

DUNGEON DELVE ADVENTURE #4

# SECRET OF THE SILVER SPIRE

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A FIRST EDITION ADVENTURE FOR 4-8 CHARACTERS LEVELS 3-7



The outlandishly-shaped tower appeared from nowhere, its smooth walls the color of quicksilver brilliantly reflecting the rays of the sun. Is this the abode of some devil or demi-god? No one, not even the wisest sages, can say for sure. Now your group of stalwart adventurers travel towards this gleaming Spire. None of you know what its strange façade hides — glory or death!

This module contains eight levels of the tower for characters to explore, maps of said levels, a cut-away map of the Spire, six new monsters, and many unusual and special items and encounters.

DUNGEON DELVES by Dungeoneers Guild Games are classic-style adventures with minimal plot for use with the Advanced 1st edition game. With little effort they can easily be adapted to most fantasy role-playing games, including the Advanced 2nd edition game, the Original game, the B/X and BECMI (“Basic”) games, and most old-school renaissance (OSR) role-playing systems.

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## SECRET OF THE SILVER SPIRE

### INTRODUCTION

**Secret of the Silver Spire** is an adventure for 4 to 8 characters of levels 3 to 7 (about 30 levels in total). The Game Master (GM) should thoroughly read the module text before play to ensure he or she has a good understanding of the encounter areas and opponents the party will face. This adventure favors no single type of character class. As such, an even mix of character class types offers the players the best opportunity for success.

### BACKGROUND & NOTES FOR THE GAME MASTER

During this adventure, the player characters (PCs) explore a mysterious tower. Whether or not this structure has a proper name is not known, as all who encounter it and those who dwell in it simply call it the “Silver Spire”. Indeed, few know anything of where the tower came from, who built it, who lives there, or what its purpose is.

In reality, the Silver Spire is not an artificial construction, but a massive living organism in the form of a tower. Its principal inhabitants — an ancient race of beings called the sylitheen, who are also referred to as the “silver masters” or “shining ones” — have learned the secrets of how to mold the creature’s body to suit their own ends. Using arcane powers and sciences, they formed the organism into the shape it now retains — the gleaming structure that serves as their home. These beings also discovered the secret of moving the Spire to other planes by means of interdimensional travel. By harnessing this power, the immortal sylitheen restlessly travels to manifold alternate Prime Material Planes searching for exotic goods and beings to study, or simply add to their prodigious collection. These amassed goods are housed in the many storerooms found throughout the tower. The Spire itself possesses a number of unusual features that the players will encounter as the adventure unfolds (see the “**Physical Properties of the Spire**” section, p. 3, for details).

Various types of servants attend to the wishes of the silver masters. A race of intelligent ape-men called the barzani oversee the sylitheen’s holdings and maintain the functions of the Spire. These creatures use and operate several technological (or “magitech”) devices and machines the likes of which the PCs find wholly alien and unfamiliar. As such, the GM should be completely familiar with the tower inhabitants and their devices prior to commencing play of this module.

Finally, the barzani command a small army of lesser modrons who serve as laborers and guards. These are the most numerous inhabitants who dwell in the tower. It should be noted that these beings do not permanently die if slain within the Spire. Instead, they reform after a short period of time. This should encourage the PCs to keep moving and not tarry overmuch. If the GM believes this feature will make the adventure overly difficult, then, by all means, dispense with it as you see fit. See AREA 136 for further details.

### GETTING STARTED

As with most DUNGEON DELVE adventures, this module contains

little or no plot, and has no predetermined adventure hook to get the players involved. This is by no means an oversight of design. Instead, it is an intentional feature that allows you — the Game Master — to make playing this module a unique experience, tailoring it to fit your own campaign with little difficulty. A minimal plot allows you to use this module as a stand-alone expedition, or as an adventure integrated into an existing campaign. As the GM, you should first read over the module in its entirety. Look for clues and hints in it to serve as seeds you can use to grow a plot. Think of the text of the adventure as the foundation and frame of a building that you side, shingle, and paint to fit your preferences and needs.

Listed below are a few plot hook suggestions to get you started:

1. Whilst traveling through the wilderness en route to an adventure, the party stumbles across the Spire. A few miles from the silvery edifice, they are attacked by a gang of modrons led by a handful of ape-men (i.e., the barzani). Possibly, the PCs end up being captured in the confrontation, and are taken into the Spire as captives. Otherwise, they encounter a concerned friendly non-player character (NPC) or creature (e.g., ranger, brownie, swanmay, lammasu, etc.) who tells them of the sudden appearance of the tower, and its unearthly inhabitants who raid nearby settlements.
2. The Spire has recently appeared a dozen or so miles from a large village or small town. Farmers and shepherds have reported seeing bands of bizarre-looking creatures roaming the countryside. Even more disconcerting, these creatures have raided a few out-of-the-way steadings, carrying off their residents and property. The mayor of the town enlists the party to investigate these strange happenings and to look for the missing citizens.
3. A high-level magic-user (or cleric or renowned sage) hires the party to seek out and explore the Spire. After decades of studying tomes of forgotten lore, performing countless divinations, and consulting with extraplanar denizens, the wizard believes that he has pinpointed the exact time and place it will appear on this world. His esoteric knowledge, however, has only uncovered a few scant bits of information on the mysterious tower, such as that it can travel between dimensions. He asks the PCs to go and investigate it to uncover any information they can about its purpose and who or what built it.

### ADVENTURE SECTIONS

The numbered areas on the module’s maps are keyed to a specific encounter description that has one or more section headings detailing its contents and/or occupants. Each type of section heading is described below. Note that numbered areas will only contain those headings that are pertinent to the area.

**Illumination:** Notes the type of illumination in an area when first entered by the PCs. Most rooms in the Spire are lit the same, thus this section notes only those areas with different illumination or when the lighting is turned off (see “**Physical Properties of the Spire, Lighting**”, p. 4, for details).

**Door(s):** This section indicates whether any doors to the area are open, locked, and/or trapped when first tested by the PCs. The GM

should note any changes to doors with subsequent visits to the same area. As noted in “**Physical Properties of the Spire, Doors**”, p. 4, nearly all interior doors function identically to one another.

**GMs Note:** Alerts the GM of any special considerations of an area that might affect the PCs, occupants, or environment.

**Description:** This section provides a physical description of an area as it appears when first encountered by the PCs. The GM should not read this section to the players verbatim but should instead paraphrase as they deem necessary. The area’s description should be amended if its occupants or contents are destroyed, removed, or altered during play.

**Encounter:** Any monsters or NPCs located in the area are noted in this section.

**Tactics:** This section provides general notes on the tactics used by any monsters or NPCs in combat upon encountering the PCs for the first time.

**Alert:** This section informs the GM of any special considerations that might arise after the PCs enter the area.

**Development:** This section notes any consequences that might arise from PCs entering a particular area that could later affect encounters in other areas.

**Treasure:** Any treasure found within the area is detailed in this section.

## ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations appear throughout this module:

**AC** = Armor Class; **MV** = Move; **MC** = Maneuverability Class; **HD** = Hit Dice; **hp** = hit points; **#AT** = Number of Attacks; **Dmg** = Damage; **SA** = special attack; **SD** = special defense; **MR** = magic resistance; **INT** = monster’s intelligence rating; **AL** = alignment; **L** = large size; **M** = medium size; **S** = small size; **xp** = experience point value; **THACO** = the number to hit AC 0; **C** = chaotic; **L** = lawful; **E** = evil; **G** = good; **N** = neutral; **F** = Fighter; **MU** = Magic-User; **C** = Cleric; **T** = Thief; **S** = Strength, **I** = Intelligence, **W** = Wisdom, **D** = Dexterity, **C** = Constitution, **CH** = Charisma; **d** = type of die; **rd/rds** = round/rounds; **cp** = copper piece; **sp** = silver piece; **ep** = electrum piece; **gp** = gold piece; **pp** = platinum piece.

## KEY TO THE SILVER SPIRE

### PHYSICAL PROPERTIES OF THE SPIRE

The Silver Spire is quite unlike any structure found on the PCs’ homeworld. As a living, semi-sentient being, originating from an alternate Prime Material Plane, it possesses only the similitude of a non-organic, constructed edifice. The silver masters — through eldritch magics and science — commanded the being into its present form to serve their desires. It should be considered impossible for the PCs to learn the secrets of controlling the Spire in this adventure because it surpasses their capacity and understanding.

The Spire is a self-contained building with its own air, water, lighting, and power supply. All the elements listed below are parts formed from the organism. This includes the engines and large machinery, such as the water pumps, located within it. All other material (e.g., furnishings, weapons, tools, containers, etc.) is of a non-organic nature not part of the Spire. Ceiling height is 20’ on LEVELS 1 to 6.



**Structure & Walls:** The walls, ceilings, and floors of the Spire are constructed from a hard material that feels much like shell or carapace, but that possesses the strength of steel.

The Spire’s *exterior walls* are smooth with no seams, indentations, or windows visible. Its chrome silver surface reflects the surrounding light, and often flickers with an iridescent radiance. Decorative scrollwork of flowing geometric designs cover sections of its surface, mostly on the tower arms and domes, and along its base. Periodically, white steam vents from small openings that quickly appear and disappear on the exterior surface. Six exterior staircases on the ground level provide access to the structure. These appear as gray-colored steps rising up 10’ from the ground to large circular openings in AREAS 2, 3, 18, 24, 39, and 40 (qq.v.). The exterior surface of the Spire is exceptionally strong. Each 10’ x 10’ section of wall possesses a Structural Defensive value of 40 points (see DMG, pp. 109-110 for details). Consider the walls as “Hard Rock” for purposes of determining which attack forms affect them and how much damage they inflict. All other types of attack forms, including blows from normal weapons, cause negligible damage to the outer walls. The Spire regenerates damage inflicted upon its structure, both interior and exterior, at a rate of 20 hit points/1 Structural Defensive point per turn.

The *interior walls* effectively deaden all but the loudest noises. Loud sounds (e.g., melee) have a 2 in 6 (33 1/3%) chance of being heard in adjacent rooms, while very loud sounds (e.g., a lightning bolt discharge) have a 4 in 6 (66 2/3%) chance. The interior walls and ceilings of LEVELS 1 to 4 are light gray with dark gray floors. Those on LEVELS 5 and 6 are pale green with pale yellow speckling in the upper portions with dark green floors. The interior surfaces of LEVELS 7 and 8 are salmon colored fading to a mottled russet.



**Pipes & Ducts:** Most (60%) rooms and passages have 1d12 visible pipes or ducts located on the walls or ceilings that look similar to veins or arteries. These carry water, air, vapor, power, and heat to all areas of the Spire. Exposed pipes and ducts can withstand 1d12+6 points of damage from heavy blows, or destructive spells or effects, to a single location before rupturing. Roll below to determine the effect of a burst pipe/duct:

**1d12 Result**

- 1-4 Nothing happens.
- 5 Drizzles water for 2d10 rounds.
- 6 Harmless gas issues from the pipe/duct for 1d12 rounds.
- 7 A high-pressure stream of water that obscures vision in a 20' radius sprays up to 20' for 1d8 rounds.
- 8 A broken heat duct raises the temperature by 1d4 x 10 degrees in a 30' radius for 1d6 turns. Creatures remaining in the heat suffer 1 point of damage per 10 degrees each full turn of exposure.
- 9 Harmless vapor obscures a 10' x 10' x 10' area. The cloud lingers for 2d4 rounds.
- 10 A broken power line shoots out sparks that inflict 1d4 damage to anyone within a 5' radius. This continues for 3d4 rounds until the line heals itself.
- 11 A 10' long blast of scalding steam inflicts 2d6 damage to anyone in its path. It continues for 1d6 rounds, and obscures vision in a 10' cube for each round it sprays.
- 12 A 6 HD **lightning quasi-elemental** (hp 30) appears from a broken, sparking power line attacking anyone nearby.

**Duct Openings:** Each room typically has 1d4–1 duct openings located in the walls near the floor or ceiling that lead to internally located pipes and ducts. These openings provide heat and air to an area. The openings range from 2 to 24 (2d12) inches wide. Note a halfling or gnome can fit into the larger ducts, though they must remove most of their armor and gear to do so. Internal ducts have many twists and turns (often tight), branches, and vertical shafts that makes navigating them difficult. Furthermore, the ducts are favored hiding places of the vermin that inhabit the Spire, many of which are deadly and stealthy.

**Doors:** External and internal doors within the Spire appear as slightly discolored, portal-shaped sections of a wall. When a living being approaches this wall section, it quavers momentarily before fully dissipating. This takes about a half segment (3 seconds) of time to complete. Open doors automatically close after 1 turn unless verbally commanded (in any language) to stay open. The spells *hold portal*, *wizard lock*, and *knock* (qq.v.) function as normal on any door in the Spire, unless noted otherwise.

The *exterior doors* are circular in shape and either 5' or 10' in diameter but can expand up to 18' in diameter like the interior doors (see below). Additionally, anyone wearing a *rank collar* can, upon command, cause the doors to turn semi-translucent to allow for viewing outside or cause the doors to seal shut. These exterior valves remain unlocked unless an immediate threat is nearby. The 5' wide exterior doors can withstand 16 points of Structural Defensive damage before being destroyed, while the 10' ones can withstand twice that amount. As with the exterior walls, the doors are equal to "Hard Rock" for attack form and damage purposes.

*Interior doors* are 4' wide by 7' high and oval-shaped. They automatically expand up to 10' wide by 16' high to accommodate beings or objects of larger sizes passing through them, and possess no means of locking. However, cell doors, like those in AREA 12, do not expand and can lock.

**Stairwells:** Within the Spire these are typically of the spiral type which wrap around the walls of an enclosed cylinder.

**Lighting:** Pale white light that emanates from the surface of the ceiling illuminates each room of the Spire. Its engines provide power for these lights. Lighting operates by verbal commands spoken in any language, or via telepathic command. Typical commands include phrases such as "lights on" or "lights off". The lights can also be commanded to dim by saying "lights dim" or "lights half". Those wearing a *rank collar* can override any light change command. Rooms in the Spire always have their lights fully on unless noted otherwise in the room description.

**Com-orbs:** These two-way communication devices appear as opaque, fist-sized crystal spheres affixed to a wall-mounted escutcheon plate. They are typically found in areas where quick messaging is paramount, such as security stations. Speaking a room's name and level into a *com-orb* in any language allows the speaker to contact the corresponding *com-orb* in the desired room. Those in the contacted room can communicate with the being at the other orb by speaking into the device. An area's keyed description notes if a *com-orb* is present, as well as on the level maps of the Spire.

**Disposal Chutes:** Accumulated refuse that cannot be reused or recycled is discarded into the many disposal openings found throughout the Spire. This material moves through internal ducts that make their way to one of three **disposal rooms** where it is destroyed (see AREA 19 for details). Chute openings are 3' high by 4' wide and are marked on the level maps with a "DC".

**Storerooms** (AREAS 7, 9, 13, 23, 25, 28, 29, 33, 48, 61, 63, 66, 71, & 76): The Spire's many storerooms hold supplies for use by its inhabitants along with numerous unique items collected from the diverse alternate worlds it has visited. These items are stored in boxes constructed from an unknown, lightweight shell-like material that is as strong as iron and dull gray in color. Each box has a removable lid that slides open and can hold solid or liquid matter. There are three standard container sizes: small (2½' x 2½' x 2½'), medium (5' x 5' x 5'), and large (7½' x 7½' x 7½'). The keyed text of each storeroom lists the total number of boxes it contains and their sizes. Additionally, each storeroom holds a few unique items, as detailed in its area description.

Most assuredly, players will desire to open some of the boxes found in the storerooms to explore their contents. To determine the contents of each box, first roll a d6 on the **Box Item Number Table** below to find the number of different types of items it holds. Next, roll a d100 on the **Random Box Contents Table** to determine each content type. Re-roll any items too large for the box's size. Double, treble, or even quadruple the number of items stored in larger boxes, as desired. The GM is free to modify any box's contents as they see fit, by changing the amount or type of items, be it ones found in this module, or with new items not found herein.