ADP8-01

The Sinister Spire

A Multi-Round Dungeons & Dragons® Living Greyhawk™ Adapted Adventure

Version 0.1

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Reviewers and contributors: the Circle

The waters of a sunless sea meet a pebble-strewn shore, beyond which opens a wide Underdark vista shimmering with pale cave-light. Titanic columns as big as castles march miles into the misted distance. The wide, steeply sloping base of the nearest colossal column is carved with streets, walls, and elaborate structures, many with gaping, empty windows. A few glimmer with faint illumination. Are you brave enough to explore the spire-city and face the terrors that lurk within? A multi-round Core adaptable adventure set in the Underoerth for characters level 5-6 (APL 6; two ARs). This adventure costs 14 TUs to play. Sequel to ADP7-05 *Barrow of the Forgotten King*. It is strongly advised to play ADP7-05 before this adventure, but it is not required.

Resources for this adventure [and the authors of those works] include Barrow of the Forgotten King [Ed Stark], Magic Item Compendium [Andy Collins], The Sinister Spire [Bruce R. Cordell and Ari Marmell].

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 adventure retires from RPGA-sanctioned play on December 31, 2008.

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PLAYERS READ NO FARTHER

If you are planning on playing this adventure, stop reading now. The rest of the information in this adventure is for the DM only. If you read farther than this section, you'll know too much about its challenges, which kills the fun. <u>Also, if you're playing this</u> <u>adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event,</u> <u>reading beyond this point makes you ineligible to do</u> <u>so.</u>

PREPARING FOR PLAY

To get the most out of this adventure, you need copies of the following D&D rule books: Player's Handbook, Dungeon Master's Guide, and the Monster Manual.

Throughout this adventure, text in **bold italics** provides player information for you to paraphrase or read aloud when appropriate. Information on nonplayer characters (NPCs) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text. Refer to Appendix I for full information on NPCs and monsters. For your convenience, Appendix I is split by APL

Along with this adventure, you'll find a RPGA session tracking sheet. If you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, complete and turn in this sheet to your senior GM directly after play. You'll also find a LIVING GREYHAWK adventure record (AR). You need one copy of this for each participating player.

LIVING GREYHAWK LEVELS OF PLAY

Because players bring their own characters to LIVING GREYHAWK games, this adventure's challenges are proportionate to the modified average character level of the PCs participating in the adventure. To calculate the Average Party Level (APL), follow the process below:

- Determine the character level for each of the PCs participating in the adventure. Each PC may bring one animal, plus any creatures gained from class abilities to help in combat. (PCs can bring more creatures but they cannot help in combat). If you deem that the animal bestows a significant benefit in combat add the animal's CR to the level of the PC it is accompanying for calculating APL. (Animals gained from class abilities and one standard horse, warhorse, or riding dog for a PC with Mounted Combat do not affect APL).
- 2. Sum the results of step 1 and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure. Round to the nearest whole number.
- 3. If you are running a table of six PCs, add one to that average.

Throughout this adventure, APLs categorize the level of challenge the PCs face. APLs are given in evennumbered 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 and gold a PC can gain at the end of the adventure. A player character more than three levels higher than the APL at which the adventure is played cannot participate. If a player character is more than two levels away from the APL at which the adventure is played, he suffers a 50% penalty to the amount of gold and XP gained in the adventure. This simulates the fact that either the PC was not challenged as much as normal or relied on help by higher-level characters to reach the objectives.

LIVING GREYHAWK adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Four or five 1st-level characters may find the challenge of an APL 2 adventure difficult. Suggest the following to these groups to help increase their chances of success:

1. Enlist a sixth player.

2. Advise characters to buy riding dogs to help protect them and fight for them.

These APL calculation rules reference version 7.0 of the Living Greyhawk Campaign Sourcebook. If you are playing this adventure in 2008, check the current version of the LGCS and follow any updated rules presented within.

TIME UNITS AND UPKEEP

This is a multi-round Core adventure set in the Underdark. All characters pay 14 Time Units (6 TU in part 1, 7 TU in part 2).

Adventurer's Standard Upkeep costs 12 gp per time unit. Rich Upkeep costs 50 gp per time unit. Luxury Upkeep costs 100 gp per time unit. Characters that fail to pay at least Standard Upkeep retain temporary ability damage until the next adventure, must buy new spell component pouches and healer's kits, and may suffer other in-game penalties (or possibly gain in-game benefits) as may be detailed in this adventure.

A character that does not pay for at least Standard Upkeep may avoid the above-described penalties by living off the wild. If the character possesses four or more ranks in Survival and succeeds on a DC 20 Survival check, he heals temporary ability damage as if he had Standard Upkeep, may refill spell component pouches and healer's kits, and may restock up to 20 arrows or bolts if the character has at least four ranks in Craft (bowmaking). PCs may Take 10 on this roll.

Chapters 1 and 5 of the LGCS present more information about lifestyle and upkeep.

PREPARATION FOR PLAY

This is an adaptation of the adventure The Sinister Spire by Bruce R. Cordell and Ari Marmell published by Wizards of the Coast. As such you cannot run this adventure without a copy of said adventure. It is the sequel to the adventure Barrow of the Forgotten King by Ed Stark. It is advised that the players play this adventure with the same character and in the correct order, but this is not required. Sinister Spire contains minor spoilers for Barrow of the Forgotten King and some things make much more sense if played in the correct order.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

As per the adventure The Sinister Spire with the following changes:

- The adventure starts in Kingsholm in the Good Hills (the same town Barrow of the Forgotten King) either as a direct sequel to Barrow of the Forgotten King or stand alone adventure.
- Banrhialorg is just a masterwork quarterstaff that also functions as a lesser metamagic rod of Extend

Spell and sheds light like a candle as a free action. It is not a legacy item.

• Use the Adventure Continues and/or the King's Bones adventure hooks.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The adventure should be run as written, with the exceptions noted below. It is assumed that the adventure is played in the order presented in *The Sinister Spire*. The APL of the adventure is 6, and the adventure is recommended for characters of level 5-7. Characters of 8th level and higher may not find the adventure challenging enough, while 4th level and lower characters will be overwhelmed.

The experience and gold is presented per area in the Experience Point and Treasure Summary below. There is a chance that the PCs could earn more gold than the maximum; however, they can only earn the maximum gold that is listed at the end of this document and on each Adventure Records (AR).

Before entering the Necromancer's Spike the first AR should be handed out. Begin the next round with the Necromancer's Spike and finish the adventure from there. It is noted that players must play both rounds right after each other and cannot play other adventures in between this one because of story purposes.

Note: This adventure requires 8-12 of gameplay. You should ensure that players are aware of this before beginning, and that multiple sessions are set up to cover the entirety of the adventure.

INTRODUCTION

The adventure starts in the town of Kingsholm at the Coronet and Cabbage Inn, either as the direct sequel to *Barrow of the Forgotten King* or as an independent adventure. In the first case, the adventurers spend a one or more nights at the inn recovering from the previous adventure, before going down again to retrieve the stolen bones and items. In the second, Ian Turbrand, the innkeeper, tells his guests (the PCs) about the fact that a group of thieves looted a venerated tomb, stealing its treasure, but above all taking the bone's of the king interred in the tomb as discussed in the King's Bones plot hook. Note that even though he promises the gold, since the PCs will not recover the bones in this adventure and hence they do not gain the gold (yet).

More information on Kingsholm can be found below and in the adventure *Burrow of the Forgotten King*. The information below is enough to run this adventure though, since the adventure itself is set far away from Kingsholm.

W Kingsholm (small town): Conventional; AL LG; 577 gp limit; Assets 49,824 gp; Population: 1,732; Mixed

(75% human, 11% dwarf, 7% halfling, 4% gnome, 3% other).

Authority Figures: Town speaker Phodor Landros (LG male human aristocrat 3), leader of town council (currently away on business); Ian Turbrand (LG male human expert 4), town councilor and innkeeper of the Coronet and Cabbage Inn.

Important Characters: Banjatha Minwitten (N female gnome diviner 3), town councilor and most potent local arcanist; Egden Frumm (LN male human commoner 7), town councilor and oldest and most respected farmer in town; Gran Stoutbrace (LG male dwarf expert 3), town councilor and owner of the Kingsholm General Store; Hergon Hilltopple (CG male halfling rogue 1/cleric 2 of Olidammara), town councilor and most powerful divine spellcaster; Sannl Ungart (LN female dwarf expewrt 6), town councilor and trade overseer.

Town Guard: Mia Desarna (LG female human warrior 4), captain of the guard; two 3rd-level warriors; seven 2nd-level warriors; one 2nd-level ranger; and three 1st-level rangers. The militia can call on about seventy other individuals.

EXPERIENCE POINT AND TREASURE SUMMARY

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

E1: Chimney's Edge

See Player's Handout 1 for the note in the hands of the halfling.

E2: Within the Node

Without a spellcaster that can cast at least 2^{nd} level spells (either by them selves or from scroll), it is impossible to proceed with the adventure. The PCs can hire Banjatha Minwitten from Kingsholm for 50 gp. Banjatha immediately returns home, but she is willing to return after a set amount of time for the same price. Otherwise the PCs need to think of a method of their own to return.

Defeating the cockroaches (either here or in E₃): APL 6: 180 XP.

E3: Giant Cockroach Warrens

Treasure:

APL 6: Coin: 9 gp; Magic 442 gp; jasper spider figurine (417 gp), potion of cure moderate wounds (25 gp); Total 451 gp.

G1: Grotto Node

Peacefully dealing with Bruthwoll:

APL 6: 60 XP.

G6: Bridge Askew

Defeating the skum: APL 6: 210 XP.

Looting the skum's treasure:

APL 6: Coin 16 gp; Magic 121 gp; dust of dryness (71 gp), pearl of speech (Undercommon) (50 gp); Total 137 gp.

P: Random Encounters

Reward the PCs three times for random encounters, assuming an EL 7 and two EL 4 encounters. Additional random encounters do not reward additional xp:

APL 6: 210 XP. **APL 6:** 120 XP. **APL 6:** 120 XP.

Looting the opponents divided over three encounters: **APL 6**: Loot 700 gp.

P1: South Gate

Defeating the kuo-toas: APL 6: 210 XP.

Looting the kuo-toas:

APL 6: Loot 10 gp; Coin 135 gp; Magic 80 gp; potion of cat's grace (25 gp), scroll of protection from energy (31 gp), wand of detect magic (38 charges) (24 gp); Total 225 gp.

P2: Dripstone Inn

Making an alliance with Es Sarch: APL 6: 120 XP.

Gaining the obsidian ring: APL 6: Coin 5 gp; Total 5 gp.

P3: Dock

Dealing with the duergar (whether peacefully or with violence) – apply only once: APL 6: 210 XP.

Looting the duergar:

APL 6: Loot 162 gp; Coin 33 gp; Magic 502 gp; 4x potions of cure moderate wounds (25 gp each), 4x potions of water breathing (63 gp each); Total 697 gp.

P4: Old Tannery

Dealing peacefully with Numa: **APL 6:** 60 XP.

P7: Plagueburst

Defeating the plaguelost: **APL 6:** 210 XP.

P9: Elessarwa's Sanctum

Defeating Elessarwa and Muvaysil:

APL 6: 210 XP.

Freeing the svirfneblin: **APL 6:** 60 XP.

Looting Elessarwa and Muvaysil:

APL 6: Loot 40 gp; Magic 718 gp; +1 mithral chain shirt (175 gp), amulet of dark blessing (100 gp), cloak of resistance +1 (83 gp), potion of cure moderate wounds (25 gp), organripper (275 gp), scroll of hold portal (2 gp), scroll of see invisibility (13 gp), wand of magic missile (CL 3; 12 charges) (45 gp); Total 758 gp.

Rikaryon's Isle

Defeating the phantom fungi: **APL 6:** 180 XP.

Finding the drow corpse:

APL 6: Magic 175 gp; +1 mithral chain shirt (175 gp); Total 175 gp.

BEGIN ROUND 2

If a character levels during this round, you can assign experience points in between encounters and allow the characters to level especially if the characters are still 5th level.

S1: Spike Entry

Defeating the drow mercenaries: APL 6: 210 XP.

Looting the drow:

APL 6: Loot 243 gp; Coin 10 gp; Magic 50 gp; 2x potion of cure moderate wounds (25 gp each); Total 303 gp.

S2: Guardian Chamber

Bypassing the trap: APL 6: 150 XP.

Looting the room:

APL 6: Magic 793 gp; +1 leather armor (97 gp), +2 greatsword (696 gp); Total 793 gp.

S5: Haunted Trophy Room

Finding the cloak: **APL 6**: Magic 208 gp; cloak of elvenkind (208 gp); Total 208 gp.

S7: Shrine of Lolth

Defeating the spider guardians: APL 6: 210 XP.

S8: Dining Room

Taking the twelve dinner settings: APL 6: Coin: 6 gp; Total 6 gp.

S9: Kitchen Defeating the undead: **APL 6:** 240 XP.

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Looting the kitchen:
APL 6: Loot 2 gp; Coin 142 gp; Total 144 gp.
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S10: Spiral Stairs

Passing the glyph of warding: APL 6: 120 XP.

S12: Charnel Pits

Defeating the guardians: **APL 6:** 240 XP.

S15: Hall of Audience

Defeating the spell oozes: **APL 6:** 240 XP.

S16: Study

Looting the study: APL 6: Loot 10 gp; Magic 533 gp; gloves of dexterity +2 (333 gp), scroll of create undead (138 gp), scroll of haste (31 gp), scroll of vampiric touch (31 gp); Total 544 gp.

S17: Library

Taking the spellbook: **APL 6:** Loot 217 gp.

S18: Graveyard

Defeating the undead: APL 6: 210 XP.

S19: Mausoleum

Looting the mausoleum: APL 6: Coin 250 gp; Magic 250 gp; shroud of perpetual beauty (250 gp); Total 500 gp.

S20: Overlook

Defeating the undead: APL 6: 210 XP.

S24: Hall of Mirrors

Defeating the constructs: **APL 6:** 240 XP.

S27: Vestry

Taking the black velvet robes: **APL 6:** Loot 2 gp; Total 2 gp.

S28: Shrine of Orcus

Defeating the undead: APL 6: 240 XP.

Taking the elemental gems: **APL 6**: Magic 375 gp; elemental gem (air) (188 gp), elemental gem (fire) (188 gp); Total 375 gp.

S29: Cursed Stairs

Bypassing the trap:

APL 6: 150 XP.

Bypassing the collapsing stairs: **APL 6:** 90 XP.

S33: Storage

Taking the artwork: APL 6: Coin 254 gp; Total 254 gp.

S35: Fadheela's Lair

Defeating Fadheela and her minions: **APL 6:** 270 XP.

Looting Fadheela and her minions:

APL 6: Loot 7 gp; Magic 439 gp; +1 buckler (97 gp), +1 studded leather (98 gp), +1 short bow (194 gp), 2x potions of cure moderate wounds (25 gp each); Total 446 gp.

S36: Closet

Looting the closet:

APL 6: Coin 687 gp; Magic 1,292 gp; Banrhialorg (300 gp), field provisions box (167 gp), 3x oil of stone to flesh (275 gp each); Total 1,979 gp.

Conclusion

Reward from Es Sarch for information on assassin's guild and the Vanguard:

APL 6: Coin 167 gp.

In addition to the gold, Es Sarch also offers his services for the future, providing the PCs with his favor. See the AR for more details.

TOTALS EXPERIENCE

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

Discretionary roleplaying award (round 1) APL 6 540 XP

Total Possible Experience (round 1) APL 6 2,700 XP

Discretionary roleplaying award (round 2) APL 6 780 XP

Total Possible Experience (round 2)APL 63,600 XP

TOTALS TREASURE

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 (i.e., 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 treasure from each encounter add it up and that is the 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.

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

Treasure Cap (round 1)

APL 2: 2,700 gp.

Total Possible Treasure (round 1) APL 2: 3,148 gp.

Treasure Cap (round 2) APL 2: 3,600 gp.

Total Possible Treasure (round 2) APL 2: 5,938 gp

ADVENTURE RECORD ITEMS

Round 1

Amulet of dark blessing: The amulet bestows 24 temporary hit points on its wearer. Once those hit points are used up, the amulet crumbles into dust.

Craft Wondrous Item, aid, shield other; CL 12th; 1,200 gp.

Jasper Spider Figurine: When this object is tossed down and the word "*lurux*" is spoken, the figurine becomes a living Large monstrous spider (MM 289). Activating the figurine is a standard action. It can't attack, but a Medium or smaller creature can ride it. The spider remains for up to 12 hours per use. After 12 hours have passed, when the monstrous spider is killed, or when the command word is spoken once more, the *jasper spider* returns to figurine form and cannot be activated again for 24 hours.

Craft Wondrous Item, animate object; CL 11th; 5,000 gp.

Organripper: This knife is a +1 dagger that deals an extra 1d6 points of damage to helpless creatures and creatures denied their Dexterity bonus to AC, as well as foes the wielder flanks. "Organripper" is inscribed in Undercommon on the blade. The weapon can be upgraded as a standard magical weapon.

Craft Magic Arms and Armor, inflict light wounds; CL 5th; 3,302 gp.

Round 2

Banrhialorg: A finely tapered staff of ash wood, Banrhialorg is shod with unblemished gold on its foot and a golden draconic head with sapphire eyes and a ruby tongue on its top. It is a masterwork quarterstaff that also functions as a *lesser metamagic rod of Extend Spell*. In the hands of an arcane spellcaster, Banrhialorg can shed light as bright as a candle; it is a free action to activate or deactivate this ability.

Shroud of perpetual beauty: Created to preserve the bodies of important persons, a *shroud of perpetual beauty* is also a boon to others who need or want to preserve the fallen. A body draped in a *shroud* does not decompose, and time spent draped in the *shroud* does not count against the time limit for spells that raise the dead.

Craft Wondrous Item, gentle repose; CL 3rd; 1,500 gp.

Maroe's Spellbook: 1st-alarm, backbiter (SC), chill touch, comprehend languages, detect undead, expeditious retreat, identify, mage armor, protection from evil, ray of enfeeblement, unseen servant; 2nd-blindness/deafness, command undead, false life, ray of weakness (SC), scare, see invisibility, spectral hand; 3rd-dispel magic, gentle repose, halt undead, ray of exhaustion, vampiric touch; 4th-animate dead, bestow curse, fear.

Favor of Es Sarch: You gain access Any to the items marked with an * in the items found section. In addition, you gain access Any to the following items from the MIC: daylight pellet, everlasting rations, glitter stone, magic bedroll, pearl of speech (Undercommon), troll gut rope and watchlamp.

ITEM ACCESS

APL 6 (round 1):

- +1 mithral chain shirt (Adventure; DMG)
- Amulet of dark blessing (Adventure; see above)
- Dust of dryness (Adventure; DMG)
- Jasper Spider Figurine (Adventure; see above)
- Organripper (Adventure; see above)
- Pearl of speech (Undercommon) (Adventure; CL 7th; MIC; 600 gp)
- Wand of detect magic (38 charges) (Adventure; DMG; 285 gp)
- Wand of magic missile (12 charges) (Adventure; CL 3rd; DMG; 540 gp)

APL 6 (round 2):

- Banrhialorg (Adventure; see above; 3,600 gp)*
- Elemental gem (air) (Adventure; DMG)
- Elemental gem (fire) (Adventure; DMG)
- Field provision box (Adventure; MIC; 2,000 gp)
- Maroe's Spellbook (Adventure; see above; 2,600 gp)*
- Oil of flesh to stone (Adventure; DMG)
- Scroll of create undead (Adventure; DMG)
- Shroud of perpetual beauty (Adventure; see above)

PLAYER HANDOUT 1

Note in the hands of the halfling corpse:

Fadheela,

I have been delayed. My servants carry the king's bones and all the items of his champions that I could find. Merthuvial I cannot locate. I shall spend a bit more time trying to find it, but I am sending these on so our rendezvous is not compromised. Please give the vanguard my regards. I shall be along shortly.

– Xeron

PLAYER HANDOUT 2: SCROLL 1

My Lord Gazaron, Hail the Vanguard of Sertrous!

As you can see, I am good to my word. Through Fadheela, I have sent you the bones and most of the items you requested. I still search for Merthúvial s I write this-the blade is hidden well. I hope the Vanguard is pleased.

You would do well, my lord, to consider your contract with the hobgoblin mercenaries breached. The brutes went on a looting spree that almost compromised the entire mission.

Should you desire it, I volunteer to deal with Krootad-their leader, the priest of Hextor, if you remember-myself.

– Xeron

Fhadheela,

You have our thanks for sending the bones and items to us here in the fortress. With the king's bones in hand, the prohecy is about to be bent to the will of the Vanguard of Sertrous! However, two of the items are missing from what you sent-Merthúvial and Banrhialorg. Please explain this discrepancy.

-Gazaron

PLAYER HANDOUT 4: SCROLL THREE

Gazaron,

That fool Xeron never sent Merthúvial as he promised he would, nor has he arrived in Pedestal to deliver it to me. That's your mess to clean. His worthless lackeys tried to withhold the items you wanted until their master arrived, so you got what you have only because | brook no defiance. The sword might still show up, or Xeron is dead. | do not know which is likely, nor do | care.

| am taking the staff as my own, and if you want it, you'll have to face me. |'ve sent the bones and other weapons along. Count yourself lucky | did not reserve anything else for myself.

-Fadheela