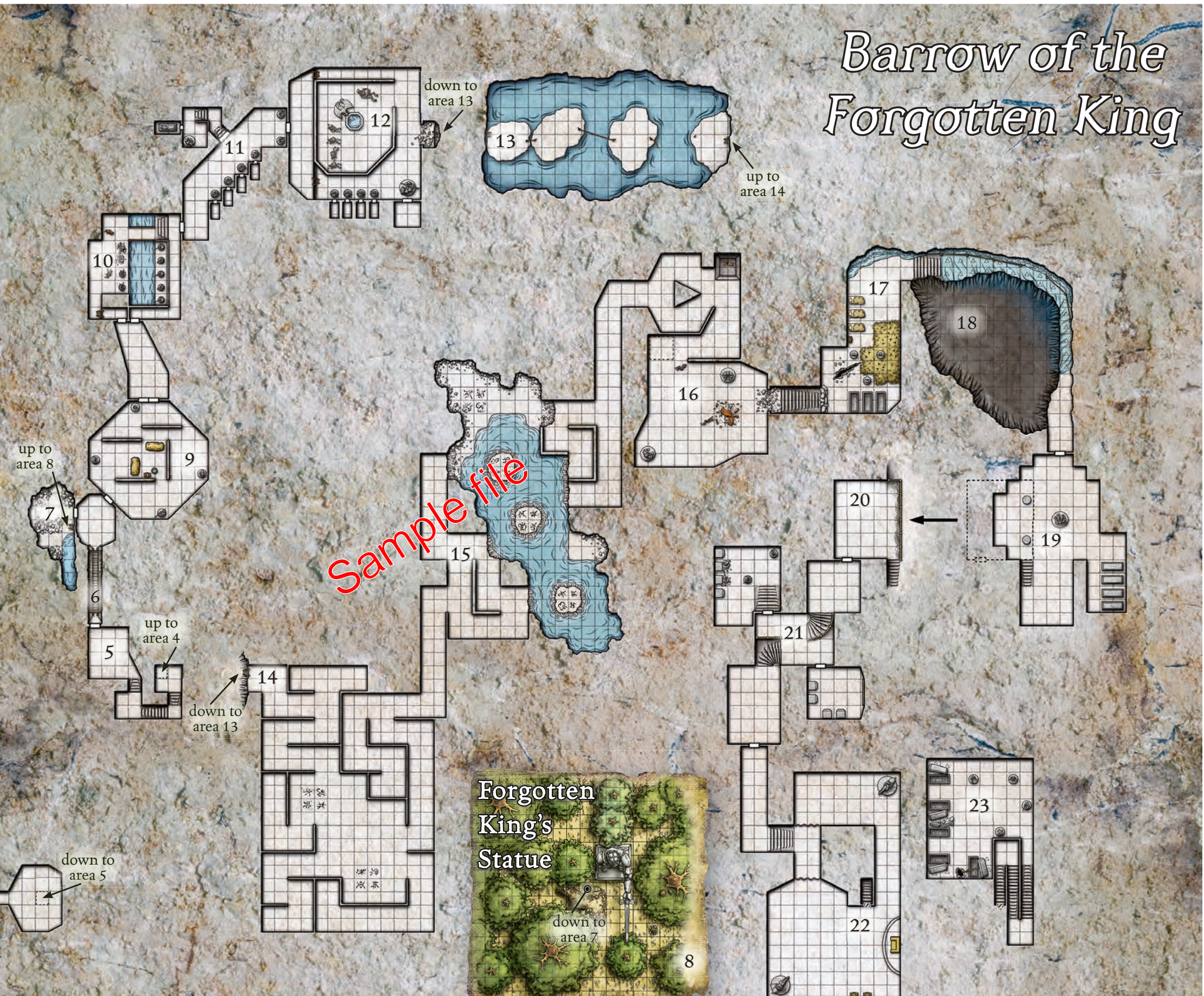
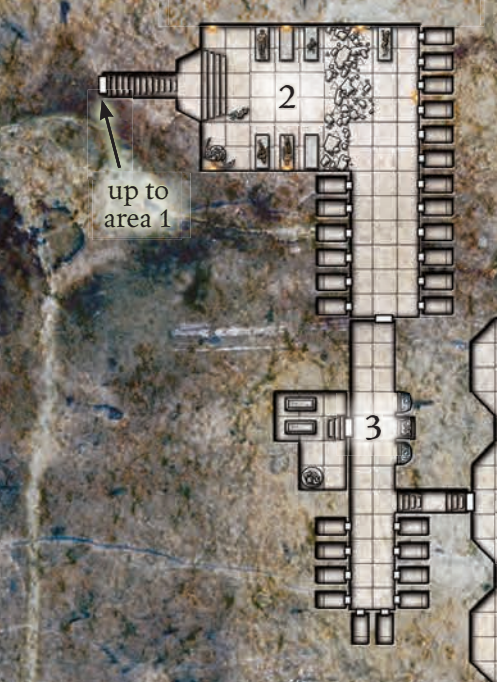
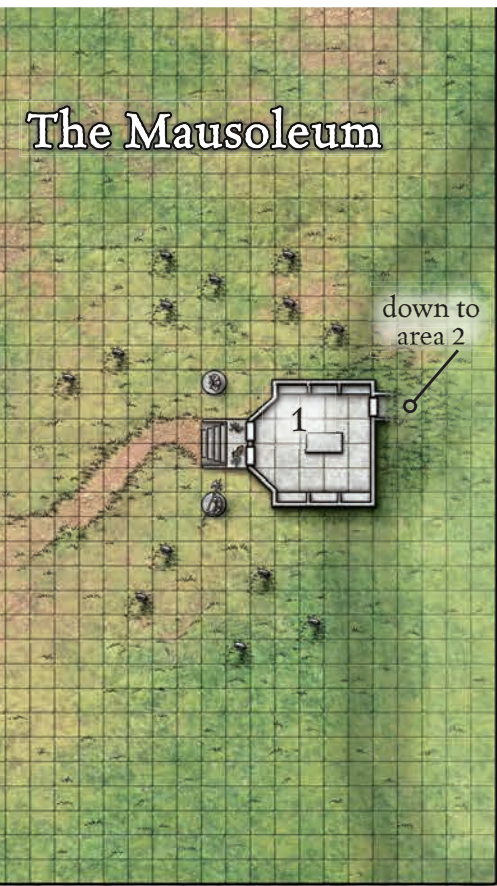


# The Mausoleum



# Barrow of the Forgotten King





BARRON  
of the  
FORGOTTEN KING<sup>TM</sup>  
Adventure

Ed Stark



# BARROW OF THE FORGOTTEN KING™

## C R E D I T S

DESIGNER  
**Ed Stark**

DEVELOPMENT AND EDITING  
**Chris Sims**

EDITING MANAGER  
**Kim Mohan**

DESIGN MANAGER  
**Christopher Perkins**

DEVELOPMENT MANAGER  
**Jesse Decker**

DIRECTOR OF RPG R&D  
**Bill Slavicsek**

PRODUCTION MANAGERS  
**Josh Fischer, Randall Crews**

SENIOR ART DIRECTOR  
**Stacy Longstreet**

ART DIRECTORS  
**Karin Jaques, Mari Kolkowsky**

COVER ARTIST  
**Steve Prescott**

INTERIOR ARTISTS  
**Wayne England, Joel Thomas**

GRAPHIC DESIGNERS  
**Trish Yochum, Michael Martin**

CARTOGRAPHER  
**Nike Schley**

FACTICAL MAP DESIGN  
**Nick Isaac, Erika Vergel de Dios**

GRAPHIC PROD. SPECIALIST  
**Angelika Lokotz**

IMAGE TECHNICIAN  
**Sven Bolen**

Sample file

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U.S., CANADA, ASIA, PACIFIC,  
& LATIN AMERICA  
Wizards of the Coast, Inc.  
P.O. Box 707  
Renton WA 98057-0707  
Questions? 1-800-324-6496



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EUROPEAN HEADQUARTERS  
Hasbro UK Ltd  
Caswell Way  
Newport, Gwent NP9 0YH  
GREAT BRITAIN  
Please keep this address for your records

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# Introduction

*The shovel clanged against rock, and its wielder snarled in frustration. He shook his brown, furry hands and squinted up into the rain.*

*"Dig!" a clear voice came from above. "Dig, damn you, or I'll have you flayed alive!"*

*Deep in the pit, the varag warrior couldn't see the speaker, but he knew the smooth-skinned, silk-clothed fool all too well.*

*Clang! Another stone. After throwing down his shovel, the varag took a pull from his wineskin. Time for a break, he thought.*

*A green orb shot out of the darkness above, knocking the wineskin out of the varag's grasp. Snarling in pain and rage, the warrior held his burned hand and watched the wineskin disintegrate in a green pool. Looking up, he saw the smooth-skinned spellcaster, and he grabbed his shovel and gripped it as if it were an axe.*

*And then he saw the eyes. Those eyes . . .*

*The varag turned back to the mud and the rock. He began to dig again.*

DD1: *Barrow of the Forgotten King* is a DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® adventure designed for four to six 2nd-level D&D characters. Player characters who complete this quest should advance to 4th or 5th level, depending on how successful they are in defeating the evil creatures awaiting them.

## WHAT YOU NEED TO PLAY

DD1: *Barrow of the Forgotten King* is intended for use in the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game. You need the *Player's Handbook* and *Dungeon Master's Guide* to play, and although this

## MODIFYING THE ADVENTURE

You can modify this adventure within certain limits.

If you have higher-level D&D characters, say, 3rd- or even 4th-level characters, you might wish to go through the adventure and advance a few monsters (particularly creatures that have class levels). This takes a little effort, but you can adapt a few rooms at a time between game sessions.

If you have more than six players, you might need to expand the size of some of the encounter maps and add a few duplicate monsters. If you are using a battle map to represent rooms, you can redraw the maps in sketch form and finalize them at the table. When you add monsters to an encounter, start by increasing the number of the lowest-level monsters. In encounters where only one monster is present, you might not need to modify the encounter at all. It might be a little less difficult, but each of the PCs gains fewer experience points since they are in a larger group.

This adventure is too dangerous for groups of fewer than four characters, as well as for characters below 2nd level. Small groups should recruit an NPC guide to fill out their ranks. You can quickly create a 2nd-level NPC using the tables in Chapter 4 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. Add a character who doesn't duplicate an existing character's abilities.

book includes complete statistics for all the monsters, the *Monster Manual* remains a helpful resource. The adventure draws material from other D&D supplements as well, but you have all the material needed to run the adventure in your hands right now.

## PREPARATION

This adventure takes place just outside the town of Kingsholm. Despite its pretentious name, the town is small and sleepy—or it was, until trouble began.

The player characters begin the adventure in Kingsholm. Whether they are native to the area or just passing through is immaterial. The action takes place in an underground complex (an area previously unknown to the townsfolk) located below and to the north of Kingsholm's graveyard.

Read through the entire text to gain familiarity with the material. This adventure has been designed specifically for low-level characters, but it is by no means an "introductory" adventure and assumes that you have some experience as a DM. It is likely you'll run the adventure over several game sessions, so prepare to run the initial encounters the first time you play. In a four-hour game session, you should get through three to five encounter areas. This gives you the opportunity to study upcoming areas between sessions, so you shouldn't have to be intimately familiar with the latter sections of this text to begin the game.

Also, take advantage of the format of this adventure: It's presented in two parts. In the first section, the adventure is discussed as a series of encounters that together form an overarching storyline. The second section contains all the tactical information you need to run the individual battles, puzzles, and other active elements of the adventure.

## USING THE FORMAT

The encounter format relies on keyed entries similar to other published adventures. However, tactical encounters are separated from story and roleplaying information.

Numbered, or "keyed," areas are described in the initial section of this text. Use the keyed entries as both a summary of the adventure and a flowchart. If a keyed entry involves combat or some other action that places importance on position and movement, that entry refers you to a tactical encounter.

**Tactical Encounters:** A tactical encounter includes a map of the area in which the encounter takes place, notes on setting up the encounter, monster statistics blocks, and descriptions of how the terrain and features of the encounter affect game play. Every aspect of an encounter need not be used—the players might not be interested in all the details of an area. Indeed, the PCs might avoid whole encounters, either intentionally or unwittingly.

The combat encounters in this adventure are designed for use with *D&D Miniatures*. If you don't have the exact miniature to represent a monster, or you aren't using *D&D Miniatures*, just use whatever substitute you choose to run the tactical encounters.

## ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Kingsholm lies at the base of a series of rolling foothills. No one knows how long the community has existed; Ian Turbrand, the owner of the Coronet and Cabbage Inn, insists that someone from his family has run the hostelry for more than three hundred years. Kingsholm appears much like every other town in the land, with one exception—its graveyard.

Built on and in the nearby hills, the graveyard has existed for centuries. Some townsfolk believe the graveyard predates the community, and nearly all the people living in Kingsholm evince a particular pride in that fact. Prominent individuals who die in Kingsholm have the honor of being interred in the graveyard's mausoleum, the centerpiece of the graveyard. Kingsholm's guards—known as sentinels—patrol the graveyard almost as frequently as they patrol the community's streets.

The most notable feature of the graveyard actually lies a little over a mile north of the town, high up in the hills. There stands the statue of an ancient king. No one in Kingsholm knows who he was or why the statue was erected there, but the townsfolk live in awe of the monument. Indeed, while the common folk have no fear of their maintained graveyard, few venture up to visit the forgotten king.

## WHAT THE PCS KNOW

Two days ago, a family of mourners ventured up into the graveyard and didn't return. A pair of sentinels investigated, but these guards vanished as well. The townsfolk were in a panic. They've always heard rumors of disturbances in graveyards and tombs, but never has such misfortune struck in their town. They look to the player characters for aid.

## WHAT THE PCS DON'T KNOW

An evil organization known as the Vanguard of Sertrous discovered that hidden deep below the statue of the forgotten king in the foothills north of Kingsholm is a cache of powerful magic weapons. It also learned of a legend surrounding the forgotten king—"The king shall rise again to defend the land." So the Vanguard decided to take the king's treasures and his bones, the former for obvious reasons and the latter to pervert the prophecy to its own wicked ends.

**Xeron:** This yuan-ti sorcerer is an initiate of the Vanguard. Raiding the barrow of the forgotten king is his first major mission for that group. The Vanguard ordered Xeron to go into the gravesite from above and investigate the whole complex, except for the mausoleum on the surface, and to leave no chance of overlooking a valuable item or piece of lore. Xeron brought his halfling apprentice, a pet choker, and a loyal runehound with him, along with a human henchman named Teryl and a female half-elf named Leera whom Teryl claimed was good at history.

**Other Robbers:** In the event that Xeron encountered resistance within the underground chambers, the Vanguard provided him with a band of laborers and mercenaries, led

by a hobgoblin cleric of Hextor named Krootad. Krootad's group was originally made up of two wolf skeletons and an ogre zombie, along with a few hobgoblin fighters, a hobgoblin wererat rogue, a goblin rogue, and several varags.

**The Mission:** Xeron had strict orders—under no circumstances was he to attract the attention of the locals. So, the yuan-ti instructed the laborers and mercenaries to quietly dig a shaft that led below the statue of the forgotten king. It took the tomb robbers days to dig down to the underground complex, but they were successful. Xeron then began exploring the entire site, venturing first toward Kingsholm's graveyard.

Xeron lost some of his control on the group when the varags began to loot the vaults for whatever treasure they could find. Contrary to the yuan-ti's orders, Krootad and the mercenaries went all the way to the mausoleum in search of valuables. There, mourners from Kingsholm stumbled upon the robbers. His allies killed the commoners quickly and easily, but Xeron realized that it was only a matter of time before someone missed the slain people. He instructed Krootad to set up "discouragement" for those who might investigate, so the cleric animated some of the old skeletons and fresh corpses in the mausoleum. Then, instead of killing a farm girl whom he knew was still hiding in one of the vaults, Xeron had her sealed in. He hoped that releasing the girl and taking care of her would slow any pursuers who had managed to defeat the undead.

Xeron then turned the tomb robbers' attention back to their mission, promising richer loot elsewhere. As they delved deeper into the complex, the robbers' progress slowed considerably. Magic and traps protected chambers deeper in the tomb. As a result, the robbers suffered injuries and had to stop to recuperate before moving on.

**Enter the PCs:** By the time this adventure begins, Xeron and his allies are only creeping along through the tomb. As time wears on, the robbers suffer more casualties, and the yuan-ti's relationship with the mercenaries becomes strained. Krootad splits from the group to animate more dead to slow pursuers, which doesn't help matters, since only the hobgoblin fighters seem willing to follow Xeron's orders.

Now the PCs have a good opportunity to catch Xeron before he accomplishes his goals. As the tomb takes its toll on the robbers, their numbers dwindle and they spread out. When he is finally cornered, Xeron no longer has a chance of escaping through the tunnel his forces dug. Instead, he resorts to breaking into a secret tunnel that leads out of the king's tomb—a tunnel the Vanguard had instructed him not to use. This turn of events gives the PCs the clue they need to pursue the king's bones further. (This secret tunnel does not play a role in this adventure, but it serves as the entry point for this adventure's successor, *DD2: The Sinister Spire*.)

## ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

After agreeing to investigate the disturbance in the graveyard (see *Adventure Starts*), the player characters find themselves in one fight after another as they descend from

Kingsholm's graveyard into the catacombs beneath. In a way, each step brings them farther into the past as they explore the barrow of the forgotten king.

When the PCs investigate the graveyard, they come upon the large mausoleum built into one of the northern hillocks. The PCs discover the remains of the town's guards and encounter undead creatures, as well as their first puzzle. Also evident is the fact that someone else has been to the graveyard before the characters—someone who killed the guards and animated the undead.

As they descend, the PCs begin to encounter earth-dwelling creatures awakened by the disturbances. They have their first battles with Xeron's tomb robbers. They also come across a couple of transitional areas that contain dangers unrelated to the tomb robbers' invasion of the Kingsholm graveyard.

In a magic labyrinth, the PCs must either search for a way through or give up their quest. Here, they encounter creatures of both good and neutral alignment. If they are careful, they might find a few temporary allies here. At the end of the labyrinth, the PCs have a chance to learn more about the tomb robbers and their mission.

The PCs next arrive in a false tomb. When the tomb robbers reached this area, they believed they'd discovered the end of their quest. Instead, they awakened a great evil and barely escaped it. The PCs have to deal with that evil, along

with other dangers. Here, they discover much about the legend of the forgotten king.

A climactic encounter takes place in the king's tomb. Here, the PCs discover that the tomb robbers have fulfilled their objective, but not all have escaped. Knowing they were being pursued, Xeron forced his remaining minions to open a passage into the Underdark in a desperate attempt to avoid capture. His plan almost succeeded. Xeron battles the PCs to the death while some of the Vanguard's minions escape into the passage below.

At the end of the adventure, the PCs learn of the Vanguard of Sertrous and gain at least one legendary weapon that once belonged to the forgotten king. They also learn of the legend of the king's possible resurrection, though they don't yet know if it is true. Additionally, they gain an opening into a whole new world (the Underdark) and the adventure waiting there.

## ADVENTURE STARTS

Characters can become involved in this adventure in a number of ways. Feel free to use one, some, or all of the hooks suggested here.

**Adventurers for Hire:** Not only is Ian Turbrand the owner of the Coronet and Cabbage Inn, but he is also a councilor in the town and the richest person in it. He has a vested interest in solving Kingsholm's problem, and this is the default hook for the PCs.

**The Legend:** One of the PCs—someone who has Knowledge (local), Knowledge (history), bardic knowledge, or a similar class feature—has heard the legend of the forgotten king. That character heard that somewhere near Kingsholm lies an ancient overlord resting with his servants and all their treasure. The PC might wonder if the disturbance in the graveyard has anything to do with the legend.

**Lost Friend or Missing Relative:** One or more of the lost mourners is a friend or relative of one or more PCs. This hook allows for a “happy ending” alternative. The characters might find the NPC, still alive, hiding in one of the vaults in area 2 of the mausoleum, as Tyra Yurling is in the original version of this adventure.

## THE NEED FOR HEROES

Kingsholm has armed guards and presumably some hale and hearty townsfolk. Why don't they investigate the tombs themselves?

The answer is simple: They're terrified. Not in living memory (and some of the townsfolk are dwarves) has any disturbance happened in the graveyard of Kingsholm. Townsfolk believe the area to be blessed, and they believe their town has been protected by its proximity to the statue of the forgotten king. Now, suddenly, that immunity is gone. They look to others—those with at least a little adventuring experience—to investigate the disturbance and tell them that everything will be all right.

### THE TOWN OF KINGSHOLM

Kingsholm is a rich and sleepy little town that benefits from trade with nearby dwarf clans and peaceful relations with halfling traders and gypsies. It has many trading houses and storage facilities for minerals and other commodities.

**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 the 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; Sanni Ungart (LN female dwarf expert 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; ten 1st-level warriors; one 2nd-level ranger; and three 1st-level rangers. The militia can call on about seventy other individuals.