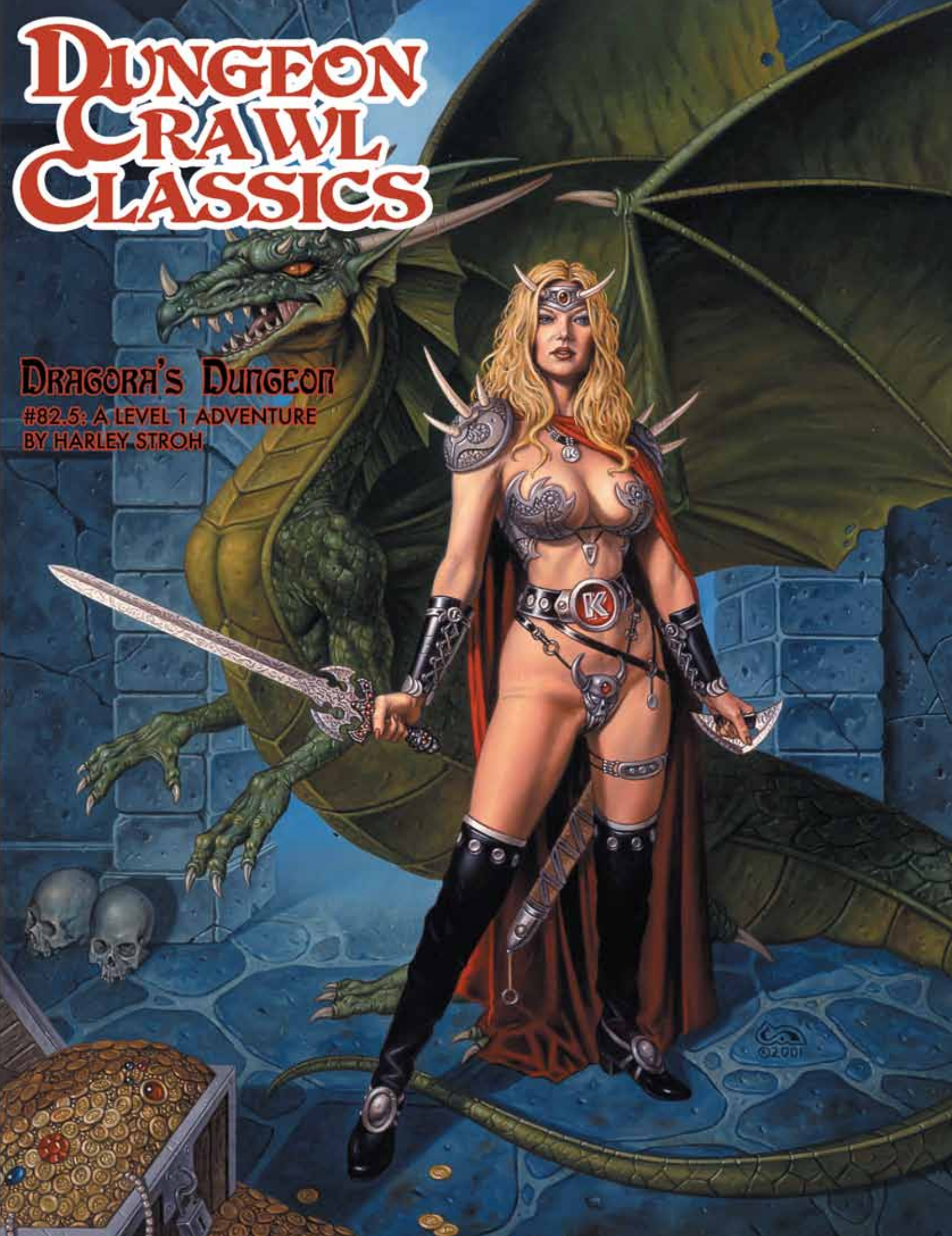


DUNGEON CRAWL CLASSICS

DRAGONA'S DUNGEON

#82.5: A LEVEL 1 ADVENTURE

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DRAGORA'S DUNGEON

A LEVEL 1 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 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 fear, and the secret doors you know are there somewhere.

Legendary heroes are the result of epic adventures. While some explorers wile away their lives battling kobolds and goblins over grubby pieces of gold, heroes answer the call to high adventure. Many will try and many will fail, but those that survive will have earned the fated title of conqueror.

Dragora's Dungeon is designed for five 1st-level characters but can easily be scaled to accommodate higher-level PCs or larger adventuring companies. A high fantasy adventure that pits the heroes against a warrior-queen, her green dragon lover, and the remnants of an ancient civilization, Dragora's Dungeon is designed to challenge a well-balanced party of adventurers. Players accustomed to cleaving their way through any obstacle will be sorely tested, but careful play coupled with courage (and no small amount of luck) will surely prevail!

Caution: While Dragora's Dungeon is for low-level *characters*, it is not recommended for first-time judges or players. The adventure is designed to reward intelligent play, just as foolish choices must surely be punished. But for players and judges looking for a challenging, dynamic adventure, Dragora's Dungeon will not disappoint.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY



Many eons ago, the fabled sorcerer-kings of Parhok perished in a rain of eldritch fire. But legends hold that one tribe survived the apocalypse, fleeing with their slaves to a hidden city. There the greatest enchanters of all time slept away the centuries, and awaken in a future age as rulers of a ruined land.

Now, once more the forbidden spells of the Parhok threaten the Known Realms. A kingdom lies ensorcelled, and a royal family is ensnared by the forgotten dweomers of a long-dead race. When the best attempts of seers and diviners have failed, the call goes out for adventurers courageous enough to save a kingdom from certain doom.

Tracking an assassin back to its lair, the PCs discover a yawning chasm opening to seething mists. Plumbing the depths of the chasm, they uncover an arcane vault from a forgotten age. What appears at first to be merely the remnants of a lost civilization is swiftly revealed to be something altogether more sinister: A race of ape-men – once slaves to the enchanters of Parhok – has inherited their master's cruel legacy. Duped by a dragon pretending to be

the living incarnation of the ancient Dragon-God Baphotet Kor, the ape-men are massing for an assault on the surface lands. Can the heroes defeat an army of ape-men and their sinister commanders? Or will they be the latest to succumb to Dragora's Dungeon?

ENCOUNTER TABLE

Location	Type	Encounter
A-1	C	Zain-kin assassin
1-1	C	2 Zain-kin legionnaires
1-1a	T	Rubble trap
1-1b	T	Pit trap
1-2	C/T	Phammut the Imp Needledrake swarm 10 Skeletons Primordial ooze
1-4a	T/C	Crushing boulder trap 3 Bristleback spiders
2-1a	C	Sicuriyu
2-1b	C	Vine horror
2-1c	T	Quicksand pit
2-2a	T	Hidden sinkhole
2-3	C	Rock viper swarm
2-4	C	3 Serpentine wraiths
2-5	C	5 Ghost drakes
3-1	C/P	Zain-kin hastati, legionnaires, and centurions
3-2	C/P	Domastrus, zain-kin warlord 3 Zain-kin legionaries
3-3	P	Variable
3-4	P	Variable
4-1	C	Mouringlar the Dragon Various zain-kin
4-2	C	2 Zain-kin legionnaires
4-3	C	2 Zain-kin assassins Pendulum scythes
4-4	C	Lady Dragora
Conclusion	C	Lady Dragora Mouringlar the Dragon



BACKGROUND



he unbridled ambition of mankind has always been its greatest strength, yet history has shown – time and again – those that hunger for power must ever end their lives in tragedy. And perhaps no race of man was more ambitious than the fabled enchanter of Parhok.

The seers and sages cannot agree on the events that led to Parhok's demise. Some claim that the wizards fell to warring amongst themselves. Others hypothesize that, intoxicated with their god-like power, the enchanters dared to reshape the world in their vision. Others point to ancient scrolls that hint that the enchanters, seeking to discover the source of magic, tapped into a fount beyond even their control.

Regardless of the reasons, the outcome is not in dispute: torrents of fire and brimstone rained destruction down upon the golden towers and shining spires, and in a fortnight, the mighty empire of Parhok was no more.

But not all the enchanters perished in the apocalypse. Legends hold that seven cabals sought refuge from the cataclysm. Their fates are all retold in apocryphal, dubious tales, but whether or not any of the magi survived, many certainly *sought* shelter from the rain of fire.

Chief among them was a cabal of enchanters known as the Ordo Thraxus, a circle renowned for their love of slavery and devotion to the Dragon-God Baphotet Kor. The Ordo fled underground to wait out the apocalypse, hoping to return in the next eon as rulers over a ruined land. While the mages slept out the ages, their weakening physical shells would be cared for by their creations: a slave race of ape-like creatures called zain-kin.

Their plans worked all too well, and the ape-men displayed far more intelligence and cunning than their masters had ever intended. Once the mages slipped into the ageless sleep, their slaves rose up and cast down their masters. Unable to break the eldritch seals that trapped them beneath the earth, the ape-men settled into lives of isolation, ruling their prison in imitation of their past masters.

THE LOST CITY OF THE PARHOK

When the zain-kin cast down their cruel overseers, it brought an end to the great magics that sustained the city. In the chaos that followed, majestic towers collapsed, blood cascaded down the steps of the Temple of Baphotet Kor, and fires raged. When the slaughter had ended, the fabled enchanters of Parhok had been laid low by their own slaves.

Some residual enchantments persisted, but they grew weaker by the century. The forgotten city's days were numbered, and the knowledge of this weighed upon the new zain-kin lords. In an attempt to save their kind, the lords revived the old ways, embracing the martial law once im-

posed on them by their slave masters, and taking up the worship of the Dragon-God with religious zeal. Ape-man warred against ape-man, competing for limited resources, and the zain-kin fractured into scores of tribes. Eventually 3 tribes rose to dominate the rest, but with no one powerful enough to quell all challengers, the zain-kin seemed doomed to battle themselves into extinction.

RETURN OF THE DRAGON

The zain-kin might have continued to live undisturbed, were it not for the legacy of the Parhok. Tales of the enchanter's might fired the imaginations of treasure seekers and sages across the Known World. While many sought to acquire the legacy of the Parhok, none were as persistent as Lady Dragora. Aided by her lover, the dragon Mouringlar, the warrior-princess uncovered ancient texts recording the flight of the Ordo, and their retreat beneath the earth. Retracing the steps of the Parhok, Lady Dragora discovered the location of the enchanter's redoubt and dismissed the eldritch seals that had stood undisturbed since before recorded history.

The shattering of the seals released a series of arcane spells intended to herald Parhok's return. The land heaved and trembled, lightning rained down from the heavens, and the earth was rent asunder. A mighty, seething chasm was torn open, and an army of zain-kin emerged.

Exiled from her homeland, the villainous Dragora sought out the lost city of the Parhok. Joined by the dragon Mouringlar, her investigations brought her to a chasm hidden deep in heart of an ancient wood. Together, Dragora and Mouringlar explored the depths of the chasm, and then passed through the ancient portal, arriving in the city of Parhok.

The zain-kin dismissed the arrival of Dragora, her appearance resembling their stories of ancient Parhok slave masters. But when the ape-men saw the dragon that accompanied the warrior-princess, they fell to their knees in abject worship: Baphotet Kor, the god of monsters from out of time, was made manifest before them.

The zain-kin stood in the presence of a god.

United under Mouringlar's leadership (secretly directed by Dragora), the zain-kin have begun rebuilding their ancient city. Once more the ancient wyrmpoortals crackle with eldritch flames, permitting raids upon the surface lands. The three great tribes, having warred for so long, laid down their blood vendettas, and instead took up the banner of Baphotet Kor.

Of course, not all is as it seems. While each of the three zain-kin lords pay lip service to Mouringlar, only two of the tribes truly believe that the young dragon is the divine avatar of the Parhok's god. And even those that do believe cannot help but wonder at the wisdom of embracing a god worshiped by their former slave masters. The zain-kin are a proud, savage race, and the slightest upset would be enough to return them to bloody, internecine warfare.

