

APPENDIX A: LINKED ADVENTURES

Wizards of the Coast has published other D&D adventures that can serve as springboards for *Storm King's Thunder*, not only getting characters to 5th level but also directing the characters toward one of the three locations described in chapter 2. If any of the characters are affiliated with a faction, such as the Harpers, you can guide them toward Bryn Shander, Goldenfields, or Triboar by having a representative of that faction give them a quest. With the growing threat of giants in the North, the quest might be as straightforward as protecting the location against a possible giant attack.

LOST MINE OF PHANDELVER

Lost Mine of Phandelver is an adventure in the *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Starter Set*, designed to take characters from 1st to 5th level. Characters who complete it are at the right level to begin *Storm King's Thunder*, and Triboar is their ideal starting point (see chapter 2). The trick is to get them from Phandalin to Triboar, which lies east along a trail that cuts across grasslands and foothills. You can simply declare that the party makes the uneventful journey, or you can offer some reason why they would want to visit Triboar. The town is a good place for them to resupply, upgrade their gear, sell their loot, and find new adventures. If those aren't reasons enough, here are a few hooks tied to NPCs in Phandalin that you can use to direct the characters toward Triboar.

LIONSHIELD DELIVERY

Linene Graywind, who runs the trading post in Phandalin on behalf of a mercantile company, the Lionshield Coster, has a colleague, Alaestra Ulgar, who lives in Triboar with her business partner, Narth Tezrin. Linene has written a letter to her friend, describing recent tribulations in Phandalin, and asks the characters to deliver it. In a note attached to the letter, Linene asks Alaestra to reward her messengers with an old gray bag stitched with animal designs. This item is a gray *bag of tricks*.

A DEMANDING LETTER

Harbin Wester, the pompous town master of Phandalin, asks the characters to deliver a letter to Darathra Shendrel, the lord protector of Triboar. In the letter, Harbin demands that the lord protector do a better job of patrolling the territory between their two settlements. He reprimands Darathra for allowing orcs to infest the hills near Phandalin. Unknown to Harbin, Darathra is a member of the Harpers. She gives the characters 50 gp for having the guts to deliver the condescending letter.

ZHENTARIM CONNECTION

The guildmaster of the Phandalin Miner's Exchange, Halia Thornton, works for the Zhentarim. If the characters impress her, she recommends that they contact Urlam Stockspool in Triboar. Urlam is always looking for adventurers to help further the Black Network's cause, and Halia vouches that "his rewards for good service are lavish." She tells the characters to look for Urlam at the office of the Triboar Travelers, a caravan company, in the heart of town.

HOARD OF THE DRAGON QUEEN

Hoard of the Dragon Queen is the first of a two-part adventure in the Tyranny of Dragons story, which deals with the rise of evil dragons and their attempt to free Tiamat from the Nine Hells. If you use *Hoard of the Dragon Queen* as a springboard into this adventure, you must change the timing of events so that the Tyranny of Dragons story and the events that precipitate *Storm King's Thunder* happen concurrently, with Annam the All-Father breaking the ordning to stir the giants before Tiamat is brought into the world.

Early in *Hoard of the Dragon Queen*, the characters join a caravan traveling from Baldur's Gate to Waterdeep. By the time they reach Waterdeep, they should be 5th level. You can use the party's arrival in Waterdeep to shift attention away from the Tyranny of Dragons story by dropping reports of giant sightings near the temple-farm of Goldenfields. The Emerald Enclave is looking for adventurers to help patrol Goldenfields' borders. If the characters take the bait, Goldenfields becomes the starting point for this adventure (see chapter 2). Although you forgo the last half of *Hoard of the Dragon Queen* in favor of this new adventure, there's nothing stopping you from returning to *Hoard of the Dragon Queen* and its sequel, *The Rise of Tiamat*, later.

The climax of *Hoard of the Dragon Queen* takes place in Skyreach Castle, a flying fortress belonging to a cloud giant, Blagothkus. You can make him a pivotal figure in this adventure by having his castle appear when the characters are around 7th or 8th level, giving them a chance to meet the evil cloud giant and convince him to aid their cause. The characters might also want to confront him after meeting the ghost of his dead son, Eigeron, in chapter 4, "The Chosen Path." The shattering of the ordning has the following effects on Blagothkus:

- The cloud giant is eager to dispose of his Cult of the Dragon allies, use their money to buy the loyalty of lesser giants, and wage war against dragonkind. If the characters help him rid Skyreach Castle of the cultists and their white dragon ally, the giant pledges to help them in return and offers them one-third of the cult's spoils. Blagothkus honors his agreements as long as the characters pose no threat to him and he gets his way. If they have an airship with Cult of the Dragon members aboard (see the "Airship of a Cult" section in chapter 4), these cultists ally with the ones aboard Skyreach Castle.
- Blagothkus knows that King Hekaton has disappeared and suspects that dragons are somehow responsible. Although he has no proof to corroborate his suspicions, Blagothkus sees dragon conspiracies everywhere and is convinced that evil dragons would pounce on the chance to throw giant society into chaos. Although he's eager to see the ordning restored with cloud giants at its apex, he can be convinced to use his flying fortress to help the characters locate King Hekaton if he's told that one or more dragons orchestrated the king's abduction.

- Although they share a disdain for dragons, Blagothkus and Countess Sansuri are bitter rivals. If the characters intend to confront Sansuri (see chapter 9, “Castle of the Cloud Giants”), Blagothkus offers to join the characters and help them thwart her machinations so that he, not she, can win the favor of the gods and elevate cloud giants to the top of the ordning.

Blagothkus bears no ill will toward small folk, but his desire to rekindle the ancient war between giants and dragons could have devastating consequences for small folk settlements up and down the Sword Coast.

PRINCES OF THE APOCALYPSE

Princes of the Apocalypse is a stand-alone adventure that takes place in and around the Sember Hills in the Dessarin Valley, a lightly settled region of caravan towns, isolated homesteads, and wilderness. Four evil elemental cults have taken refuge there and are building secret temples in the ruins of a dungeon complex beneath the hills. By the time the characters reach 5th level, they will have visited several settlements in the valley, explored ruins in the Sember Hills, and defeated a number of low- to middle-rank elemental cultists.

You can transition the characters from *Princes of the Apocalypse* to this adventure by having them defend the town of Triboar from a giant attack. In this scenario, Triboar becomes the starting point for this adventure (see chapter 2), and the characters are pulled away from the threat of Elemental Evil to focus on the giant threat instead. Here are a few hooks to lure the characters to Triboar, if they aren't there already.

HARPER SYMPATHIZER

Endrith Vallivoe, a retired caravan merchant living in the village of Red Larch, is friendly toward the Harpers. If he suspects or knows that one or more characters have ties to the Harpers, he urges them to speak to Darathra Shendrel, the lord protector of Triboar. He doesn't reveal that she's a Harper, but he's certain that she has need of adventurers in these “troubled times.”

ERRANT PRIEST

A priest of Helm, Silvarren Loomshank, is scheduled to relieve Imdarr Relvauder, one of the priests at the Allfaiths Shrine in Red Larch. Silvarren is several days overdue, however, and Imdarr overheard a rumor that Silvarren is getting drunk nightly at the Talking Troll, a tavern in Triboar. Imdarr asks the characters to verify this rumor and, if it is true, to urge Silvarren to pull himself together and fulfill his obligations.

HOMESTEADS IN PERIL

Herivin Dardragon, the halfling proprietor of the Harvest Inn in the town of Westbridge, has received reports that ogres and hill giants are pillaging farms along the Long Road between Westbridge and Triboar. Characters who head north to investigate can see that the reports are true. At one damaged farm, the characters encounter halflings who lost an orchard of olive trees and most of their livestock to hill giants. The Skittermarsh clan has gathered its remaining livestock (a sickly cow and four hungry goats) and packed its belongings on three

USING THE ELEMENTAL CULTS

Here are examples of how you can weave *Princes of the Apocalypse* and *Storm King's Thunder* together by having cultists aid the giants, as a way to hide their own plans:

- The Cult of the Black Earth sends cultists to Deadstone Cleft (see chapter 6, “Canyon of the Stone Giants”). They provide Thane Kayalithica and her stone giants with information on the defensive capabilities of nearby settlements and offer to help lay waste to them. The cultists might know about the earth primordial trapped under Deadstone Cleft and want to communicate with it.
- The Cult of the Eternal Flame helps Duke Zalto and his drow allies (see chapter 8, “Forge of the Fire Giants”) steal Maegera, the fire primordial trapped in Gauntlgrym. The cultists believe that the fire primordial is the offspring of Imix, the Prince of Evil Fire, whom they worship as a god.
- The Cult of the Howling Hatred, after witnessing several cloud giant castles drifting in the skies over the Sword Coast, sends representatives to meet with the cloud giants and learn their intentions. Countess Sansuri is fascinated by the cult's ability to create *devastation orbs* and wants a demonstration. Characters who visit her castle (see chapter 9, “Castle of the Cloud Giants”) might encounter a team of air cultists with a *devastation orb* in their possession.
- The Cult of the Crushing Wave might help Chief Guh and her hill giants dam the river that runs alongside her den (see chapter 5, “Den of the Hill Giants”). Water cultists might also be helping the Kraken Society guard King Hekaton (see chapter 11, “Caught in the Tentacles”).

mules with the intention of relocating to Triboar. The family matriarch, Misty Skittermarsh, offers the characters a 100 gp gem if they escort her family to Triboar.

OUT OF THE ABYSS

Out of the Abyss takes place almost entirely in the Underdark, a subterranean expanse of caverns, tunnels, fissures, and lakes. The characters start the adventure as prisoners of the drow and, after escaping their captors, make their way to the surface. If they succeed, they are contacted by King Bruenor Battlehammer of Gauntlgrym and asked to lead an expedition back down into the Underdark, to deal with a terrible demonic threat.

If you run that adventure as written, the characters are 8th level or thereabouts when they reach Gauntlgrym. You can plan to have them surface when they reach 5th level instead, then segue from *Out of the Abyss* to *Storm King's Thunder*. Because this adventure takes place in the lands directly above the locations in *Out of the Abyss*, you can have the characters surface near one of the three locations in chapter 2.

Once the characters become embroiled in the affairs of giants, you might want to play down the demonic threat in the Underdark. Or you can move back and forth between the two adventures, giving players the option of accepting Bruenor's quest to descend into the Underdark before returning to the surface to deal with the giants. In the latter case, it's likely that the characters will be higher level than normal, but you can make the encounters in this adventure more challenging to compensate (see the “Modifying Encounter Difficulty” section in chapter 3 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*).