Dungeon of the Hooded Inquisitor

Dungeon of the Hooded Inquisitor is an adventure scenario for 2nd or 3rd level 5e characters set in the outer caves of the Lower Reaches below the City of Arches. It's intended to work with any 5e-based system including D&D 2014, D&D 2024, *Level Up Advanced 5e*, *Tales of the Valiant*, or others. It can be easily modified to support other fantasy RPGs as well.

This scenario is the second in a series of scenarios following the Key of Worlds campaign arc included in the City of Arches sourcebook beginning with the *Scroll of Akrave*. If desired, you can modify it to run as a stand-alone adventure in any campaign or setting.

This Isn't a Typical Adventure

This scenario isn't laid out like a traditional adventure. Instead, it presents ingredients to use and a scaffold around which to build your own adventure for your own group, campaign, and story. This scenario gives you adventure hooks, histories, secrets and clues, notable NPCs, potential encounters, locations, and potential treasure.

Use these components to build your own adventure during prep and play and customize them to best suit your campaign, the situation in the adventure, the interests of your players, and the pacing of the game.

Each section in this scenario suggests how to use these components during prep and play.

Adventure Summary

Having learned of the existence of the Blackfire Braziers and the artifacts able to alight them, the characters seek the confessions of a Knight of the Black Flame known as Sir Gelfred Longshadow. Sir Gelfred had been captured, imprisoned, and tortured at the infamous Dungeon of the Hooded Inquisitor. It's hoped that Sir Gelfred's confessions remain at the location so they may reveal the locations of the two artifacts able to light the Blackfire Braziers.

At this point in the campaign, the characters may or may not have already learned the locations of the Blackfire Braziers themselves in the *Lake of Monoliths* scenario.

Adventure History

Millenia ago, the Nameless King had hundreds of sites where he imprisoned and tortured his enemies in his insatiable desire for the secrets of the world and those beyond. Many of these sites were lost after his fall. Other dungeons became lairs of the remaining followers of the Nameless King who sought to bring this villain back to power.

The Dungeon of the Hooded Inquisitor was one such site. Here one of the Nameless King's torturers remained – a hooded and mute ogre cowled in black, wielding a massive cleaver, and wearing a blood-soaked leather apron adorned with dozens of terrible implements of torture.

Several hundred years ago, the small order of knights known as the Knights of the Black Flame crossed swords with a now-long-defeated sect of the Nameless King. During these battles, the cult captured a Knight of the Black Flame named Sir Gelfred Longshadow. Sir Gelfred was one of few who knew the location and power of the artifacts of the Black Flame – the Sword of Irixthius and the Staff of Servlyn. Each of these artifacts can light the Braziers of Black Flame and unlock the vault of the Key of Worlds, a powerful artifact able to open all of the archways of the City of Arches to worlds beyond.

Luckily, the cult of the Nameless King and the hooded inquisitor didn't know what they had in their hands and never acted upon the information they had extracted from Sir Gelfred. Instead, the locations of the two artifacts remains in the ruins of the Dungeon of the Hooded Inquisitor to this day.

Secrets of the Dungeon of the Hooded Inquisitor

Deliver the following secrets and clues as the characters explore the dungeon. Characters might discover these clues from old confession books, raving spirits, strange statues, and writings on the walls. It is not critical the characters discover every secret – think of them like information as treasure, uncovered as the characters explore the tomb.

- Centuries ago, cultists of the fallen Nameless King captured a Knight of the Black Flame named Sir Gelfred Longshadow. They imprisoned and tortured him at the Dungeon of the Hooded Inquisitor.
- Sir Gelfred's confessions include the locations of the Staff of Servlyn and the Sword of Irixthius – the two artifacts capable of igniting the Blackfire Braziers and unlocking the vault of the Key of Worlds.
- The hooded inquisitor was a hooded ogre now likely long dead. His fell deeds, however, rose him as an ogre zombie.
- The necromancer in charge of the dungeon, Skylex the Whisper, built a soul-harvesting artifact. With it, the Hooded Inquisitor could kill prisoners, trap their souls in this vessel, and push their souls into a new host body to be tortured to death again.

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- The Sword of Irixthius lies in the Tomb of the War King deep in the Endless Warrens outside the City of Arches.
- The Staff of Servlyn lies in the Tower of Therax in the outer chambers of the Lower Reaches.
- Skylex the Whisper was thought to have betrayed the cult of the Nameless King and found himself under the knife of his own creation. He remains still as a wraith, trapped in a radiant-barred cell within the dungeon.
- Skylex once served as a mage of Kartan but was expelled for his heretical research into the resurrection and return of the Nameless King.

Key NPCs

The following is a list of key NPCs for this adventure.

- **Sir Gelfred Longshadow** – One of the Knights of the Black Flame who hid the Key of Worlds and locked it behind the three Braziers of Black Flame. He was one of few who knew the locations of the the two artifacts capable of igniting the blackfire braziers.
- **Skylex the Whisper**. Former mage of Kartan and necromancer of the Cult of the Nameless King. Skylex is now a **wraith** trapped in this dungeon of his own creation.
- **Squire Tenes Spinesoul.** Squire of Sir Gelfred who was trapped in an oubliette and forced to eat his comrades which has now turned him into a **ghast**.

Adventure Start

Use one of the following hooks to draw characters into this scenario:

- The scrolls uncovered in the tomb of the Akrave described the accounts of Sir Gelfred Longshadow and his confessions recorded in the Dungeon of the Hooded Inquisitor. Danvon of Duskwater, mage of the tower of Kartan, seeks adventurers to enter the tomb and recover the accounts of Sir Gelfred's confessions.
- A tiny wisp of the soul of Sir Gelfred Longshadow appears to one of the characters, begs them to end his suffering in the Dungeon of the Hooded Inquisitor, and asks them to protect the information he holds lest it fall into the wrong hands.
- Roselyn Zeshe, spymaster for the queen, learned that the cult known as the Children of Ibraxus hunts for secrets held in the Dungeon of the Hooded Inquisitor. She seeks adventurers to recover this information first and understand what significance it might have to these deranged cultists.

Encounters in the Dungeon

The following is a list of potential inhabitants the characters might run into while exploring Akrave's tomb. Choose the number of creatures as best fits the story and the pacing of your game.

1. **Skeleton** jailors wearing cages over their heads.
2. Hungry **ghouls** sucking the marrow out of old bones.
3. Mechanical **giant spiders** armed with torture implements on their legs.
4. A s**pecter** screaming as they scour the halls for life.
5. **Swarms of rats** running from a flood of acid.
6. **Zombies** of former adventurers slain in the dungeon.
7. **Cultists** of the Children of Ibraxus.
8. **Bandits** of the Bent Nails looking for treasure.
9. A treasure-seeking **scout** trapped in a cage.
10. **Gray oozes** festooned with weapons, formed from the remains of dead tortured soldiers.

DCs, Damage, and Hazards

Though not outwardly trapped, the Dungeon of the Hooded Inquisitor contains several hazards the characters might run into.

The following list offers potential hazards the characters might run into while exploring the dungeon. Roll on this list or choose hazards based on the pacing of the game.

DCs for detecting and disabling these hazards are all 10. Hazards typically inflict 5 (1d10) for single-target traps and 3 (1d6) for multi-target traps.

1. Slamming portcullis.
2. Barbed rusty spikes sticking out of the walls.
3. Collapsing floor into a pit of sharp bones.
4. Spring-loaded iron maiden.
5. Swinging bladed pendulum.
6. Vats or cauldrons filled with acid.

The characters might discover other inhabitants who succumbed to these deadly hazards before the characters arrived.

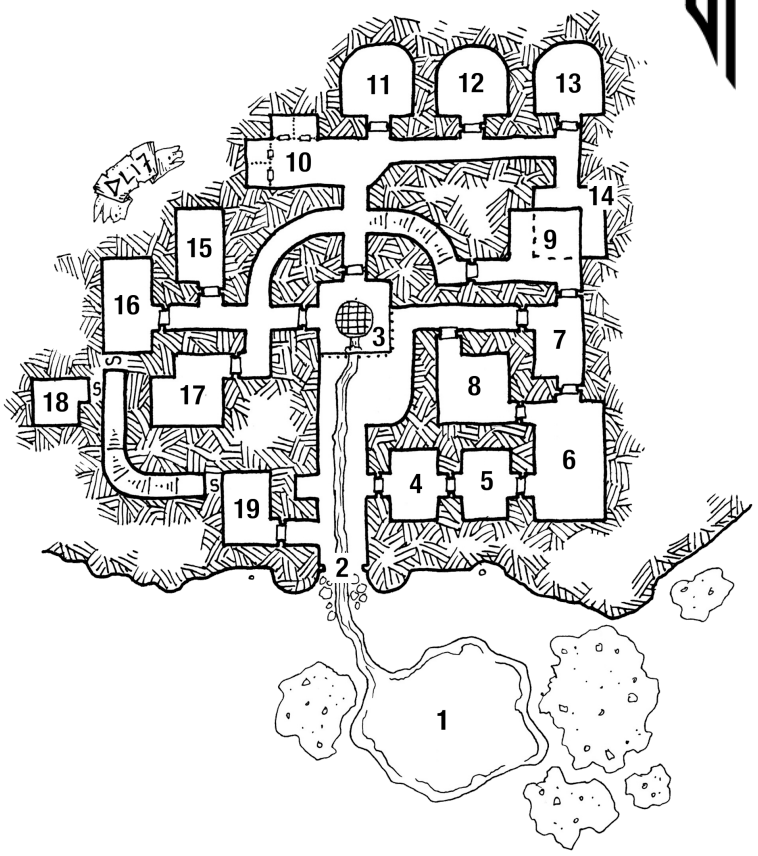
Locations

The Dungeon of the Hooded Inquisitor is hidden in the outer chambers of the Lower Reaches of the City of Arches. Without a map or directions, it is nearly impossible to find. The outer doors of the dungeon appear like a giant fanged skull carved out of rock with a river of acidic liquid flowing from its mouth into a pool.

The dungeon features cracked worked stone, mostly unadorned. The ceilings are 15 feet high in the chambers and 10 feet high in the hallways. The dungeon is unlit. Doors are made from rotted wood bound in rusted iron. Cells are barred in rusted iron.

The following key describes locations portrayed on the map. Add your own details, secrets, and inhabitants to these chambers as desired.

1. Acidic pool filled with ancient skeletons.
2. Shattered dungeon doorway with an acidic rivulet flowing down the center of the hall.
3. Iron sluice that occasionally belches up acidic water from below. Sometimes it belches up rats, zombies, or worse.
4. Guard armory well-picked over by scavengers.
5. Guard barracks shredded by vermin.
6. Warden's office with a throne carved from a giant's skull and manacles on the walls.
7. Destroyed guard station, remains of many battles in this common junction.
8. Large iron maiden with blood grooves flowing into drains.
9. Moldering library of confessions – but not that of Sir Gelfred.
10. Cells for the awaiting containing manacles, skeletons, and raving spirits.
11. Cell filled with dozens of skeletons.
12. Cell of the **wraith** Skylex the Whisper barred with radiant beams from gemstones in the floor and ceiling.
13. Empty cell of Sir Gelfred Longshadow – prayers carved on the walls.
14. Torture chamber of the **ogre zombie** known as the Hooded Inquisitor. Soul vault containing the spirit of Sir Gelfred. Zombie corpses ready to be reanimated for further tortures.
15. Cell of private confessions. Spider-like torture construct hanging from the ceiling.
16. Obulette of Squire Tenes Spinesoul, now a **ghoul** after having devoured his fellow squires.
17. Private chamber of Brother Krave, priest of Kelthys the Lady of Screams and taker of confessions, now a **specter**.
18. Hidden dungeon treasury.
19. Chapel of Kelthys – Lady of Screams, goddess of torture and confessions.



The Knight's Confession

Chamber 14 contains the torture chamber of the hooded inquisitor. Here the Hooded Inquisitor, now an **ogre zombie** continually tortures and slays the spirit of Sir Gelfred Longshadow whose soul flows into a large cylinder in the center chamber – a soul-vault built by Skylex. The soul vault is connected to several iron sarcophagi in which zombies writhe. With a lever on the wall, the hooded inquisitor can push Gelfred's soul from the vessel into one of the zombies and then conduct his tortures again.

For the centuries this has continued, Gelfred has yet to give up the locations of the Staff of Servlyn or the Sword of Irixthius. Doing so serves no purpose anyway since the hooded inquisitor doesn't actually take confessions anymore.

Should the characters slay the Hooded Inquisitor and attempt to free Gelfred's soul, he will impart the locations of these items, knowing that dangerous forces seek them as well and that the vault of the Key of Worlds is under attack from worlds other than this. He has felt as much in his spectral form.

Should the circumstances prevent Sir Gelfred from giving the characters this information, they might learn it from confessions kept in Brother Krave's chambers in area 17 or from the ghoul squire, Tenes Spinesoul in area 16.

Treasures

A handful of chambers in the dungeon of the Hooded Inquisitor hold items and treasures taken from those imprisoned and tortured in these halls. Those foolish adventurers who came to the dungeon and fell likewise left their own treasures behind.

Use the sample treasure list below to inspire the treasures the characters might discover. You can include one large treasure horde on the dungeon or split up this treasure into separate amounts found in different places.

The total treasure found in the dungeon includes a total of 150 GP in mixed coins, gemstones, and jewelry.

Consumable Magic Items

You can also include the following consumable magic items somewhere in the dungeon.

- *Spell Scroll* (3rd-level, *Slow*)
- *Dust of Disappearance*

Permanent Magic Items

If desired, place one of the following permanent magic items somewhere in the dungeon.

- *+1 shadowy chain mail armor*. This armor does not have a penalty to stealth checks. A character can use their bonus action to gain advantage on their next stealth check for one minute. This ability returns at the next dawn.
- *Gauntlets of Ogre Power*
- *+1 lightning-touched trident* called “Stormspire”. As an action, a character attuned to Stormspire can cast the spell *thunderwave* with a DC of 13. This ability resets at the next dawn.

Further Adventures

Once the characters complete this scenario, they can continue their adventures by choosing one of the following paths.

- The characters can travel to the Tomb of the War King in the Cliffs of the Dead to recover the *Sword of Irixthius*.
- The characters can travel to the Tower of Therax in the outer chambers of the Lower Reaches to recover the *Staff of Servlyn*.
- If they have not yet done so, the characters can travel to the Lake of Monoliths to find the locations of the Blackfire Braziers.