

DUNGEON CRAWL CLASSICS

THE CURSE OF THE RINGSPIRE

#88.5: A LEVEL 2 ADVENTURE
BY HARLEY STROH



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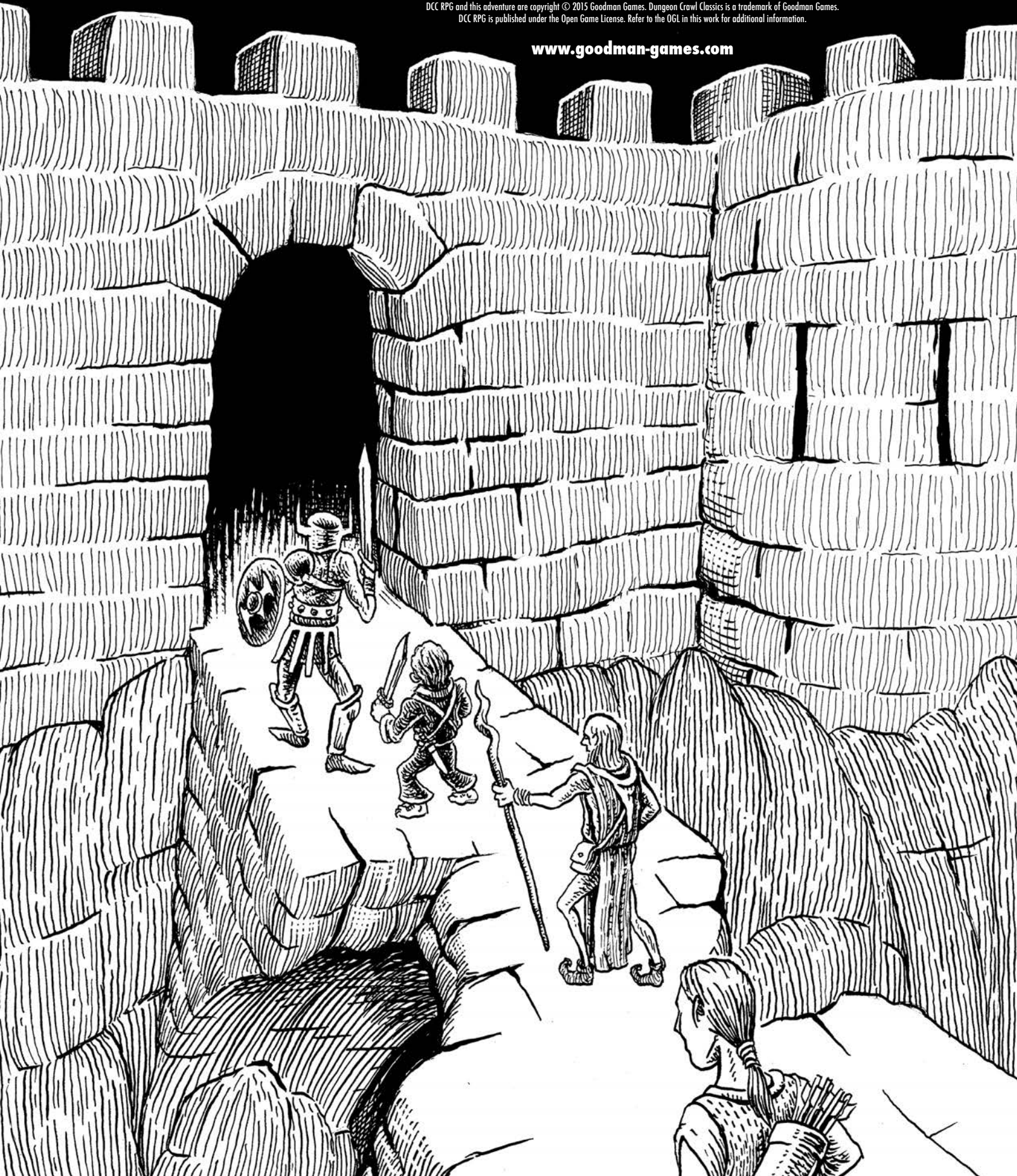
A LEVEL 2 ADVENTURE

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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.

Legends are born from epic heroes and timeless adventures. While some are content to wile away their lives wresting grubby pieces of copper from kobolds and goblins, a select few are called to high adventure. Many will rise and many will fall, but those that survive will have earned the fated title of Hero.

Curse of Kingspire is designed for 5 characters of 2nd level, but can easily be scaled to accommodate higher-level PCs or larger adventuring companies. Elves will enjoy moments in the spotlight, with special encounters keyed for (or against) them. Wizards will find special challenges amid the eldritch secrets concealed by the Kingspire, thieves will be tested during the infiltration of the citadel, and warriors of every stripe will find foes aplenty to challenge them.

Caution: Like all Master Dungeons, *Curse of Kingspire* 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. New players, testing their

character's wings may find the adventure unforgiving and harsh, while new judges may be challenged when the adventure calls for improvisation. There are many other excellent adventures eminently more suitable for beginning players and judges.

However, for players and judges looking for a challenging, dynamic adventure, or for those brazen enough to laugh in the face of danger, the Kingspire awaits!

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The *Curse of the Kingspire* takes place in three distinct chapters, each requiring – and rewarding – its own style of game play. The first chapter, focusing on the infiltration of a shire and the ruins atop the ridge known as the Kingspire, rewards careful infiltration, and quick, deadly strikes. The second chapter, taking place in a distant, otherworldly realm where the Kingspire is eternally under siege, rewards role-playing and problem solving. The final chapter, set in the gloomy underworld beneath Old Kingspire is a violent, bloody climax, where the PCs must use both wit and brawn to overcome monstrous foes.

The adventure begins with the adventurers investigating rumors of demon worship on the outskirts of the realm. Happening upon the hamlet of Kingshire, the PCs discover it devoid of inhabitants, save for a few cultic devotees. The leader of the cult, driven to insanity by the encroaching madness that roils and seethes amid the foul mists of the Drachenvold, has been sacrificing his fellow villagers to the fell power that lurks within the ruins of the Kingspire citadel. While Arkos aims to restore his people to greatness, the rite he is enacting has far graver results.

Investigating the abandoned hamlet of Kingshire, the PCs encounter a band of cultists, a rearguard ordered to ward off any that might risk interrupting Arkos' fell rite. Continuing with their investigations, the PCs press into the Drachenvold swamp, where they encounter the sinister remains of Arkos' wicked deeds.

Arriving at Kingspire citadel, the PCs infiltrate the ruined keep, by guile or by blade, bypassing guardian sentries and traps and finally encountering Arkos, the leader of the cult. In a climatic battle, Arkos' hellish rite comes to a head, resulting in an eldritch apocalypse the washes over the adventurers, transporting them through space and time to Old Kingspire, where an eternal battle wages.

In order to escape this extra-dimensional prison, the PCs must ply their guile against the sinister Crow King and his Twilight Court. Winning the graces of the king (or failing that, one of his rivals), the PCs discover the secret that will win their release:

The Twilight Court is divided, the eldest son of the Elder Kith exiled to the endless caves beneath the Kingspire. When he fled from his treacherous family, the rogue lord stole an ancient *Runeblade* in his flight. That same relic

HANDOUT A

MY BROTHER LED HIS REMAINING HENCHMAN, TEN TORMORIANS AND TWISTED KITH, ALL
 INTO THE CAVERNS BENEATH OUR CITADEL. I WOULD SEAL THE GATES AND
 FORGET HIM, WERE IT NOT FOR THE RUNESWORD. THE SAVAGES DRAW
 CLOSER EVERY DAY, AND THOUGH LADY ARMARCH AVERS THAT HER
 MAGICS CAN SAVE US, I RATHER PUT MY FAITH IN THE HELL BLADE.

AM I TRULY

CURSE ME, A THOUSAND TIMES THAT I EVER TRUSTED HIM.
 MAY THE HELL BLADE TAKE HIS SOUL, AS IT IS CONSUMED SO MANY
 BEFORE HIM. I AM FORGOTTEN BY THE WORLD.

ADJUTANT TO THE DEER KING, THE

EVEN NOW THE SAVAGES BEAT OUR HIGHLY GATES, THE TIME
 FOR BATTLE IS AT HAND. I SHALL CALL THE VIZIER TO ME SO THAT

HANDOUT B

