	Any cavern or dragon lair
Xonthal's Tower	65	Traditional maze, tower with floors, small underground dungeon
Well of Dragons	80	Mountain city
Tiamat's Temple	84	Small island

#### **Monsters and NPCs**

I've provided a list by challenge rating of monsters and unique NPCs with stat blocks that appear in the appendix section of both books. Unique NPCs are always good to re-use. Just scratch off the name and assign a new one instant, brand-new character!

### Monsters

**CR: 1/2** Ambush Drake, p. 88 H

**CR 1** Dragonclaw, p 89 H, p. 89 R Ice Toad, p. 90 R

**CR 2** Guard Drake, p. 91 H, p. 90 R Dragonwing, p. 90 R

**CR 5** Dragonfang, p. 89 R

**CR 7** Dragonsoul, p. 89 R

## NPCs

**CR 1** Jamna Gleamsilver, gnome, p. 91 H

**CR 2** Frulam Mondath, human spellcaster, p. 90 H

#### CR 3

Dralmorrer Borngray, high elf spellcaster, p 90 H Pharblex Spattergood, bullywug, p. 91 H

#### CR 4

Azbara Jos,. human spellcaster, p. 88 H Langdedrosa Cyanwrath, half-dragon warrior, p. 91 H

#### CR 5

Captain Othelstan, human warrior, p. 89 H Talis the White, half-elf spellcaster, p. 93 H

**CR 6** Rath Modar, human spellcaster, p. 92 H and p. 91 R

**CR 7** Rezmir, half-black dragon, p 93 H

**CR9** Blagothkus, cloud giant, p. 89 H Neronvain, elf warrior, p. 91 R

#### CR 11

Naergoth Bladelord, undead, p. 91 R Severin, human spellcaster, p. 92 R

**CR 30** Tiamat, dragon fiend, p. 92

#### **Other Encounter Charts**

*Hoard* and *Rise* have a fair share of randomized charts. Having a list is good for easy reference. It doesn't preclude you from making your own or on expanding on these.

#### Hoard

Episode 1 Encounters, p. 7 Episode 3 Encounters, p. 21 Hiring Out, p 31 Trade Way Events, p. 34 Encounters North of Waterdeep, p. 40 Mere of Dead Men Encounters, p. 44

#### Rise

Sea of Moving Ice Encounters, p. 26 Ice Caves Encounters, p. 30 Serpent Hills Encounters, p. 39 First Attack Cult Forces, p. 55 Second Attack Cult Forces, p. 55 Third Attack Cult Forces, p. 56





THERE ARE PLACES IN THE adventure narrative that serve as good spots the DM can use to start their **Springboard Adventure.** This is especially true in *Hoard* for low-level parties.

Consider these departure points as places to begin new adventures.

#### **Rebuilding Greenest**

The attack on Greenest was devastating. The town's mill, temple to Chauntea, and even portions of the keep will need to be repaired, if not reconstructed. Many dwellings, stores and workshops were also probably destroyed. Moreover, the town was robbed of what few riches it possessed. Even if a portion of the treasure was recovered from the cult, it is insufficient for the task of rebuilding.

It is the PC's new mission to help, with the town serving as the party's base.

This will be a "frontier-style" adventure arc. In the vast grasslands of the Western Heartlands, Greenest is fairly isolated. Even before the Cult of the Dragon began attacking settlements, the lands between the sparsely populated villages was filled with dangerous adversaries.

#### **SCATTERED TO THE FOUR WINDS**

The Cult of the Dragon is on the run, most of its forces defeated at the Well of Dragons. Even so, the sort of folk who might join the cult out of fear, intimidation or a desire to inflict dominance over others are still out there.

In this campaign, the PCs embark on a quest to track down the remnants of the cult. Some cultists will try to blend in among the common folk in the surrounding country.

Others, though, will have to be pursued to the major cities of the Sword Coast. In the



underbelly of these urban areas, cultists are trying to form new cult cells.

As time passes, the cult will replentish its resources and its members will grow in power.

#### The Road North

There are many locations and opportunities on the long road from Baldur's Gate to Neverwinter to branch off and seek adventure.

In many instances, the PCs will aid rural local folk beset by marauders, bandits and reavers. But goblins and orcs that come down from the high places might also assail travelers and villages.

Carnath Roadhouse provides a solid location that can serve as a base of operations for the PCs. Instead of being a den for cultists, it can be a waystation from which deputized marshals can patrol the trade route and set things right in an otherwise lawless environment.

#### **GREYPEAK WARDENS**

After bringing order to Parnast, the PCs can reclaim the Hunting Lodge and from there act as one of the few agents of law and order in the Greypeak Mountains.

The challenges of defending Parnast can certainly be daunting. The Greypeaks are home to stone giants, worg packs and dragons. The latter might be a reason former cultists might try to regain their footing here. The area is isolated, and cultists might not believe there are adventurers in the region capable or inclined to try and stop them.

#### WATERDEEP TROUBLESHOOTERS

Harper leaders Leosin Erlanthar or Remallia Haventree have need of adventurers who can form a team of agents available to be dispatched at a moment's notice.

Based in cosmopolitan Waterdeep, these "firefighting" teams are dispatched to strongholds and cities vital to the Lord's Alliance and work through means subtle and straightforward to resolve the latest political crisis.

Likewise, Ontharr Frume and the Order of the Gauntlet might assemble a similiar unit. However, in the latter case, the team would be dispatched when it is certain that a martial solution is needed.

#### A MINTARN ODYSSEY

The PCs are veterans of the battle at the Well of the Dragon who only wish to return home. Perhaps they were attached to a group of Mintarn mercenaries that have their base back in Neverwinter. Perhaps they were infantry in support of Purple Dragon Knights based in Cormyr. Perhaps they are Thayan allies, facing even a longer voyage.

Thus, they begin the long trek. Shall they go by sea or land? But are the gods against them? What forces are being employed to delay and torment these soldiers? Most certainly, they will have adventures along the way. The journey home is never so simple.



#### **THAY IN THE FRAY**

The presence of so many Thayan Red Wizards within the Cult of the Dragon is most troubling to the new Open Lord, Laeral Silverhand.

Even while maintaining an uneasy alliance with Thay, Waterdeep's leadership is vigiliant against infiltration of their society by the eastern power's agents. Assembling a team of magic users and adventurers with other skills, Silverhand would direct them to investigate reports of Thayan intrusion, all the while entreating with their emissaries and using the same team to shore up those relations.

#### **FROSTSKIMMR'S NEW CREW**

*Frostskimmr*'s captain, Lerustah Half-face, thinks there are riches to be had by voyaging up the Shaengarne River into the Maer Dualdon. There is trade to be made in the Ten Towns region of Icewind Dale.

But he needs a sturdy crew that's not afraid to leave the ship and go exploring overland.

It's an opportunity for cultist bounty hunters to visit Bryn Shander and the other remote locations in the north. Even in the far north, cultists who fled the Well of Dragons are plotting their next move.





EACH **Springboard Adventure** is presented in the form of adventure outline. Each adventure includes a short description, a list of resources from *Hoard* or *Rise* that could be applied to it. Lastly, there are suggestions of other elements, such as monsters or treasure that can be used to enhance your adventures.

#### **Delegation to Scornubel**

Greenest leader Governor Tarbaw Nighthill sends a delegation of leading citizens, including the chief priest of the temple of Chauntea (who repeatedly counsels that "no deal is better than a bad deal") and the player characters, to negotiate loans and other financial assistance from Scornubel's merchant princes so that Greenest can rebuild.

**Locale(s):** Scornubel, wilderness between the City of Caravans and Greenest.

**Adversaries:** Grasslands monsters (*DMG*, p. 303), such as cockatrice, giant goat, hobgoblins, and gnolls; nobles and bandit captains (as merchant princes), thugs (merchant muscle), and spies (Zhentarim agents).

**Story goal:** Navigate waters of financial sharks, avoid bad deals that require Zhentarim entanglements, obligations or indebtedness on the part of Greenest.

**Rewards:** Investment from reputable persons; shore up reputation of town and its citizens.

#### **TRACK DOWN SWINDLERS**

Penniless townsfolk come to the governor with grim news. Burly workers came to Greenest

offering to help rebuild. But they demanded payment up front. Now they've run off with our money! Despite being angry with the townsfolk for being dupes, the governor also thinks such scoundrels should be severely punished. The PCs are dispatched to track down flim-flam artists, who were on the road south, according to reports. The PCs will track them to a bandit encampment.

**Locale(s):** Greenest and surrounding wilderness, raider encampment (map *HotDQ*, p. 16)

**Adversaries:** Bandits and thugs, former cultists; Grasslands monsters (*DMG*, p. 303).

**Story goal:** Recover the money, or at least a portion of it; apprehend the guilty to face justice in Greenest; make sure Greenest establishes a reputation for prosecuting those who would commit fraud.

**Rewards:** Gratitude of governor and townsfolk; an offer to join goodly factions, such as the Harpers or the the Order of the Gauntlet.

#### LUMBER IN SHORT SUPPLY

The governor makes a direct appeal to Elturel for permission to obtain lumber from The Wood of Sharp Teeth so residents might rebuild the town, including a palisade to discourage attacks.

**Locale(s):** Greenest, road to Elturel, The Wood of Sharp Teeth.

**Adversaries:** Forest monsters (DMG, p. 302), such as kobolds, tribal warriors, giant wolf spider, panther, black bear, and hobgoblins.

**Story goal:** "Reconstruct" Greenest, placing new buildings on the Greenest map (HotDQ, p. 10) or keying existing ones using the Settlement charts (DMG p. 112).

**Rewards:** As defenders, the townfolk insist on building a lodge for the players characters in an unclaimed area of town.

#### LUSKAN OR BUST

Remallia Haventree, heir to the Ulbrinter shipping operation, hires adventurers to protect their ships from pirates and seagoing monsters in the northern waters off Luskan.

**Locale(s):** Seacoast between Waterdeep and Luskan, ghost town of Port Llast, including the islands of Ruathym and Aurilssbarg.

**Adversaries:** Pirates and pirate ships; merfolk, giant octopus,ghost, sahuagin priestess, sea hag, killer whale, dragon turtle and dragons.

**Story goal:** Make Ulbrinter shipping an unappealing target and dismantle at least one Luskan controlled pirate enterprise.

**Rewards:** Pirate booty, support from Waterdeep merchants and lawful seagoers; recover Horn of Valhalla.

#### A TEAR IN THE SEAM

Neverwinter lord protector, Dagult Neverember, asks the PCs to investigate a possible "tear" in the seam over the former spellplague chasm in the city's southeast quarter following sightings of aberrant monsters in those neighborhoods.

**Locale(s):** Neverwinter; intact dungeon deep down beneath the seam (*DMG*, p. 312).

**Adversaries:** Aberrations and undead, including chull, grell, banshee, hook horror, intellect devourer, nothic and mind flayer.

**Story goal:** Clear out the dungeon beneath the seam, prevent aberrations from terrorizing this quarter of the city.

**Rewards:** Gratitude of Lord Nevember, emnity of the Abolethic Sovereignty for destroying its new "staging area." Recover artifact valued by Dwarves.

#### **Ogre Foothold**

An ogre tribe under the direction of a oni chieftain has gained a foothold and is threatening villages and merchant trains along the High Road, requiring a response from a team based at the Carnath Roadhouse.

**Locale(s):** Carnath Roadhouse (*HotDQ*, p. 41); for lair re-key the Dragon Hatchery map (*HotDQ*, p. 23).

**Adversaries:** oni chieftain, half-ogres, ogres, allied orc and orog bandits.

**Story goal:** Eradicate the ogre stronghold so that merchant trains between Waterdeep and Neverwinter can take the High Road unmolested.

**Rewards:** Gain recognition from the Order of the Gauntlet, Zhentarim merchants or Neverwinter's authorities.

#### **BEAST LORDS OF THE HIGH FOREST**

Pixie emissary to The Emerald Enclave requests assistance, saying a growing tribe lycanthropes and other beasts roam unchecked in the High Forest because there are so few rangers in the aftermath of the assault on the Well of Dragons.

**Locale(s):** High Forest, village of Nesme. **Adversaries:** Lycanthropes, owlbear, manticore, and allied warbands of bugbears and gnolls.

**Story goal:** Force the lycanthropes to disband, put down the menace posed by gnoll and bugbear allies.

**Rewards:** Restore balance to the forest, earn the gratitude of the Emerald Enclave and of Delaan Winterhound.

#### **STARGAZERS OF CASTLE NAERYTAR**

The recently liberated Castle Naerytar has been reclaimed by the Academy of Stargazers. The stargazers have learned how to use the portal beneath the castle as a teleporter, using it to dispatch "firefighting" teams to locations across the Sword Coast to do acts of good.

**Locale(s):** Castle Naerytar (*HotDQ*, pg. 51, 55, 60), sites across the Sword Coast

**Adversaries:** Thayan mages and their undead minions; chromatic dragons that hold sway over remote areas.

**Story goal:** Accept orders from the Stargazers and perform trouble-shooting missions across the Sword Coast, disrupting the influence of Thayan Red Wizards and their minions.

**Rewards:** Acquire and keep safe the legendary magic items the Thayans desire.

#### **Discord in Silverymoon**

During a period of uncertainty and unrest accompanying the war of the Dragon Queen, a dissident group of bards are working to discredit and undermine Silverymoon's rulers, such as Taern "Thunderspells" Hornblade.

**Locale(s):** Silverymoon; nearby walled town of Washedberm (*DMG*, p. 114).

**Adversaries:** A secret society of bards, druids and rangers and a few wizards who are dissatisfied with Silverymoon's rulers. Because they operate in secret, they live openly in the nearby town.

**Story goal:** Root out the troublemakers, many of whom are well-respected members of the Washedberm community. Disrupt their master plot to overthrow Silverymoon's rulers.

**Rewards:** Gratitude of Silverymoon's elite and any of the surviving Seven Sisters.

#### **AXE TO GRIND**

Adventurers out of Ten Towns and other places are searching for legendary dwarven weapon, an axe linked to Mithral Hall's founding. Brawnanvil can't bear the thought of this artifact ending up as some adventurer's prize, but in the aftermath of the attack on the Well of Dragons, he hasn't the men to spare on a treasure hunt.

**Locale(s):** Mithral Hall; old dwarf dungeon hold that was recently re-opened (*DMG*, p. 113).

**Adversaries:** Underdark creatures (*DMG*, p. 305), including drow, drow elite warriors, driders, drow mages.

**Story goal:** Explore the dungeon, return with the legendary magical axe.

**Rewards:** Loot from explorations, magic weapon.

#### LADY SILVERHAND'S LIGHT TOUCH

Intelligence reports indicate a cell dedicated to the Cult of the Dragon is meeting in an underground location somewhere in the Dock Ward. The City Watch has been dispatched, but they haven't turned up anything.

**Locale(s):** Waterdeep, a cult safehouse (*TRoT*, Tomb of Diderius map, p. 40), and Waterdeep's Field of Triumph.



**Adversaries:** Cultists, dragonclaws, dragonfangs, dragonwings and dragonsoul minions of an undead cult leader (use Naegoth Bladelord stats, *TRoT*, p. 90) and a dracolich or great dragon.

**Story goal:** Stop the cult's underhanded strike on the Field of Triumph. The cult intends to disrupt a sporting event and cause the death of bystanders.

**Reward:** Thanks of the city and the personal gratitude of the Lords of Waterdeep, including Lady Silverhand.

#### **GOING GOTHIC**

Sandesyl the vampire queen and Cult of the Dragon ally has reestablished herself in a mountaintop fortress in a remote and isolated section of the Greypeak mountains.

**Locale(s):** mountaintop fortress and nearby village (maps of Parnast and Skyreach Castle, *HotDQ*, ppg. 73, 76).

**Adversaries:** All the traditional vampire lord tropes, villagers who live in fear, a surrounding wilderness filled with werewolves and other creatures of the night, interloping troop of the traveling folk, a mad scientist conducting experiments in a forlorn castle, and of course, the machinations of a vampire queen who is very secure in her power base, a castle.

**Story goal:** Stop the vampire from reestablishing the Cult of the Dragon along its traditional lines.

**Rewards:** The ancient treasure horde of the vampire in a dungeon deep beneath the Hunting Lodge.



## **DM'S KIT**

## **Springboard Adventures** for the Tyranny of Dragons Storyline

A frugal Dungeon Master is here to help you get more out of the adventure books, Hoard of the Dragon Queen and The Rise of Tiamat, even after you've played through them once.

Both books are packed with resources that can be used again in whole new adventures.

This guide provides ideas for making Springboard Adventures, how to make a inventory of a published adventures resources, lists of Departure Points for a new set of adventurers and a baker's dozen worth of outlines for new adventures within the Tyranny of Dragons storyline.