

URC2-04



NIMAR'S SECRET

A One-Round D&D[®] LIVING GREYHAWK[®]
County of Urnst Regional Adventure

Version 2

by Tim Creese

RPGA HQ reviewers: Christopher Lindsay and Stephen Radney-MacFarland

This adventure is part four in a continuing series that explores the Crystal Springs, an odd crystal laden area of upwelling waters that begin the Franz River. *Mysteries of Crystal Springs, Part IV*. An adventure for characters level 3-8.

Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS[®] rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, and Peter Adkison.

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This is an RPGA Network scenario for the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game. Most sanctioned events delegate a four-hour time block for each round of this scenario, with actual playing time will around three hours. The rest of the time is spent in preparation before game play, and reward distribution and scoring after the game. The following guidelines are here to help you with both the preparation and voting segment of the game. Read this page carefully so that you know and can communicate to your players the special aspects of playing an RPGA scenario.

PREPARATION

First, print this scenario. This scenario was created to support double-sided printing, but printing it single sided works as well. There is enough room along the inside margin to bind the adventure, if you desire.

Read this entire adventure at least once before running the event Familiarize yourself with any special rules, spells, or equipment presented in the adventure. It may help to highlight particularly important passages.

When you run an RPGA D&D adventure we assume that you have access to the following books: the *Player's Handbook*, the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*. We also assume that you have a set of dice (at least one d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, and d20), some scrap paper, a pencil, an RPGA scoring packet, and your sense of fun. It's also a good idea to have a way to track movement during combat. This can be as simple as a pad of graph paper and a pencil, as handy as a vinyl grid map and chits, or as elaborate as resin dungeon walls and miniatures.

Instruct the players either to prepare their characters now, or wait until you read the introduction, depending on the requirements of the scenario described in the introduction.

Keep in mind that you must have at least three players (not counting the DM), for the game session to be a sanctioned RPGA event. You cannot have more than six players participating in the game.

Once you are ready to play, it is handy to instruct each player to place a nametag in front of him or her. The tag should have the player's name at the bottom, and the character's name, race, and gender at the top. This makes it easier for both the players and the DM to keep track of who is playing what character.

The players are free to use the game rules to learn about equipment and weapons their characters are carrying. But, as the DM, you can bar the use of even Core Rulebooks during certain times of play. For example, usually the players are not free to consult the *Dungeon Master's Guide* when confronted with a trap or hazard, or the *Monster Manual* when confronted with a monster.

Text that appears in ***bold italics*** is player information, which you may read aloud or paraphrase as appropriate. Text in appendixes contains important DM notes, for you, offering insight to issues particular to the adventure. Monster and nonplayer character (NPC) statistics are provided with each encounter in abbreviated form. Full monster statistics for standard monsters are provided in the *Monster Manual*, while statistics for unusual monster and unique individuals are profiled in the Appendix at the end

of the adventure. You should review all of these statistics before the game starts to refresh you memory of the creatures' abilities.

SCORING

After the players have completed the scenario or the time allotted to run the scenario has run out, the players and DM score the game. The RPGA has three ways to score its games. Consult your convention coordinator to determine which method to use for this scenario:

1-No-vote scoring: The players write their names and RPGA numbers on the scoring packet grid. You fill in the top of the grid. That is all. No one is rated. This method is used for people who are just playing for fun.

2-Partial scoring: The players rate the game master and the scenario on their player voting sheet, and provide personal information, but don't vote for other players. The game master rates the scenario and completes personal and event information, but does not rate the players as a team or vote for players. This method is used when there is no competition, but the event coordinator wants information on how the DMs are performing, or the game master wants feedback on his or her own performance.

3-Voting: Players and game masters complete the entire packet, including voting for best player. If this method is used, be sure to allow about 15-20 minutes for the players to briefly describe their characters to the other players, and about 5-10 minutes for voting. This method is used when the players want to know who played the "best" amongst the group, or when the adventure is run in tournament format with winners and prizes.

When using voting, rank the players in order of your voting choice while they are completing their forms, so that you are not influenced by their comments on your abilities. It's a good idea to have the players vote while you determine treasure and experience awards for the scenario.

After voting, give the Scoring Packet to your event coordinator.

This is a LIVING GREYHAWK adventure. As a LIVING™ adventure it is expected that players bring their own characters with them. If players do not have a LIVING GREYHAWK character generated, get a copy of the current LIVING GREYHAWK character generation guidelines, and a character sheet from your convention coordinator or the RPGA Web site (www.wizards.com/rpga), and then have any players without a character create one. Once all players have a LIVING GREYHAWK character, play can begin.

Along with the other materials that you are assumed to have in order to run a D&D game, it is also recommended that you have a copy of the LIVING GREYHAWK *Gazetteer*.

LIVING GREYHAWK LEVELS OF PLAY

Because players bring their own characters to LIVING GREYHAWK games, this adventure's challenges are proportioned to the average character level of the character participating in the adventure. To determine the Average Party Level (APL):

1) Determine the character level for each character participating in the adventure.

2) If characters bring animals that have been trained for combat (usually war horses and riding dogs), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (such as animal companions, familiars, a paladin's mounts, and so forth) use the following chart to determine the number of levels you add to the sum above. Add each character's animals separately. A single character may only bring four or fewer animals of this type, and animals with different CRs are added separately.

CR	1	2	3	4
1/4 and 1/6 0	0	0	1	
1/3 and 1/2 0	0	1	1	
1	1	1	2	3
2	2	3	4	5
3	3	4	5	6
4	4	5	6	7

3) Sum the results of 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure-round up.

4) If you are running a table of six characters, add one to that average.

By following these four steps, you have determined the modified APL. Throughout this adventure, APLs categorize the level of challenge that the characters face. APLs are given in even-numbered increments. If the APL of your group falls on an odd number, ask them before the adventure begins whether they would like to play a harder or easier adventure. Based on their choice, use either the higher or the lower adjacent APL.

APL also affects the amount of experience you may gain at the end of an adventure. If your character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the APL that this adventure is played at, that character will receive only half of the experience points awarded for the adventure. This simulates the fact that

either your character was not as challenged as normal, or relied on help by higher-level characters to reach the objectives.

Note: LIVING GREYHAWK adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Three or four, or sometimes even five 1st-level characters may find difficulty with the challenges in a LIVING GREYHAWK adventure. If your group is APL 1 there are three things that you can do to help even the score.

1) Attempt to create a table of six 1st-level characters, or try to enlist higher-level characters to play at that table.

2) Advise characters to buy riding dogs to help protect them, and fight for them. All riding dogs are considered trained to attack. Characters who want their dog to attack they must succeed at a Handle Animal or Charisma check (DC 10). Failure indicates that the animal will not attack that round. This is usually a free action (see *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide* Chapter 2: Characters) that may be attempted each round. If an animal loses half or more hp in a single round it flees, unless another check is successful.

3) A group of APL 1 adventurers who desire an extra hand can "enlist an iconic." The stats for the 1st-level versions of Tordek, Mialec, Lidda and Jozan are given at the end of each adventure. The group may pick one of these characters to joint them on this adventure. The DM controls that NPC.

TIME UNITS AND UPKEEP

This is a standard one-round Regional adventure set in the County of Urnst. All characters playing in region pay one Time Unit to participate in the adventure. Adventures' Standard Upkeep costs 12 gp. Rich Upkeep costs 50 gp, and Luxury Upkeep costs 100 gp. Characters playing out of region pay double these amounts.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND

This adventure is part four in a continuing series that explores the Crystal Springs, an odd crystal laden area of upwelling waters that begin the Franz River.

In part one, players were introduced to Nimar, a sorcerer that has taken the duties of Mayor of Dosselord so that he resides close enough to Crystal Springs do continue his extensive research of unnatural magic that comes from Crystal Springs. Nimar discovered the intentions of some gray dwarves who intended to attack the good peoples of the surface world, and begged adventurers to stop the imminent attack. The heroes thwarted the scouting group of the gray dwarves, and saved the day.

In part two, Ronco Weathertoe, a halfling general store owner, hired the heroes to find the missing mayor. Nimar was found entrapped in a crystal, and the characters had to find a magical chime to free the

sorcerer. The magical chime was hidden near a xorn hatchery in the crystal tunnels beneath Crystal Springs.

In part three, while attending a festival in Dossselford, some heroes investigated earthquakes that centered at Crystal Springs. Delving deeper underground, the adventurers found villages of elementals serving as slaves to “the Masters.” The heroes learned the Masters have been dormant for several thousand years, and had arrived to this area via a crystal spelljamming ship. The heroes made their way to the ship, and activated a cylinder switch that stopped the Masters.

Unknown to the characters, the same cylinder that stopped the earthquakes also released the dormant Masters, lying hidden in the depths of their spelljamming vessel. The Masters, an alien race with sorcerer-like powers slowly woke, and spent months regaining their strength before leaving their ship.

The Masters, angered by the insolent slaves that let mere surface dwellers disturb their ship, have recently attacked the elemental villages, and have begun to carry out their orders, the malicious destruction of this planet's inhabitants.

The Masters have found allies in their short foray into the Underdark. Mind flayers and the drow, common on the home planet of the Masters, were found dwelling in the endless tunnels near crystal springs.

In this adventure, the heroes must find Ronco Weathertoe, his daughter Melinda, and Nimar. Ronco and Melinda went in search of Nimar, fearing he had gotten himself into trouble once again. Nimar's secret is that he is the offspring of a Master that awoke hundreds of years ago, and mated with a woman of the surface world.

Introduction The characters are attending the festival of Growfest. They learn that a man named Verth has wrestled the title of Mayor away from the absent Nimar. Dossselford continues to grow, as more and more people take up residence in the old, rundown buildings on the outskirts of town. The characters must figure out a secret message in a note left by Ronco.

Encounter 1 The passage to the Underdark is blocked by a unique trapped door. The characters must either disarm each of the many traps, or set them off, one by one, to gain access to the crystal tunnels.

Encounter 2 The characters encounter a dying xorn in a room full of slain xorn. A drow elf teleports into this room, not knowing he is arriving into the company of surface dwellers, and attempts to make a hasty retreat.

Encounter 3 The party reach the earth elemental village to find it in ruins. A wounded elemental warns the characters that the Masters have awoken, and that nothing is safe. The elementals provide information on a lone surface dweller (Nimar) that was on the trail of the Masters. Information can also be gotten about two halflings that were on the trail of Nimar.

Encounter 4 Having seen a drow elf earlier in the adventure, the characters encounter an area of darkness along the trail. This globe of darkness conceals a pit trap to foil them.

Encounter 5 A cavern shows signs of magical battle. A lone roper has survived and tries to eat the characters.

Encounter 6 A white dragon and its mate have been slain in a far off cavern that the characters eventually discover after a few days of exploring. There is a juvenile white dragon (or more for higher APLs) that has captured Melinda, and ensnares Ronco just as the adventurers arrive. The heroes must defeat the dragon(s) to save their friends.

Encounter 7 The characters rescue the halflings and learn the secret of Nimar, being of the Masters' bloodline. Depending on the APL, the characters either end the adventure here, escorting Ronco and his daughter back to the surface, or at higher APLs they may continue to search for Nimar.

Encounter 8 The characters find an unconscious Nimar, and the creature(s) that caused him harm. Mind flayers and Masters battle the heroes.

Encounter 9 Nimar recovers and the characters help him return to the surface. During this trek of many days, Nimar informs the characters of the Master's plan to lead a force of mind flayers and drow to attack Dossselford.

Conclusion Nimar asks if the characters can aid him in the defense of his town. The attack on Dossselford takes place in part five, not during this adventure.

INTRODUCTION

The festival of Growfest has brought you to the eastern town of Dossselford. Spring has the promise of a good year for crops, as there have been ample amounts of rain exactly when needed.

Dossselford is bustling with activity, as many of the outlying farmers crowd this river town for Growfest. Even the newest townsfolk are in good spirits, as their rebuilding of the old buildings has gone well.

Give players Map 1: The Rebuilt Town of Dossselford.

Verth is all smiles as he welcomes everyone to the festival as the new mayor of Dossselford. Verth has done an impressive job in overseeing the rebuilding efforts for the new folk, while many of the older townsfolk complain about being ignored.

The characters may inquire about how Verth has been appointed Mayor. The story differs, depending on the NPC asked. Use this opportunity to roleplay at the festival. Tents have been erected to accommodate as many attendees as possible. Feel free to create a roleplaying

atmosphere to suite the players, but they should interact with some of the townsfolk.

For conflicting views of how things are progressing with the rebuilding of Dossselford, have the characters engage in conversation with both old and new residents.

The newer residents gladly tell the following:

- Verth was elected mayor in the absence of Nimar.
- Mayor Verth is wonderful, and has opened the town's coffers to aid in the rebuilding of Dossselford.
- Several new shops are now open, and many more people are coming to Dossselford to settle.
- Many more funds are needed to improve the houses for new people.
- Mayor Verth has granted a temporary relief of taxes to the new businesses, so they can get running.

The older residents complain to the characters about the following:

- Verth has wrestled away the title of mayor while Nimar has been gone.
- Nimar has been gone since shortly after Needfest.
- Ronco and Melinda have gone to look for Nimar, and left a note on door of their establishment, offering free goods for the taking.
- Nimar will set Verth to right after he returns.
- This is madness! Verth has squandered all the town's coffers on the rebuilding of the shanties.
- Verth has pardoned the new businesses of their taxes; all the while he raises our taxes to pay for the repairs of the shanties.

When the characters make their way to Ronco's general store, read or paraphrase the following:

The general store run by Ronco Weathertoe is normally bright, warm, and cheery, but now it is dark and abandoned. The once well-stocked supply store is now a cold, empty building. All that remains of the famous haphazard piles of goods are a smattering of pieces of paper that litter the floor. Even the comfortable fireplace looks as if it has been unused for years instead of months.

Give them Player's Handout 1. The handout reads as follows:

Greetings!
Out of respect
To my customers.
Outfit your-
Selves' with anything!
Please leave IOU, and
Reimburse me
In the fall when
Nimar, Melinda and I
Get back.

Sincerely,
!

-Ronco Weathertoe

There is a secret message using the first letter of each line. Reading those letters top to bottom, the secret message says: GO TO SPRINGS! Give the players a little time to discover it themselves. Since they need this clue to continue the adventure, point out that there seems to be something strange about the note, if they don't happen upon it themselves.

ENCOUNTER 1: THE DOOR TO DARKNESS

Having discovered the secret message in Ronco's note, you make the two-day trek to the Crystal Springs. Sunshine reflects its way through the crystal tunnel into this unique underground area.

Soon, you are in a large crystal cavern that has a most unusual patterned door that separates the surface from the denizens of the Underdark. The door's numerous bands of various metals and colors are an obvious lock device that must be unlocked to proceed.

Previous modules in this series utilized magical amulets to bypass this door. Nimar is not here to give such amulets to the characters; so good old-fashioned rogue skills must be relied upon to proceed. If the trap is not disabled, then it goes off each time a character either attempts to pick the lock, or strikes the door with any force.

Iron Door: 2 in. thickness; Hardness 10; hp 60; Break (DC 28); Average Lock: Hardness 15; hp 30; Open Locks (DC 25).

Elemental Burst Trap: 15 ft. radius from the door (1d6 per APL); Reflex save (DC 20) for half damage; Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 28).

Roll 1d6 to determine the type of damage:

- 1 Fire
- 2 Cold
- 3 Character hears the 'twang' of a cord snapping, but nothing happens (no damage, but use this opportunity to play upon their nerves)
- 4 Electricity
- 5 Acid
- 6 Sonic

ENCOUNTER 2: REST IN PIECES

Beyond the door, the crystal tunnel changes to a darker shade. Light reflected through the crystal from the surface becomes dimmer as the path moves farther and deeper into the Underdark.

The gritty sounds of stone scraping against stone echoes from ahead down the tunnel. The sounds grow louder near a sharp turn in the crystal passage.

Beyond the turn in the tunnel is the xorn hatchery that was introduced in part two of this series, and characters that played in part three of this series should remember the basic gesture of peace for this region. Cupping handfuls of dirt is a display of goodwill to the xorn.

Twelve xorn lie dead on the cavern floor. Huge chunks of their earthen bodies have been blasted away, and several limbs litter the ground. A lone xorn has crawled its way toward you. In its dying breath, it mutters the phrase, "The Masters will attack you, too. No one is safe!"

As the xorn dies, a black skinned elf with white hair steps out of the rocky crystal. He instantly summons a globe of darkness!

This lone drow wizard was hoping to meet one or more of the Masters here. He does not wish to combat the characters, so he has conjured the darkness as a partial action as the party is surprised. There tell tale signs that the drow has moved deeper into the Underdark. If the characters played part three, they recognize the tunnel the drow has escaped down, as one that leads to the habitat of the earth elementals.

There are no details for this drow elf, as there is no combat, and the party cannot catch him. Instead, play upon the nerves of the players, and mention that from time to time they have the feeling they are being watched, no doubt by the drow that escaped.

ENCOUNTER 3: AN ELEMENTAL AFFAIR

The tunnel continues on past the dead xorns, and navigates a long way until it empties into an area filled with earth elementals.

The ruins of several rock buildings litter the huge cavern floor, and wisps of smoke rise from the destruction. All about, the elementals are tending to their dead, as well as clearing the debris.

One elemental notices you, and approaches, holding its hand up as a warning. "Not safe," it says. "The Masters have awoken, and they are not pleased. You should return to the surface while you still can."

Characters that participated in part three recognize this place as the elemental village of slaves to the Masters. There was to be a trading link between the surface and Underdark established, but the merchants are all dead. In fact, the vast majority of the elementals are dead.

If asked about the drow the characters have been following, the elemental has not seen it, and knows nothing of it.

If asked about the carnage, the elemental informs the party of the following:

- A group of surface adventurers came to the village months ago. (Note: The players could be the very same adventures. If so, the elemental addresses the characters directly. "When you came down here months ago...") The actions of the/you adventurers woke the Masters.
- The Masters must have stayed long in the crystal tower, and gained strength.
- A dozen Masters came here, and said we had failed them. They proceeded to loosen magic and destroy our village.
- Two of the Masters walked away, up the tunnel from which you came. Did you see them? One mentioned he wanted to 'thank' the xorn for them letting surface dwellers into the Underdark. The other wanted to go to the surface, and begin 'carrying out their orders.'
- The remaining Masters left the village using that tunnel. (Note: Elemental points to the tunnel.) Their number was half a score that left that way.
- The Masters are going to the other elemental areas to punish others.
- Three other surface dwellers recently came down here. One was a tall man, and sort of looked like a Master. The other two were much smaller, and the female called the male "Pa." They left through the same tunnel as the Masters, but that was quite some time after the Masters departed. Those surface dwellers have been gone for a long time.
- I overheard one Master say something about the realm of the Underdark being theirs for the taking. I fear many peaceful denizens of the Underdark could suffer the same fate as our fallen.
- After the Masters left, we began the recovery of our village.
- I don't think the Masters want us as slaves anymore...

ENCOUNTER 4: THE MASTERS' TRAIL

The tunnel which the Masters left is a pure stone natural passage. After seeing so much crystal, the sight of a stone tunnel almost seems out of place.

In a cavern where the tunnel comes to an end, a man-sized oval hole has been melted into the wall. Beyond is darkness...

Beyond the portal is a 10 ft. wide chasm. The area is enveloped in a permanent *darkness* spell. Unless the characters can dispel the darkness, they have to make their Jump check with a -5 modifier. Failure results in the character falling into the chasm, which is 20 feet deep.

Characters can climb out of the chasm with a successful Climb check (DC 10). There are some handholds that allow an easier climb than normal.

ENCOUNTER 5: THE ROPER!

The characters travel through the Underdark for two days before they come across signs of the Masters. Have the characters sleep and prepare spells as normal.

The passage empties into a large cavern. The dome ceiling is beyond sight. Several of the stalagmites are blackened with soot. One stalagmite seems to have a dark stain around its base. A severed hand lies near the stalagmite, and a wand is still clutched by its long, pale fingers.

The stalagmite is actually a roper, and has eaten one of the Masters, except for the hand that gripped a magic wand. The wand actually belongs to Nimar, who knowing it had little, if any, charges remaining decided to drop it. The nearby roper made a quick meal of the Master that came upon Nimar's wand.

The roper attacks any that stray too close, especially any character that wants to get the wand. The severed hand is 10 ft. away from the roper that looks like a stalagmite.

APL 4 (EL 6)

➤ **Roper:** hp 101 (50 remaining); see *Monster Manual*.

Note: At APL 4 the creature is the wounded survivor of the Master's wrath. It has fewer hit points, and three of its six strands are destroyed.

APL 6 (EL 8)

➤ **Roper:** hp 101 (85 remaining); see *Monster Manual*.

Note: At APL 6 the creature is the wounded survivor of the Master's wrath. It has fewer hit points, and two of its six strands are destroyed.

APL 8 (EL 10)

➤ **Roper:** hp 101; see *Monster Manual*.

The only treasure is the *wand of fireball*, and it has three charges remaining and casts at 6th level (6d6). This wand belonged to the sorcerer Nimar, with whom the characters should be familiar.

ENCOUNTER 6: HALFLINGS ON ICE

Two tunnels exit this domed cavern. One exit has frost surrounding its opening, and the other exit appears to be normal.

The Master's trail leads to the frosty tunnel. Their footprints can be discovered with a successful Track check (DC 15). A successful Track check (DC 20) also reveals three additional sets of tracks on top of the

Master's tracks. A booted man-size individual and two halfling-size individuals passed this way.

The other regular exit leads to a series of twisting tunnels that come full circle and empty back into the roper cavern. There is soft earth throughout this tunnel, and no footprints are present. If the characters begin taking this route, their feet squish in the soft wet dirt. There is a pool of water deeper in these tunnels, and the characters can drink some non-harmful, albeit gritty tasting water.

Continuing down the frosty tunnel, the characters begin noticing a rapid change in temperature. Their breath begins to frost and the long tunnel becomes icy as they move forward. Fifteen minutes further along this passage, the entire floor, walls, and ceiling are covered in ice.

Characters must make a successful Balance check (DC 15) or move at half speed on the ice. A failed check results in falling down, and no movement for the round.

Your passage is slippery, as a layer of ice coats the ceiling, walls, and floor. Echoing down this tunnel are the sounds of a growl, and screams.

This tunnel eventually empties into a grand domed chamber of ice. This huge domed ice chamber is over 200 feet to the ceiling, and has a diameter of 300 feet.

The echoed scream was from Melinda, as she was engulfed by a white dragon's breath. She is currently frozen against the far wall, and her father Ronco desperately tries to defend her against a juvenile white dragon.

A pair of large white dragons lies dead in the center of this ice cavern. They each have several scorch marks, and blast marks, seemingly from several magical attacks.

Ronco suffers a number of wounds. He calls out to the characters, and begs their help. Initiative starts with the white dragon breathing on Ronco, who tries to tumble out of harm's way, but slips on the ice. He becomes frozen to the floor, as the dragon's breath freezes him in place.

Besides dealing with one or more white dragon(s), the characters need to free Melinda and Ronco from their icy entrapment before the halflings can be healed.

There are numerous ice formations for the characters to take cover in this cavern.

At APL 8, the cavern floor is sloped, and the characters need to make a Balance skill check DC 20 to avoid falling. Characters may wish to let gravity work, and simply slide across the cavern floor. The many chunks and bumps of ice can be used to roleplay a painful trek across the cavern floor.

The juvenile white dragon(s) do not speak the common tongue, and are enraged because of the death of the parents. Characters won't be able to parlay, and combat is eventual. The juvenile white dragon(s) use the fog cloud ability to blind the characters and escape by climbing the walls and ceiling.

APL 4 (EL 5)

➤ **Juvenile White Dragon:** hp 102; see Appendix I.

APL 6 (EL 7)

➤ **Juvenile White Dragons (2):** hp 102, 102; see Appendix I.

APL 8 (EL 9)

➤ **Juvenile White Dragons (4):** hp 102, 102, 102, 102; see Appendix I.

ENCOUNTER 7: HEALTHY HALFLINGS

Once the characters revive Ronco and Melinda, the halflings are thankful. Ronco tells the characters the following:

- He and Melinda have come this far, as they have been trying to catch up to Nimar.
- Nimar left Dossselford in a hurry, confiding to Ronco that he “had to set things to right.” When Ronco asked Nimar what he meant, the sorcerer confessed to being a direct descendant of the Masters.
- Nimar feels obligated to right the wrongs of the evil Masters, and has come here to confront them.
- Ronco didn’t want to bring Melinda, but it’s no use to try to keep her from adventuring.
- Ronco can’t proceed further. He has to see that Melinda gets safely back to the surface.
- Ronco asks the characters if they have encountered any of the drow elves that he has seen down here. He has noticed a patrol of four of the black elves back in the roper cavern, but they did not attack, and he didn’t want to provoke them.
- Nimar is in pursuit of the Masters. He learned from the earth elementals that the Masters had been awakened, and that some have gone to the surface. Many more of the Masters have descended into the Underdark, and it is that group Nimar is chasing.
- As there is only one other exit from this lair, Ronco thinks Nimar traveled deeper into the Underdark.

A search of this lair reveals an area of a yellowish substance an inch or so beneath a far off area of ice. No, it’s not the dragon’s litterbox, but rather it is their treasure hoard. Gold pieces as noted in the Treasure Summary, are buried two inches below the ice. Characters can dig the coins out, but it takes quite some time.

Ronco suggests that everyone rest and recover their health and regain spells before going on. This gives the characters ample time to extract the dragon’s riches.

For APL 4 tables, the adventure ends here. Ronco insists that the characters accompany he and his daughter back to Dossselford.

For APL 6 and APL 8 tables, continue with Ronco bidding the characters farewell as he takes his daughter back to the surface.

“I wish ya luck, there. I don’t know if da Masters or Nimar did all dat there damage to dem bigger white dragons. So, you be careful, don’t cha know.”

“I’m takin’ Melinda back top side. I’m sure glad you were able to figure out dat clue I left back at my shop. You saved my bacon, and I’ll not be forgettin’ dat.”

“Come see me after you find my friend, Nimar. I don’t know what he’s up to, but nothin’ good can come from this! Please find him, and bring him back to Dossselford where he belongs.”

“I’ll be waiting for you back at my store. Be careful down here.”

ENCOUNTER 8: THE MASTERS NEW RECRUIT

Has it been days, weeks, or hours since the halflings departed? It is hard to gauge time in an environment of timeless darkness.

Several side passages and turns show signs of recent passage. One such intersection has soot blackened scorch marks and a dead being lying face down in your path.

Its body seems human, if not for the fact that it is taller and thinner than a human. Its eyes are almond shaped, similar to an elf’s, but the eyes are enlarged. A bony crest lines the top of the Master’s head.

Its fingers are too long for its hands. Its skin is pale, almost sickly in appearance. It is clothed in a black cloak of a soft but rugged fabric. It has black boots made from the same fabric as its cloak.

Ahead in this tunnel, the characters hear an echo of an explosion and a momentary wave of invisible heat washes over their faces.

When the characters go to explore the explosion, read the following:

A dazzling display of multi-colored lights reflects off of the tunnel walls ahead. Then another BOOM is heard, and the lights wink out.

APL 6 (EL 8)

➤ **Mind Flayer:** hp 45; see *Monster Manual*.

Around a turn in the tunnel, the party sees Nimar, the Mayor of Dossselford, webbed upon the ground. A single, invisible mind flayer is near Nimar, and cuts loose its *mind blast* as its surprise action.

APL 8 (EL 10)

➤ **Mind Flayer:** hp 50; see *Monster Manual*.

➤ **Master:** Male human Sor8; hp 28; see Appendix I.

↗ **Pit Trap (40 Ft. Deep):** CR 2; no attack roll necessary (4d6); Reflex save (DC 20) avoids; Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 20).

Around a turn in the tunnel, the party sees Nimar, the Mayor of Dosseldorf, webbed upon the ground. This encounter includes a pit trap. The Master has cast Illusionary Wall to disguise a pit in the cavern floor. To accentuate this trick, the mind flayer levitates over the pit, and appears to be standing on a normal floor. The Master casts *empowered lightning bolts* for his two remaining 4th-level spells.

ENCOUNTER 9: NIMAR, DESCENDANT FROM THE MASTERS

After achieving victory, the characters should inquire about the well being of Nimar. He was beaten down badly by the exchange of magic, and he has several burns upon his body. Although his is unconscious, he is still alive and responds to any attempt to awaken him.

Nimar wakes up, believing he is still under attack. He is suspicious of the party, thinking the Masters and the wicked mind flayers have magically disguised themselves as adventurers he remembers from previous trips to the Crystal Springs.

Once the party convinces Nimar that the threat is over (showing him the fallen foe(s) for example), Nimar insists the Underdark is no place for the characters to be. He wants to get back to Dosseldorf and warn them of an impending attack by the Masters, and insists that the adventurers accompany him.

The following information can be learned from Nimar as the party journeys back to the surface:

- We must get to Dosseldorf immediately. There is at least one Master that intends to begin gathering evil forces to attack Dosseldorf.
- Other Masters are already too far into the Underdark, and may begin recruiting the subterranean races to their cause of destruction.
- Drow elves have already agreed to help the Masters attack the surface.
- The Masters could not get a mated pair of white dragons to join their cause, so they killed them. There may still be a young dragon or two in the area. Be careful on the journey back.
- I am indeed a descendant of the Masters. Several hundred years ago, a single Master awoke and made his way to the surface. That Master lived long, and took several wives and sired several children.
- The Lord of the East is also related to me, and has Masters blood in his veins too.
- I wonder if Ronco tried to follow me. I confided to him that I “had to set things to right.” When Ronco

asked me what I meant, I confessed to being a direct descendant of the Masters.

I was careful not to let Melinda know I was coming here, because she would wish to follow. Melinda is not skilled enough to venture into the Underdark.

CONCLUSION

Traveling at a steady pace, the surface is reached after three halts for sleep. Light begins to filter through the crystal walls once the threshold of the stone shaped arch is crossed.

There is not a lot of time converse with the denizens of the earth elemental village. A quick confirmation that no other Master was seen heading to the surface is all that Nimar needs to hear before he pushes on to the plug.

“How clever of you to bypass those many layered locks, I am fortunate that you braved the Underdark, and found me when you did. I am in your debt. A debt that I hope to repay you once the assault upon Dosseldorf and other surface settlements are put down.”

“Can I count on your might and magic to aid against the Masters? The good folk of Dosseldorf will sing praises about your success, if we win the day...”

The characters reach the surface, and are free to go where they choose. The first wave of destruction lead by the Masters is the subject of “Mysteries of Crystal Springs, Part V.”

The End

EXPERIENCE POINT SUMMARY

To award experience for this adventure, add up the values for the objectives accomplished. Then assign the experience award. Award the total value to each character.

Encounter 1: Door to Darkness

Bypass the trapped door.

APL 4	90 XP
APL 6	120 XP
APL 8	210 XP

Encounter 5: The Roper!

Defeat the roper.

APL 4	180 XP
APL 6	240 XP
APL 8	300 XP

Encounter 6: Halflings on Ice

Defeat the white dragon(s).

APL 4	150 XP
APL 6	210 XP
APL 8	270 XP

Encounter 8: The Masters New Recruit

Defeat the mind flayer(s).

APL 4	0 XP
APL 6	240 XP
APL 8	300 XP

Roleplaying

Good roleplay and investigation.

APL 4	60 XP
APL 6	90 XP
APL 8	120 XP

Total Possible Experience

APL 4	540 XP
APL 6	900 XP
APL 8	1200 XP

TREASURE SUMMARY

During an adventure, characters encounter treasure, usually finding it in the possession of their foes. Every encounter that features treasure has a “treasure” section within the encounter description, giving information about the loot, coins, and magic items that make up the encounter’s treasure.

The loot total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if the foes are plundered of all their earthly possessions. Looting the bodies takes at least 10 minutes per every 5 enemies, and if the characters cannot take the time to loot the bodies, they do not gain this gold. If you feel it is reasonable that characters can go back to loot the bodies, and those bodies are there (that is, not carted off by dungeon scavengers, removed from the scene by the local watch, and so on), characters may return to retrieve loot. If the characters do not loot the body, the gold piece value for the loot is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

The coin total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if they take the coin available. A normal adventuring party can usually gather this wealth in a round or so. If for some reason they pass up this treasure, the coin total is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

Next, the magic items are listed. Magic item treasure is the hardest to adjudicate, because they are varied and because characters may want to use them during the adventure. Many times characters must cast *identify*, *analyze dweomer*, or similar spell to determine what the item does, and how to activate it. Other times they may attempt to use the item blindly. If the magic item is consumable (a potion, scroll, magic bolts, etc.) and the item is used before the end of the adventure, its total is subtracted from the adventure totals below.

Once you have subtracted the value for unclaimed treasures from each encounter add it up and that is number of gold pieces a characters total and coin value increase at the end of the adventure. Write the total in the Gp Gained field of the adventure certificate.

TREASURE KEY:

L = Looted gear from enemy; C = Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables; M = Magic Items.

Encounter 5: The Roper!

Defeat the roper and retrieve the wand.

APL 4: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *wand of fireball* (6th, 3 charges) (Value 122 gp per character).

APL 6: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *wand of fireball* (6th, 3 charges) (Value 122 gp per character).

APL 8: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *wand of fireball* (6th, 3 charges) (Value 122 gp per character).

Encounter 7: Healthy Halflings

Find and retrieve the gold from the dragon’s lair.

APL 4: L: 0 gp; C: 400 gp; M: 0

APL 6: L: 0 gp; C: 600 gp; M: 0

APL 8: L: 0 gp; C: 1200 gp; M: 0

Total Possible Treasure

APL 4: 522 gp

APL 6: 722 gp

APL 8: 1322 gp

ENCOUNTER 6: HALFLINGS ON ICE

🐉 **Juvenile White Dragon:** CR 5; Medium-size dragon (cold); HD 12d12+24; hp 102; Init +0; Spd 60 ft., fly 200 ft. (poor), swim 60 ft., burrow 30 ft.; AC 21 (touch 10, flat-footed 21); Atk +16 melee (1d8+3, bite) and +10 melee (1d6+1, 2 claws) and +10 melee (1d4+1, 2 wings); SA Breath weapon, *fog cloud* 3/day; SQ Cold subtype, icewalking; AL CE; SV Fort +10, Ref +8, Will +8; Str 17, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 8, Wis 11, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Move Silently +12, Listen +14, Search +11, Sense Motive +12, Spot +14; Alertness, Cleave, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (bite).

Breath Weapon (Su): May breathe a 30 ft. cone of cold (4d6) once every 1d4 rounds. Reflex save (DC 18) for half damage.

Fog Cloud (Sp): May cast *fog cloud* as a spell-like ability 3 times per day at 12th level of ability.

Cold Subtype (Ex): Cold immunity, double damage from fire except on a successful save.

Icwalking (Ex): This ability works like the spider climb spell, but the surfaces the dragon climbs must be icy. It is always in effect.

Blindsight (Ex): May ascertain creatures by nonvisual means (mostly hearing and scent, but also by noticing vibration and other environmental clues) with a range of 120 feet.

Keen Senses (Ex): A dragon sees four times as well as a human in low-light conditions and twice as well in normal light. It also has darkvision with a range of 400 feet.

ENCOUNTER 8: THE MASTERS NEW RECRUIT

🐉 **Master:** Male human Sor8; CR 8; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 8d4+3; hp 28; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (touch 13, flat-footed 10); Atk +3 melee (1d6-1, club); SA Spells; AL LE; SV Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +5; Str 9, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 16.

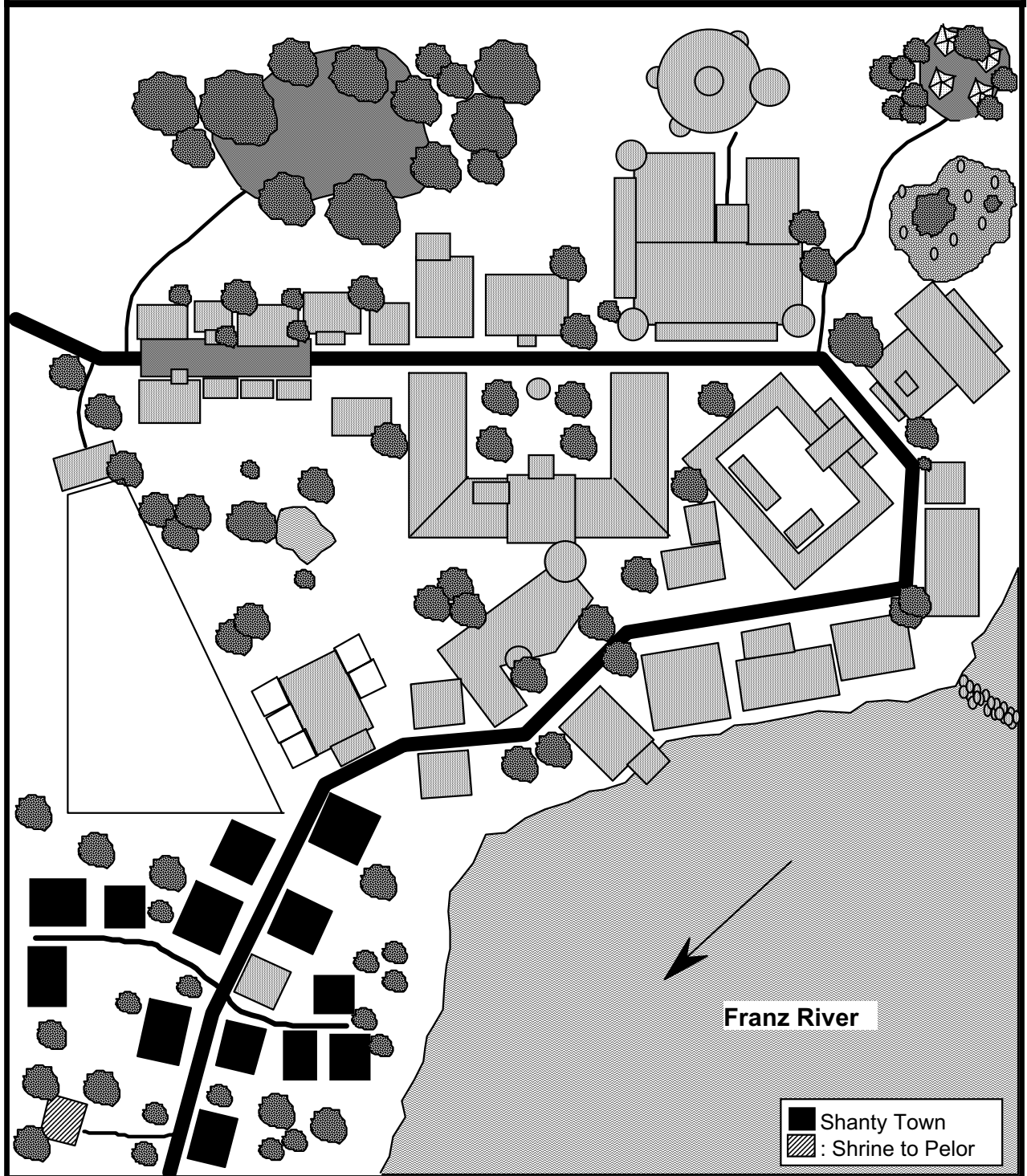
Skills and Feats: Concentration +11, Knowledge (arcane) +11, Spellcraft +11; Combat Casting, Empower Spell, Improved Initiative, Toughness.

Possessions: traveler's outfit, club.

Spells Known (6/7/7/6/3; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0 – *daze, detect magic, ghost sound, light, mage hand, open/close, ray of frost, read magic*; 1st – *charm person, magic missile, obscuring mist, ray of enfeeblement, shield*; 2nd – *mirror image, see invisibility, web*; 3rd – *haste, lightning bolt*; 4th – *illusory wall*.

DM Map 1: Dosseldorf

Mystery of Crystal Springs 4



PLAYER HANDOUT 1

GREETINGS!
OUT OF RESPECT

TO MY CUSTOMERS,
OUTFIT YOUR-

SELVES' WITH ANYTHING!
PLEASE LEAVE IOU.
REIMBURSE ME
IN THE FALL WHEN
NIMAR, MELINDA AND I
GET BACK.

SINCERELY,

!

-RONCO WEATHERTOE