



Conan the Conqueror: The Hour of the Dragon

Robert E. Howard

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When plague sweeps through Nemedra, felling the King and his three sons, the King's brother Tarascus assumes the throne and seizes the opportunity to invade neighboring Aquilonia without warning. King Conan rallies the Aquilonian host and rides out to meet the invader. But there are whispers that the plague was a thing of evil, brought forth from the blackest corners of the tombs of stygia at the behest of a dark master, and on the eve of battle dark forces assail the Aquilonian king and set in motion an unexpected course of events, as Howard's indomitable Conan the Barbarian hacks and slashes his way through wizards, warriors and unearthly forces in this rare full-length novel of swords and sorcery, magic and mayhem, on a quest to recapture his hard-won Aquilonian throne. This collector-quality edition includes the complete text of Robert E. Howard's classic tale of swords and sorcery and high adventure in the Hyborian Age. This volume features Conan the Barbarian in Howard's only true novel-length story in a freshly edited and newly typeset edition. With a generous 6"x9" page size, this Summit Classic edition is printed on hefty bright white paper with a fully laminated cover featuring an original full color design. Page headers and proper placement of footnotes exemplify the attention to detail given this volume. This story first appeared as "The Hour of the Dragon", serialized in *Weird Tales*: Part 1, December 1935; Part 2, January 1936; Part 3, February 1936; Part 4, March 1936; Part 5, April 1936. Subsequently published in book form titled as "Conan The Conqueror, featuring Conan", the story has alternately been known as "Conan the Conqueror" and "The Hour of the Dragon" in the ensuing years. Purely as a matter of editorial choice we have titled this Summit Classics edition as "Conan the Conqueror: The Hour of the Dragon". Robert Ervin Howard (January 22, 1906 – June 11, 1936) was a prolific contributor to a variety of pulp fiction magazines in a writing career cut short by his suicide by gunshot at thirty years of age. In addition to poetry and newspaper content, Howard wrote numerous short stories in a variety of pulp genres, including boxing stories, westerns, detective stories, and historical and contemporary adventure fiction. Best known as the creator of Conan the Barbarian, Howard is often regarded as the father of the "sword and sorcery" genre, and Conan eclipsed Howard's other popular characters, most notably Solomon Kane. While very widely read in the pulps, Howard's work did not begin to appear in book form until after his death. Sadly, failures to file and renew documents and publish notices then required by copyright law, especially by the publishers of *Weird Tales* magazine and by Howard himself, allowed much of Howard's work to slip into the public domain quickly. Poor quality, badly-edited short-run editions circulated periodically, and Howard's work became increasingly obscure until the 1960's, when the "Lancer" editions presented quality paperback versions of many of the "Conan" stories. The popular "Ace" paperbacks of the 1970's presented an extensive lineup of "Conan" material, and launched the modern revival of Howard's sword-wielding barbarian, leading to comics, movies, new stories (mainly written by others either from wholecloth or unfinished stories and notes by Howard) and the taciturn Cimmerian's status as a major fictional character.

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