

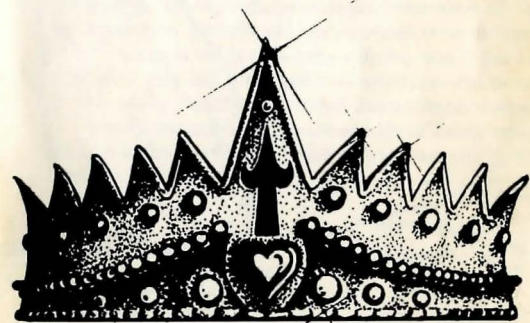


The
Grimson
Crown™

Further Adventures in Transylvania

as chronicled by
His Majesty's Loyal Chamberlain

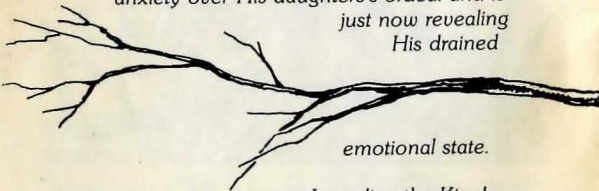
Mikhail



The Crimson Crown™

T

Today is a day of great gladness for the people of Wallachia. The hero has destroyed the Vampyr and rescued Princess Sabrina. She is safe, unharmed by the cruel stregoicha devil who had kidnapped her from her father, His most Royal Highness, King John the Good. Many boyars and their families have come to the castle to join in the festivities, even the Ham Burgher Raanald. Yet there is an odd aura of fatigue about the King that only I, His Majesty's chamberlain, have seemed to notice. While His loyal subjects and Prince Erik engage in joyous celebration of Princess Sabrina's deliverance from danger, good King John appears to be . . . how can I express his strangeness, drifting away! In fact, this morning His Majesty requested me to keep a journal. It is almost as if He wants a record of everything that happens, but how can He know something will happen? Perhaps I make too much of it. Surely His Majesty is exhausted from anxiety over His daughters's ordeal and is just now revealing His drained



emotional state.


Long live the King!

L

Life in Wallachia is returning to normal. The castle inhabitants are resuming their everyday occupations. The peasants have returned to the fields and mills. The weather is calm and warm. A gentle wind blows from the south. There has been one bizarre occurrence. A monk riding a donkey has been seen wandering through the eastern province. He

wields a hoe and offers tea to all he meets! He warns the peasants of the coming of evil. They pay no mind to the monk.

They believe he is feeble-minded. However, I wish that I could shake the feeling of foreboding that has come over me and enjoy the days as everyone else does. Even King John seems a little better, although He complains of insomnia.

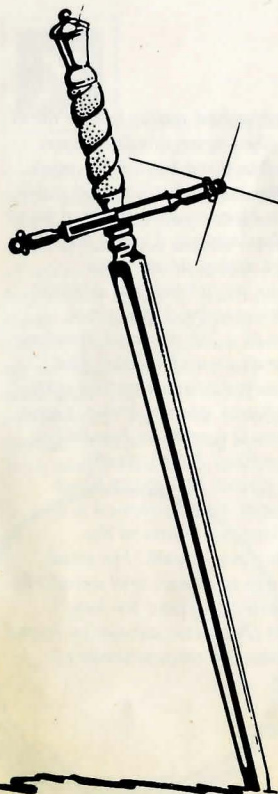


May Wallachia prosper.

I

had hoped that His Highness would recover soon from His "exhaustion". I fear, instead, that it grows worse each day. Some believe that it may be the plague. Just last evening King John failed to attend a state occasion, saying He felt ill. In confidence, Danil, the Royal Physician, said he could find no physical reason for the King's illness! Magicians and wisemen from throughout the land have come to the castle to study His Majesty. Even the infidel sorcerer Zordek knows not what ails the King, but he assures me it is not the plague. I grow uneasy. Last night was the first time that His Highness had shunned a royal duty. His attitude of late seems so strange and distant. Were I called to theorize on this extraordinary occurrence, I would say His Majesty fights a battle in His mind, not His body. But enough of such foolishness. I am afraid the bizarre mood of His Majesty has started to affect me, too. According to the wisemen, were there anything really wrong with His Highness the sorcerous incantations Xyzzy or Ernases would have set Him right. King John has been under great stress and is only human. His condition will improve with time and a little rest.

Long rule King John the Good!



D

arkness has reached out its fearful hand over our small Kingdom. Not since the disappearance of Princess Sabrina has there been such panic and dismay throughout the land. Our just and noble Lord, King John, is dead. Murdered by the foul hand of His dreaded enemy, the Vampyr. Unless Her Highness' rescuer lied, the ordog demon has somehow been restored to his twisted and unclean semblance of life. How this can be, I know not. Perhaps he is the 7th son of a 7th son and therefore doomed to eternal existence as an Undead. But there is corruption and wickedness connected with this that mortal men, such as I, cannot know. Gone, too, is the Crimson Crown. It was to be handed down to Prince Erik upon King John's death. Without the crown, Erik cannot be named King! Worse than all of that I have already named is the future of our land if the Vampyr learns of the Crown's secrets. With His dying breath, His most royal Highness revealed His murderer and asked His people to search out a hero and plead for help once again. If the original champion cannot be found then we are to find a relative or acquaintance of our distinguished saviour.

May King John rest in Peace.

N

o luck. I have had no luck in my search for a hero. With each day the Vampyr tightens his grip on our defenseless kingdom. The land grows bleak and barren. Peasants from Transylvania and Moldavia arrive daily, almost hourly, at the castle seeking food and shelter. Many come in search of safety from the monster. Little do they know how fragile their safety is. Each day the Vampyr grows closer to discovering the secrets of the Crimson Crown. If the day comes that he can use the Crown, we are doomed. Ah, if only the powerful Munjistan were alive! Now that I look back on past events, I can see that it was the Vampyr that caused the strange "illness" of King John. If only we could have saved Him. The news of late is so depressing,

I despair of writing any more today.

Protect our land and our people.

W

e have proof that the Vampyr is cognizant of some of the powers of the Crown! Indeed he has already unlocked one of its secrets. This bodes ill for us all. But let me record what happened:

Yesterday, a peasant from Moldavia came to the castle doors begging an audience with Prince Erik or Princess Sabrina. Under normal circumstances this would never be allowed but, as we well know, these are far from ordinary times. Prince Erik decided to meet the man in a small, undecorated chamber to make the man feel more at ease. The peasant, whose name is Mord, told the Prince that he had been foraging in the forests in Transylvania trying to find something for his family to eat. He stumbled through a tangled path and fell upon a most disturbing scene. The Vampyr stood, with his back to Mord, before a terrified girl. With the Crimson Crown upon his loathsome head, the Vampyr was forcing the girl to tell him where her parents were hid. Once their hiding place was known to him, their deaths were certain. Mord scrambled back to his family and rushed with them to Wallachia. Prince Erik commended Mord on his bravery and clear thinking, and as a reward, provided Mord and his family a supply of food and drink.

T

his was not good news. Normally the ruling king wears the Crimson Crown while hearing testimony of those charged with a crime. With the Crown on his head, the king, and everyone in contact with him, would be blessed with the ability of ascertaining the truth of every sentence spoken by the accused, and would possess great strength of will. The Vampyr not only discovered the truth-reading ability of the Crimson Crown, but he must have devised a way to twist its magical will powers so that he could force the unspoken truth from his victims. Do we stand a chance against such evil?

Preserve the kingdom.



T

heir Highness' have found our hero! They leave in one day for dark Karel Thurg, stronghold of the Vampyr. They journey to the desolate forests of Transylvania, where the Vampyr was last seen. It is a dangerous mission. They must destroy the monster, once and for all, and return with the Crimson Crown so peace may reside throughout Wallachia once more. Princess Sabrina and Crown Prince Erik have asked that I give them this journal before they go. Many bizarre things have happened. Since King John asked that they be recorded, they feel that He somehow sensed the approaching tragedy. Perhaps there may be something in the past events that will aid them in their mission. Surely it will do no harm to bring the journal. I am thankful I am not an adventurer by trade!

A

strange pamphlet was found nailed to a tree just outside the castle grounds by the minstrel boyar George this morning. Everyone had a different idea as to what this writing means. Some say it is a curse. Others say it is a philosophical dissertation. I feel that it pertains to the upcoming events, so I have copied it word for word into this journal:

Instructions for Erik and Sabrina

Crown Prince Erik and the Princess Sabrina are to be your almost constant companions on this perilous journey. Each of them serves a distinct and important purpose on this adventure. It is up to you to discover their purposes, and how to best utilize their presence. Whenever you wish to communicate directly with Erik or Sabrina, type the instruction such as this: "Sabrina, Take the Jewel", or "Erik, Use the Sword". Most of the decisions and deductions will have to be made by the resident hero, you.

Godspeed!

COURTESY WALLACHIAN
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

MOLDAVIA



XYGLPH
BEFORD PATRIA

Noordt



MARE NIGRUM

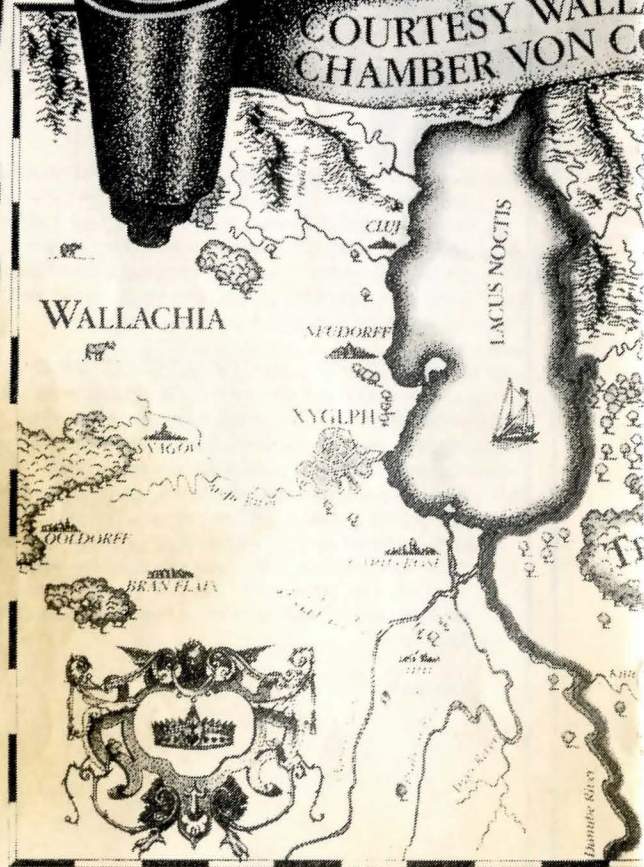
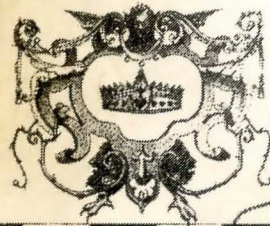


ARX
KAREL THURG

WALLACHIA

LACUS NOCTIS

TRANSYLVANIA



UNTO THINE EYES ALONE



hands I do not have, yet I grasp so tight.
I love darkness, my enemy is light.
Both the mighty and low know me well,
For in the hearts of men do I dwell!



Iwonder as I wander: where am I?
I shed tears, yet I cannot cry,
I trek but cannot walk, swim, or fly,
I am born to die. Say, what am I?



Iam, I'm not. I visit young and old,
Some I make timid and some I make bold,
Unwise is the one who pokes fun at me.
Beware, for I am a shadow of thee.





