

DUNGEON CRAWL CLASSICS

SAILORS ON THE STARLESS SEA

#67: A LEVEL 0 ADVENTURE
BY HARLEY STROH



DK 2010

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A LEVEL 0 ADVENTURE

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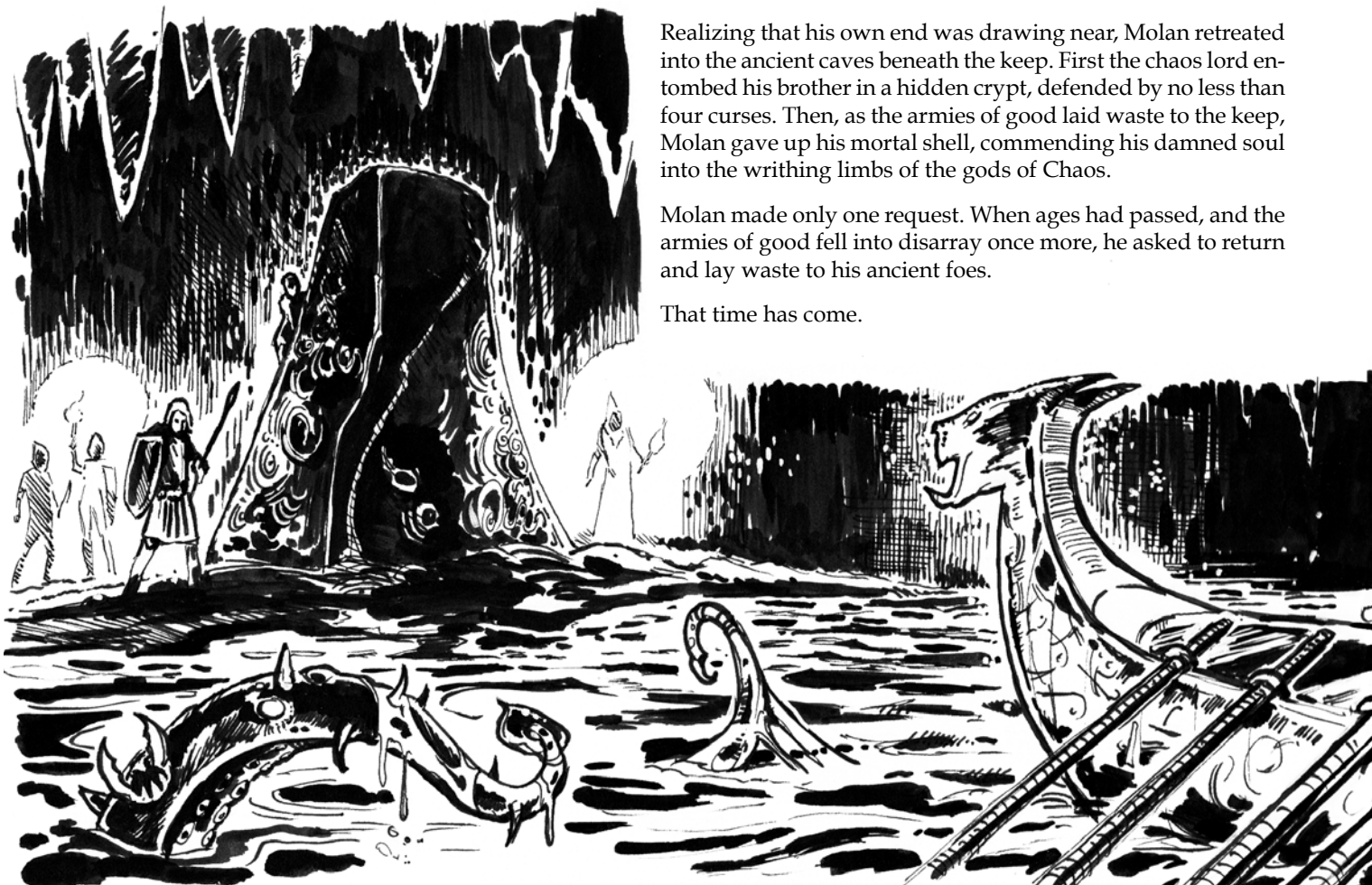


INTRODUCTION

Remember the good old days, when adventures were underground, NPCs were there to be killed, and the finale of every dungeon was the dragon on the 20th level? Those days are back. Dungeon Crawl Classics adventures don't waste your time with long-winded speeches, weird campaign settings, or NPCs who aren't meant to be killed. Each adventure is 100% good, solid dungeon crawl, with the monsters you know, the traps you remember, and the secret doors you know are there somewhere.

This adventure is designed for 10 to 15 0-level characters. Remember that each player should have 3 characters. In playtest groups of 15 PCs, 7 or 8 typically survive. The adventure can also be enjoyed by a party of 1st- to 2nd-level characters who are aided by hirelings.

Bent on stopping the rash of abductions plaguing their village, the characters discover a horde of vile beastmen inhabiting the ancient keep on the hill. Seeking the source of these abominations, the PCs uncover an ancient chaos cult and its source: an antediluvian ziggurat set in the center of a vast, underground sea. There, at the font of chaos, the PCs witness a wicked rite culminating in the sacrifice of their fellow villagers. If the PCs can interrupt the rite before its conclusion and stave off the re-birth of the legendary chaos lord, they stand a chance of escaping the underworld alive. But if their courage or luck should fail them, the PCs will suffer a fate more fearsome than death, their spirits fueling the infernal might of the reborn chaos lord.



BACKGROUND

Through the ages past, innumerable chaos cults flourished on the edge of civilization. For each holy spire rising to extol the virtues of goodness and law, there was an infernal reflection, offering mankind material power and wealth in exchange for cruel acts and bloody sacrifice. Humanity was a young and foolish race, and many a prince and peon sold his soul in exchange for power over his foeman. But as civilization endured, uniting tribes into clans and clans into kingdoms, slowly the light of law beat back the chaos.

Not to be outdone, the powers of chaos and evil sought out champions of profound wickedness and cruelty, mortals possessed of the strength of will to lead the hordes of chaos against the armies of the enemy.

These champions were the chaos lords.

The brothers Molan and Felan were two such champions. Vicious and cunning beyond measure, and without a scrap of mercy in their war-hardened hearts, they led hordes of bestial humanoids to victory against the armies of good. With the spoils of their bloody campaigns, they raised a mighty keep and rained terror and violence down upon all in their demesne.

In the end, the brothers' success was their undoing. Disparate forces of men, dwarves, and elves rallied together in a crusade against the wicked chaos lords. For thirty-nine days, the allies laid siege to the foul keep. And on the fortieth day, the captain of the elves dealt Felan a mortal blow.

Realizing that his own end was drawing near, Molan retreated into the ancient caves beneath the keep. First the chaos lord entombed his brother in a hidden crypt, defended by no less than four curses. Then, as the armies of good laid waste to the keep, Molan gave up his mortal shell, commending his damned soul into the writhing limbs of the gods of Chaos.

Molan made only one request. When ages had passed, and the armies of good fell into disarray once more, he asked to return and lay waste to his ancient foes.

That time has come.

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Since time immemorial, you and your people have toiled in the shadow of the cyclopean ruins. Of mysterious origins and the source of many a superstition, they have always been considered a secret best left unknown by the folk of your hamlet.

But now something stirs beneath the crumbling blocks. Beastmen howl in the night and your fellow villagers are snatched from their beds. With no heroes to defend you, who will rise to stand against the encircling darkness? The secrets of Chaos are yours to unearth, but at what cost to sanity or soul?

An introductory adventure for the Dungeon Crawl Classics Role Playing Game, *Sailors on the Starless Sea* pits a mob of 0-level adventurers against the legacy of the Chaos Lords and their corrupted hordes. Delving beneath the crumbling ruins, the characters discover ancient crypts, a starless sea, and an ancient ziggurat, where death and treasure await in equal measure!



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