



KINGDOM IN THE SWAMP

BY JOHN NEPHEW

Follow a crazy
halfling into a
vampire's castle.

Artwork by Valerie Valusek
Cartography by Diesel

A senior in high school, John Nephew recently went to the city of Petrozavodsk in the Soviet Union as part of a sister-city delegation from Duluth, Minnesota. He plans to put some Russian flavor in future modules. This is John's second appearance in DUNGEON™ Adventures. He will also have a short module appearing as part of the AD&D® game anthology I13, Adventure Pack.

Kingdom in the Swamp is an AD&D adventure for higher-level characters; 6th to 9th level would be suitable. While it is necessary to have strong combatant characters and at least one cleric, it is more important that the players be ready to find solutions beyond the sword or spell book.

Adventure Background

A few days ago, Candor Fletten, a halfling thief known more for his urban exploits, returned from a journey to the southern jungles and rain forests (or so he says). Few people have believed him in the past — usually they have been too busy taking inventory of their possessions to even listen to him — but some are guessing that he may actually be telling the truth (certainly, he's got a good story).

Candor left town a couple of months ago with some other adventurers, but has come back alone. Most tavern patrons are of the opinion that he took his companions' purses and ran, but why would he come back to town? And why, then, aren't his former companions hot on his trail? Candor may be a thief, but he's not a murderer. He even gets nauseated by cockfighting.

Maybe the halfling's tale is worth hearing . . .

"Well, we were traveling along the rivers thereabouts — there are a lot of them, y'know — picking up valuables from ancient ruins and that stuff. Sure, I lightened the load of a passing trader or trapper on occasion, but Gorum didn't like that. Gorum Grimbeard, the stout dwarf warrior, that is. The other people in the group were Tandis Malrynar, a half-elf magician, and the priest Antonius Dalsor. We also had a native guide named Melstu.

"It was all going very well (we had a nice pile of goods we had acquired),

until we were invited to Melstu's village after saving his life when he was bitten by a poisonous snake. I have this affinity for little things, especially when they're not mine — big things, too, on occasion — and that gets me into trouble sometimes. I also have a fair share of curiosity.

"So there was this hut in the village, and the natives always acted strange around it, and nobody ever went into it except this one guy who wore lots of bones and feathers and rattles. Of course, I was just dying to know what was in it. I managed to keep away from it the first day, since there was a big tribal feast to occupy me, but the next morning I couldn't help myself. In I went, straightaway.

"It was kind of smoky inside — some kind of incense — and there was a funny little statuette of an elephant. It was gold, with ivory tusks and tiny jewels for eyes. I picked it up, of course, and started to walk out so I could show it to Gorum — he likes gems and stuff. Well, on the way out I bumped into that guy with the feathers, and the elephant fell out of my shirt. 'Um, I uh,' I said. 'I put it there so it wouldn't get dusty.'

"Featherhead didn't seem happy about me borrowing his elephant, so I started running. It took my companions about half a minute to realize what was wrong, and then they started running, too. It's happened before, and those guys know that people usually aren't very understanding.

"We were in pretty bad shape, since we didn't get a chance to pack any gear. We ran down to the river and hopped in a couple of canoes and headed off. We had no armor, few weapons, and were being chased by a tribe of angry natives. After a day of being chased, we made it to where the river starts making a swampy delta, a few miles from the ocean. Melstu's tribe didn't enter the swamp; in fact, they laughed and turned around. We figured they'd leave people to watch for us, so we took our chances with the swamp.

"Not too far in, we saw this decrepit castle on a little island. We tied our canoes to a cypress tree and marched through the soggy ground. We weren't expecting a lot of hospi-

talities or anything, or even for it to be occupied — funny idea, anyway, building a castle in a swamp — but it was just about nightfall and we were dead tired. To our surprise, it turned out to be the home of an eccentric gentleman who treated us to a small banquet of some kind of cooked meat and vegetables. Rats and marsh weeds for all I know, but it was pretty good at the time. The old gent — his name was something like 'Ken-ther' — said he had no guest rooms, but that we were welcome to sleep in the dining hall. We accepted and fell asleep in minutes.

"I woke up that night to the cries of Antonius. A big bat was biting his throat, and Gorum was tugging at it. Tantis was just waking up. Horrified, she cast her *burning hands* spell at it, but instead of being killed, it turned into that Mr. Ken-ther. (Gentleman indeed! I was somewhat disillusioned.) He just looked at her, and she dropped her dagger and bag of spell materials as if she had forgotten what she was doing. Gorum stabbed the awful thing with his knife, but it didn't hurt the vamp a bit.

"Then the vamp gave a strange, piercing cry and lots of bats started fluttering through the doors of the dining hall, which opened by themselves. They weren't normal bats like we have around here, but big, tropical, carnivorous ones. I pulled out my magic dagger and stabbed at them, but they were in my eyes and I couldn't see. Gorum was bellowing with rage. I bet he killed lots of the winged devils. I couldn't take it; I ran out of the castle, followed by the bats. I jumped in one of the canoes and cut the rope to the cypress tree. As soon as the bats came above the water, it was like they forgot what they were doing and just flew away. I paddled as fast as I could — paddling isn't easy for a 3'2" person — away from the castle.

"By midday the next day, I had made it to the ocean. I had the luck of running into a ship of ivory traders, who brought me to a civilized island. Now I'm here, two and a half weeks later. I don't know if Antonius and Tantis and Gorum are alive, dead, or worse, but I want to get back at that vampire no matter what."

For the Dungeon Master

Three centuries ago, in the Kingdom of Thrydrick, Kenither the Gaunt took the throne by force with an army of undead. According to legend, he had made a pact with the Demon Prince of Undead, Orcus; in return for the kingdom, Kenither was to force the population to pay homage to the demon, and Orcus would receive Kenither's soul after his death.

Kenither was always power hungry, cruel, and wicked, but above all, selfish. After stealing the throne, he overtaxed the populace to finance his wars. He ignored the demonic pact he had made, but Orcus did not. After six years, the Abyssal Prince returned. Upon seeing that Kenither had made no effort whatsoever to convert the populace and keep his part of the bargain, he became filled with anger. Demons and undead ravaged the land, destroying Kenither's brutally efficient government and assaulting the king's new castle, reducing it to a smoldering ruin.

Orcus ordered Kenither brought before him. "You are indebted to me, mortal."

"For what?" asked the man. "For the ruins of a once-proud land? By terminating your part of the pact, you have erased my debt to you."

Rather than being enraged by the mortal's insolence, Orcus was amused. "In a way, my slave, that is true. I shall give you a new kingdom for even better terms. Originally you owed me two things: the homage of the people, and your soul. It shall not be necessary for your new subjects to worship me, but you may never leave your land. If you do, I shall take your soul."

Thus, Kenither remained a king, but not as he wanted to be. Orcus deposited him in a steamy swamp far to the south, where he was given a castle on a small island of dry ground. His domain extended only to the water around him. Even though his body died in time, his hatred-filled soul kept it animate; Orcus could not claim his soul until he crossed the border of his kingdom.

Read the boxed-in "Adventure Background" to the players. Candor Fletten was telling the truth and would greatly appreciate the player characters' help. If the characters do not promptly offer their services, he will beg them to aid him. He has little money but is willing to offer an emerald as an immediate



reward. He supposes (and in conversation appears to be quite certain) that the vampire has considerable wealth, just waiting for the valiant adventurers to claim.

Other people in the tavern (presumably where Candor and the player characters are at the moment) suggest the possibility of the vampire being the legendary Kenither. A bit of research among local sages and storytellers reveals most of the information given above. The party should then be sufficiently briefed for the quest and can prepare for the journey.

Candor Fletten is a 5th-level half-ling thief (AC 4; MV 9"; T5; hp 29; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 12; I 14; W 9; D 18; C 16; Ch 15; AL NG; pick pockets 65%, open locks 62%, find/remove traps 50%, move silently 60%, hide in shadows 56%, hear noise 25%, climb walls 75%, read languages 20%). He carries a *dagger* +2, *longtooth*. He lost the rest of his equipment in the jungle, but has been "borrowing" money and valuables since then. When he meets the characters, he has the following additional items: a suit of leather armor, a sling and 35 bullets, a potion of *sweet water*, an emerald (worth 1500

Random Encounter Tables

Table I: Daytime

Roll	Result
01-03	Babbler
04-09	Basilisk
10-15	Boalisk
16-19	Cifal
20-23	Crane, giant
24-31	Crocodile, normal
32-35	Fly, giant bluebottle
36-39	Frog, poisonous
40-43	Grippli
44-49	Pudding, brown
50-53	Raven, giant
54-61	Rat, giant
62-66	Scum creeper
67-72	Snake, poisonous
73-80	Spider, huge
81-88	Throat leech
89-94	Toad, poisonous
95-00	Volt

Table II: Night

Roll	Result
01-03	Babbler
04-14	Crocodile, normal
15-19	Frog, poisonous
20-24	Ghast
25-27	Night hag
28-34	Pudding, brown
35-39	Raven, giant
40-46	Scum creeper
47-51	Shadow mastiff
52-58	Snake, poisonous
59-69	Spider, huge
70-72	Sundew, giant
73-83	Throat leech
84-90	Toad, poisonous
91-93	Wight
94-98	Will-o-Wisp
99-00	Wraith

gp), 32 gp, 5 pp, and 24 sp. Despite what all the taverners and patrons say, Candor won't steal from his companions and friends. He dislikes combat and violence ("Why hurt 'em? You can only kill them once, and it bugs them more if you rob 'em blind anyway."), but will defend himself if and when necessary. His curiosity is insatiable, and he is constantly asking nosy questions.

The Swamp

The Dungeon Master may choose to expand the adventure by adding details of the sea journey to the swamp. Otherwise, it may be supposed that the party can secure passage on a merchant vessel (for a fee of 100 gp) and then set off and travel through the swamp in dug-out canoes (each canoe costs 30 gp and holds two characters and all their equipment).

Candor has a general idea of where the castle is; the swamp map included with this module depicts that area. Four terrain types are indicated on the swamp map, and these require further explanation:

Deep Water: Deep enough for canoes and other small craft to move normally. No above-the-surface vegetation.

Shallow Water: The bottom gets in the way of movement of water craft. Wading is possible, but because of the thick silt on the bottom, movement is reduced by 50%, and characters receive a +1 penalty to armor class in combat. The silty bottom doesn't affect swamp monsters.

Reeds are often found growing here along with the usual swamp trees.

Bog: This is shallow water where the vegetation has become a thick layer of waterlogged turf. The stench of rotten material is strong. Movement is reduced to two thirds and armor class is normal. Most native monsters of the region are physically adapted to move without penalty in the bog.

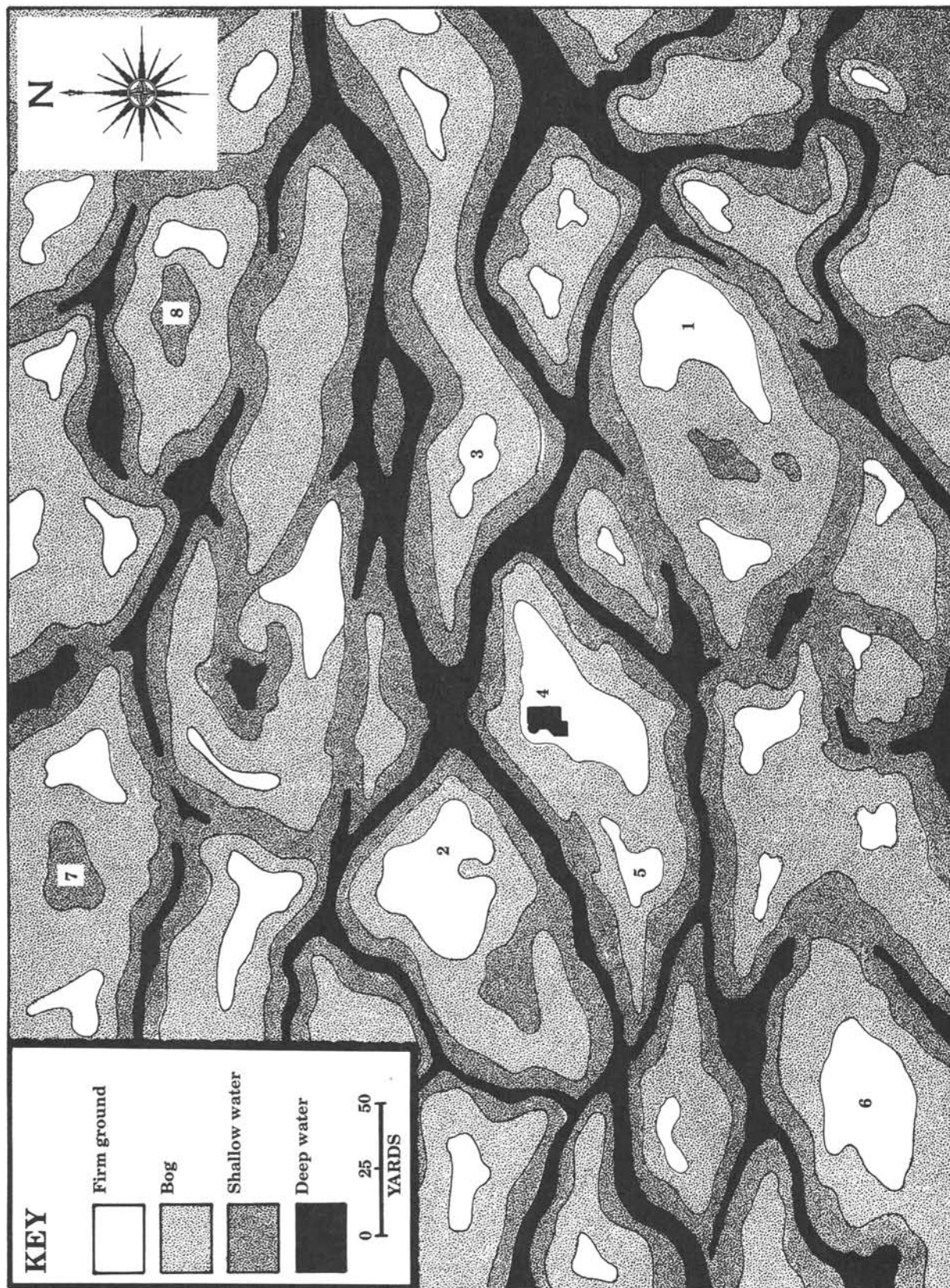
Firm Ground: These are islands of high ground, either here for eons or created more recently by a large buildup of silt and bog. Combat and movement are conducted normally. If the characters want to camp, the best place is on firm ground.

The number of wandering monsters encountered is up to the DM's discretion. Take into consideration the party's strength and composition. A random encounter should be a challenge but not necessarily fatal (except perhaps to the creature encountered).

Swamp Encounter Key

1. Greenhag Cave. A cave dug out of the side of the high ground here is the home of a greenhag (AC -2; MV 12"//12"; HD 9; hp 46; #AT 2; Dmg 7-8/7-8; SA mimicry, *audible glamor*, *dancing lights*, *invisibility*, *pass without trace*, *change self*, *speak with monsters*, *water breathing*, *weakness*; SD surprise 5 in 6; SD surprised 1 in 20; magic resistance 35%; AL NE). Despite the many edibles in the swamp, the 'hag tires of rats, snakes, spiders, and an occasional

KENTHIER'S SWAMP





bird. Visitors for dinner are always a welcome change in diet.

Her cave is damp and cool. Several varieties of harmless fungi are growing on the walls and ceiling. The floor is covered with marsh reeds on which lie a moldy bag filled with reeds (if searched carefully, two amber stones worth 100 gp each can also be found in it) and a reed basket containing 212 gp, 37 pp, three bloodstones (base value 50 gp each), and a dead frog.

2. Statue. On the crest of this hill, overlooking Kenither's castle, stands a life-size stone statue of Orcus. It used to be more majestic and terrifying; three centuries of weather have taken their toll. Nonetheless, its gloating expression is apparent. Kenither can see it every day, but the statue is beyond his domain and power.

3. Cypress Tree. Here, on the outskirts of Kenither's kingdom, the second canoe of Candor's party remains tied to the cypress tree.

4. Kenither's Castle. Refer to the next section for the full description of the castle and its occupants.

5. Grave Hill. This island of firm ground in Kenither's kingdom is covered with graves. In them lie various

hapless persons who were forced to serve the vampire. Kenither prefers not to create lesser vampires because he loses power over them if they ever leave his kingdom (see "Melstu's Village"). Instead, he tries to *charm* his victims. They serve him for the remainder of their natural lives. When they die, he puts their remains here and animates them as zombies to further serve him.

The hill has 14 graves, each open and containing a rotting corpse. The zombies (AC 8; MV 6"; HD 2; hp 9 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8; always strike last; SD immune to *sleep*, *hold*, *cold*) have instructions to come to life and slay anyone besides Kenither who comes to the hill. Kenither is also able to come here and command them to any other purpose. This is useful if he is doing badly against the player characters.

6. Outlaw Camp. This bit of dry land is the camp of a small group of "explorers." They are outlaws of a distinguished sort, several having prizes on their heads in civilized lands. They are exploring in search of any riches that the jungle might hold, and they are happy to incidentally rob and kill anyone they meet in the process.

There are eleven outlaws. Their leader is Almund Stavín (AC 4; M 9"; F8; hp 46; #AT 3/2; Dmg by weapon type; S 17, I 13, W 12, D 10, C 12, Ch 11; AL NE; has chain mail, shield, broad sword, and *hand axe* +1). His right-hand man is a half-orc assassin named Zhongir (AC 6; MV 12"; A6; hp 26; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type S 15, I 10, W 10, D 16, C 15, Ch 4; AL LE; has leather armor, spear, dagger, and two knives balanced for throwing). The remaining nine outlaws are 2nd-level fighters (AC 6; MV 9"; F2; hp 13; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; AL NE/LE/CE; have studded leather armor, shields, morning stars, and knives).

The camp itself consists of four tents. Three are for the 2nd-level fighters. Besides personal articles (clothing, etc.), each tent contains 2-20 gp worth of low-value items (assorted coins and trinkets). The leaders' tent also contains a very heavy locked strongbox containing the band's treasure: 212 pp, 254 gp, four gems (base value 500 gp), and a gold torc set with two garnets (worth 300 gp total).

7. Wounded Thessalhydra. Lying in this stagnant pool of water is a wounded thessalhydra (AC 0; MV 12"; HD 12; hp 35; #AT 6; Dmg 1-6 (x4) 1-12/1-20; SA

acid saliva, spitting; SD immune to acid; AL N). It lost four of its heads and sustained some serious body damage when it entered the territory of a frogemoth deeper in the swamp. It crawled back here and is resting; its severed heads will grow back. Anything that comes near the thessalhydra is attacked, but it won't strain itself by pursuing prey. It has no treasure.

8. Algooids. This pool of water is filled with algae which have formed into two algooids (AC 5; MV 6"; HD 5; hp 27, 25; #AT 2; Dmg 1-10/1-10; SA control trees; SD immune to edged weapons of less than +2 bonus, immune to *fireballs* and *lightning*; AL CN). The algooids attack anything that nears the pool, but do not pursue opponents beyond the adjacent bog area.

If characters search the bottom of the pool, they have a 50% chance of finding a gold necklace set with seven jade stones (1,700 gp total).

The Castle

The castle is fairly small, with only two towers: one square and one round. It is about 40' wide and 50' long, with walls about 25' high. Vines, mosses, and fungi thrive on the walls. It is evident that no attempt has been made to keep the outside in good repair. Despite its good foundations, the castle has settled a bit, giving it a slight tilt and a few large cracks in the walls where more vegetation has gained purchase.

Because he can be found anywhere in the castle, the vampire is described here. Kenither is a vampiric 9th-level fighter/10th-level magic-user (AC 1; MV 12"/18"; HD 8+3; hp 60; #AT 3/2 or 1; Dmg 5-10 or by weapon or spell; SA *energy drain* (2 levels), *summon* bats, *charm* gaze; SD +1 or better weapon needed to hit, immune to many magical and poison attacks, takes half damage from cold and electricity, regenerates 3 hp/round, assume *gaseous form* at will, *shape change* to bat form at will).

Kenither is a unique vampire with some special powers and limitations. If he passes beyond his island/bog domain (the border is the edge of the water — see the swamp map), voluntarily or not, Orcus will receive his soul. The vampire body will crumble and dissolve into muddy swamp water. Because of his undead immunities, he is unable to be forced to leave his kingdom while "alive;" if reduced to zero hit points,

he becomes gaseous and flees to his coffin, where his body reforms and regenerates. He must, therefore, be carried out of his domain while in the coffin, after having been reduced to zero hit points. If his coffins (he has some extras in the cellar) are destroyed, he reforms elsewhere in his domain but cannot have more than 35 hp without a coffin. The normal ways of killing vampires (wooden stake, etc.) won't work. Kenither can survive direct sunlight, but he dislikes it and it penalizes his attacks and armor class by two points. While not affected by garlic (actually, he likes the stuff), this vampire, like others, cannot be seen in a mirror or touch holy symbols and holy water. If confronted by mirrors or holy symbols in an attempt to force him off his kingdom, he turns into a bat or becomes gaseous, and moves to a place from which he can resume combat.

He is unable to *summon* wolves, since there aren't any in his domain, but 12 giant bats (AC 8; MV 3"/18"; HD 1; hp 5 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1-4; AL N) sleep in the trees of his kingdom. He may summon these. During the day, all 12 come in answer to his call, but at night most are out hunting, and a roll of 1d12 determines how many are within range and come. *Summoned* bats arrive in 1-3 rounds. There used to be more bats, but Gorum Grimbeard and Candor killed quite a few.

As a fighter, Kenither can make three attacks in two rounds and utilizes the fighters' combat table when using a weapon. He has some weapons around his castle, but doesn't regularly carry one on his person because he can't retain it in bat or gaseous form. If Kenither plans to attack the party, he is likely to pick up a weapon from a room adjacent to the party and then attack. He cannot drain energy while using a weapon, but because of his dislike for creating other vampires, he prefers using weapons unless heavily pressed.

As a 10th-level magic-user, Kenither has learned the following spells: *alarm*, *animate dead*, *dancing lights*, *darkness 15' radius*, *detect invisible*, *dimension door*, *dispel magic*, *Evard's black tentacles*, *hold person*, *magic jar*, *Melf's acid arrow*, *mirror image*, *taunt*, *tongues*, and *unseen servant*. His complete spell book is listed under room 5, the study. If the DM feels it appropriate, he may have learned different spells from those on the list. Also, as creator of the ho-



monculous in the laboratory (room 4), he can see and hear through its eyes and ears and communicate with it telepathically from anywhere within his kingdom. The homonculous may be used by the vampire to keep an eye on the party's movements in other rooms. If the homonculous is killed, Kenither suffers 2-20 hp damage.

Candor Fletten's three companions are all in Kenither's castle, in one form or another. Kenither has removed and hidden their armor and weapons. Their statistics and descriptions are presented here:

Antonius Dalsor, 4th-level human cleric (was 6th-level before being drained by the vampire): AC 10; MV 12"; hp 25; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; S 14, I 13, W 16, D 8, C 15, Ch 14; AL LG; spells: *aid*, *command*, *cure light wounds* (×3), *hold person*, *messenger*, *purify food & drink*, *withdraw*.

Antonius is a pious priest, kind-hearted and friendly. He was adventuring to attract attention to his deity (DM's choice from lawful good deities). He also hoped to convert some natives and, though Candor disrupted that dream, he has always been patient with the little thief. See area 3.

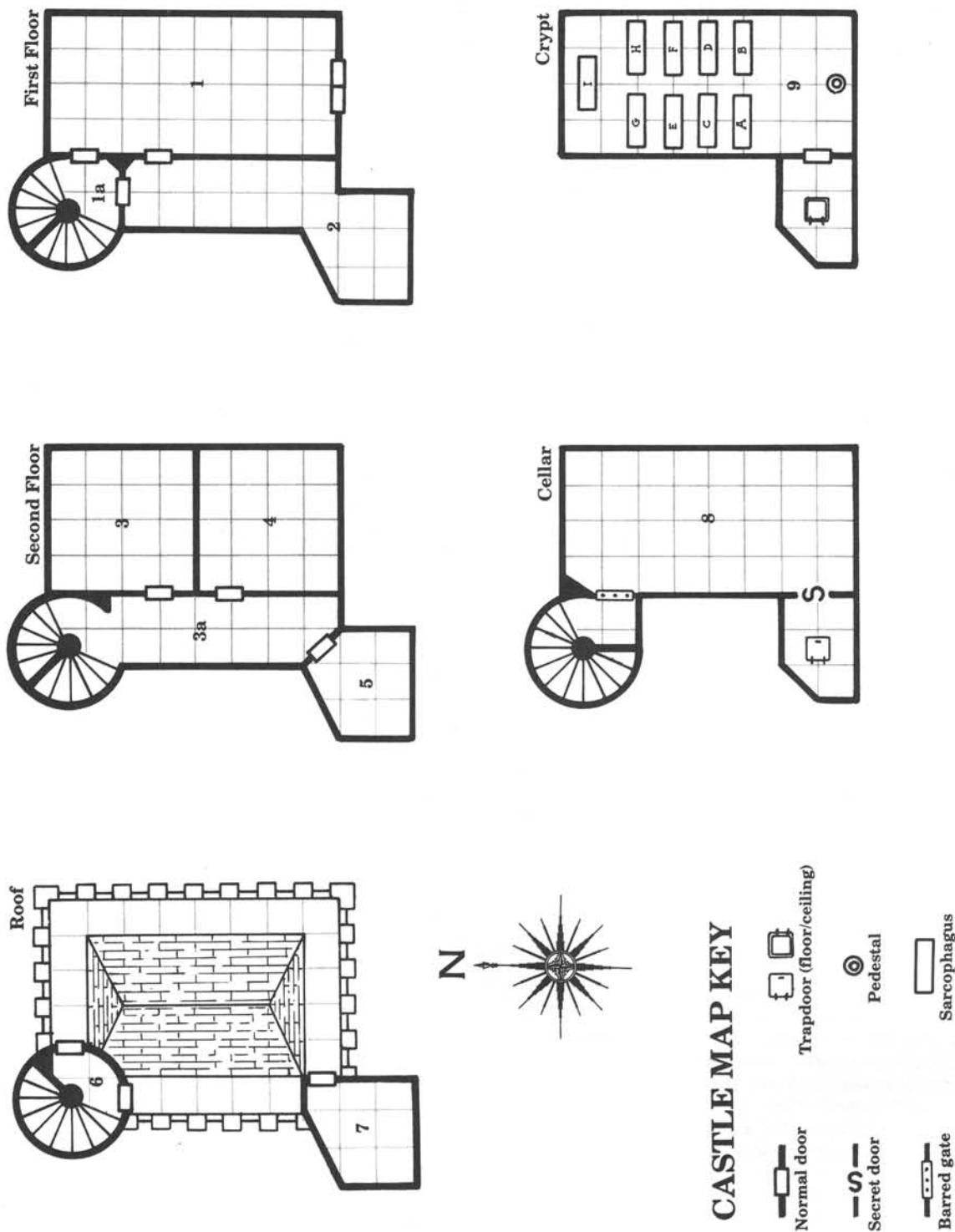
Gorum Grimbeard, 7th-level dwarf fighter: AC 10; MV 6"; hp 62; Dmg by weapon; S 18/99, I 14, W 13, D 10, C 16, Ch 7; AL LG.

Candor looks up to Gorum with good reason. In the heat of battle, Gorum's prowess is terrible to behold. As his name suggests, Gorum is generally dour and serious; he laughs only at the problems Candor gets him into. Somehow he tolerates, maybe even likes, the kleptomaniacal halfling (though his friends know better than to suggest this around him). Gorum is a loyal worshipper of Clangeddin Silverbeard. He prefers to fight with axes, but on occasion uses a mace. See area 5.

Tandis Malrynar, 5th-level half-elf magic-user: AC 9; MV 12"; hp 14; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; S 9, I 17, W 13, D 15, C 10, Ch 13; AL NG.

Tandis is strangely shy and quiet for an adventurer. She feels comfortable in neither the mainstream society of humans nor that of elves. Through adventuring, she meets a variety of people, travels extensively, and also gets an opportunity to develop her magical skills. Her traveling spell book was left in Melstu's village. The remaining spells she has memorized are *flaming*

KENTHER'S CASTLE



sphere, light, shocking grasp, spider climb, and web. See areas 1 and 2.

The vampire's actions are largely left to the DM's discretion, with the following guidelines. The vampire won't strike immediately; he first observes the party to find strengths, weaknesses, and special attributes. He may strike at any opportune time. He is likely to first make an attack in room 3, though this need not be the case (especially if the party takes the stairs down first). He may take gaseous or bat form as it suits him, either to escape or to lure the party elsewhere (such as to Grave Hill).

Have fun taunting the party, but remember that they should be able to eventually defeat Kenither — which of course allows him to regenerate in his coffin. The party will probably try all of the conventional methods of destroying a vampire, but the coffin and body must be carried out of the kingdom to permanently slay him. It is recommended that experience points be given for the non-permanent slaying of Kenither, but the amount should be doubled if the party discovers and takes advantage of his weakness.

Castle Encounter Key

1. Dining Hall

Centered in this room is a 20'-long oak table of finest quality. Places are set for twenty people. Five place settings are clean; the rest are covered with a thick layer of dust. Each place is set with a somewhat tarnished silver plate, a rusty steel knife, a silver spoon, and a crystal goblet. The tablecloth is molding purple silk. Spaced along the length of the table are five silver candelabras, each with lit candles, having only token effect in dispelling the shadows of the place. There are two doors in the west wall, 25' and 30' from the double front doors in the south wall.

Kenither set the table a couple of centuries ago and sees no point in removing and washing the dishes. Each silver plate is worth 5 gp, each goblet is worth 1 gp, and each goblet is worth 15 gp. The candelabras are worth 200 gp apiece.

On the wall opposite the main door, a shield that displays Kenither's coat-of-

arms hangs above two crossed pole arms: a bardiche and a halberd. Kenither is proficient with both weapons.

The 12'-high ceiling is mostly teak beams and planks. A high, vaulted stone arch at the midpoint of the room supports the ceiling of this room and the wall between rooms 3 and 4 on the second floor.

Characters will presumably come in through the front doors. The doors open easily, and there is no one in the dining hall. For every round that the characters spend in the dining hall, there is a 5% chance that Tandis Malrynar comes in. If the characters knock on the front doors, they open on their own, and Tandis arrives in the next round to see who or what is making the noise. (See room 2 for Tandis's behavior.)

1a. Spiral Staircase

The door opens onto a small landing. A stone staircase, its treads worn down from years of use, spirals upward and disappears downward into darkness. Two doors exit the stairwell in the east and south walls.

Neither of the doors from the stairwell are locked.

2. Kitchen and Pantry

The pantry is a 10'-wide corridor that runs south from the dining hall door. The walls on each side are covered with 2'-wide shelves which hold preserved foodstuffs in casks, crates, jars, boxes, and bottles.

If the characters walk 15' down the pantry, describe the kitchen to them.

The pantry opens out into a kitchen which occupies the ground floor of a squarish tower. There is a fireplace in the southwest corner that vents through the wall, inadequately removing the smoke. Slung over the fireplace is a cauldron. The rest of the room contains two tables and assorted cooking tools and foodstuffs.

Much of what is stored in the pantry remains from when Kenither last had human servants, some even from when he was human himself! The old stuff has much variety, from fruit (shriveled,

rotten, or moldy) to vinegar (once wine) to worm-infested meat. Recent additions to the store consist mainly of pickled marsh weeds and rat meat. Kenither can eat, and does on occasion (such as when entertaining guests), but does not need food for sustenance.

The kitchen cauldron contains a stew of tender marsh weeds and fresh rat meat seasoned with spicy ground bark. Among the other foodstuffs is a loaf of bread. It has an unusual taste, the flour being made from the seeds of another marsh plant.

If Tandis did not go into the dining hall to meet the visitors, she is in the kitchen preparing the next meal (or asleep on a pallet in the corner if it is night). Tandis is under the influence of Kenither's *charm* gaze. She does not remember the night Candor fled. In fact, she remembers very little at all of her life before coming here, and it takes her a few minutes to recognize her half-ling friend. She feels that she leads a contented existence here, organizing the kitchen, preparing meals, and so forth. A big project she hopes to accomplish in the future is removing the dust from the dining hall.

If questioned about Gorum and Antonius, Tandis says that she has no idea of the dwarf's whereabouts (after she remembers who he is) but has seen Antonius a few times. She thinks that Antonius is also in the service of His Majesty (as she refers to Kenither) but cannot be sure because she is forbidden to leave this floor of the castle.

The vampire's *charm* may be broken, but while it is in effect, Tandis cannot use her spells and won't leave this level of the castle. She is not familiar with any of the rest of the castle.

3. Bedroom

This luxurious bedroom contains a large bed with silk covers, a teak-wood dresser, and other comfortable furniture. Hung over the bed is a picture of a gaunt young man wearing ceremonial robes and jewelry. An oak wardrobe sits in the west corner of the room.

Clever characters might look for a mirror in this room, but won't find one. The portrait is of Kenither in his years as monarch of Thyrdic, and might bring a price of 3,000 gp from a sage or

collector. The wardrobe contains much clothing of Kenither's size, almost all moth-eaten and falling to rags. Propped in the far left corner of the wardrobe is a long sword, and piled against the back wall are the hapless adventurers' armor and weapons.

There is a secret panel in the back of the wardrobe that opens to reveal a niche in the stone wall behind. Inside the niche is a cache of Kenither's treasure: 700 gp, 500 pp, 4 sapphires (1,200 gp each), and a diamond (worth 5,000 gp).

Antonius lies on the bed, bound by a *rope of entanglement*. When the character party enters the room, Kenither has possessed him by means of the vampire's *magic jar* spell. "Antonius" greets the party and "recognizes" his old companion Candor. Because Kenither has neither control of nor access to the mind of Antonius, he largely has to play it by ear in dialogue with the party. He asks to be freed. If he is released, he attacks the party with spells and then tries to get and use the long sword from the wardrobe. If the party refuses to free him, he frees himself, since he knows the *rope's* command words (Antonius does not). Kenither leaves Antonius's body if it is reduced to 5 hit points or less. He returns to his *magic jar*, a crystal button on a shirt in the wardrobe. Kenither's body (in gaseous form) is also in the wardrobe.

If the party has already destroyed the vampire when they first enter this room, Antonius has his own mind but is still bound by the *rope of entanglement*.

3a. Hall and Stairwell

A narrow landing at this level opens into a 10'-wide hallway. There is an oaken door set into the stone corridor just on the left as you exit the stairwell, and a similar door 10' beyond that. A third door closes off the end of the corridor 20' away.

None of the doors leading from the hallway are locked.

4. Laboratory

This room is evidently a laboratory, filled with containers, substances, and tools. Items are cleared away from the center of the room where a pentacle has been drawn on the floor in front of a podium.

Kenither cleared away the debris in the center of the room recently. He has spent the last century or so in research to find a way to conjure and control Orcus, but has not had much success. This set-up is for a minor experiment, trying to summon and control a mephit, that Kenither is preparing to try.

Kenither has been quite involved in alchemy over the centuries. Among the paraphenelia here are 30 vials of liquids. The majority are harmless and have no effect on the imbiber. There are three vials with poisonous contents, which cause nausea and incapacitate the character for 2-12 turns. Five more vials have special contents: holy water, unholy water, oil, a *potion of extra healing*, and a *potion of restoration* (see end of module). The specific appearance of the liquids is left to the DM. Some ideas can be found in the *Dungeon Masters Guide*, Appendix K.

The laboratory also contains several bottles filled with metal filings, including silver (worth 15 sp), electrum (15 ep value), gold (15 gp value), and platinum (75 gp value).

Any other particulars of the chamber can be fleshed out by the DM as needed or desired. Refer to the *DMG*, page 218, "Magic-user Furnishings," for more possibilities.

A homonculous (AC 6; MV 6"/18"; HD 2; hp 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1-3; SA bite causes sleep for 5-30 minutes; SD saving throws as Kenither; AL N) is hiding behind the podium. It keeps a careful eye on the party and, if possible, attempts to secrete itself upon one of the characters — in a backpack, for example. It is then able to spy on the party for Kenither (as the homonculous's creator, Kenither can use the creature's senses) and possibly make use of its sleep-inducing bite at an opportune moment. If the homonculous is discovered and attacked, it bites its attacker and flees, if possible. The creature has relatively few hit points and, if killed, causes Kenither to suffer 2-20 hp damage. The homonculous therefore avoids directly confronting the party, instead following and harassing as best it can.

5. Study

This room must be a small library or study. There is a desk with an open tome on it and several sheafs of

parchment with writing nearby. Hanging over the desk, suspended from the ceiling by strong hemp cord, are a gold-gilt birdcage and a lit oil lamp. Bookshelves line the walls and are quite filled.

The lamp is quite grimy on the outside, but cleaning reveals it to be made of gold with platinum inlays and worth 1,000 gp. The parchment has been written on in an archaic tongue (*comprehend languages* or a thief's *read languages* ability is necessary). It contains notes, all pertaining to the conjuration of demons of lord/prince status. The tome is a general overview of popular methods for the summoning and control of denizens of the lower outer planes. Some of the methods recommended may no longer be in common use as the volume dates from almost 430 years ago — it was an antique when Kenither was first dabbling in the dark arts.

The DM can detail the volumes as he desires. The majority of the books pertain to demonology and alchemy, or are Kenither's journals.

Two texts should be of interest to the party. The first is the vampire's spell book. This large volume has "Kenither" written in gilt script on what appears to be the cover. In fact, the binding of the book has been reversed. The first page behind the cover (actually the last in relation to the contents) has a *sepia snake sigil* drawn upon it. When turned over and read from the back cover, this book contains Kenither's full spell list:

Level 1: *alarm, dancing lights, firewater, identify, mending, Nystul's magic aura, read magic, sleep, taunt, unseen servant, wizard mark*

Level 2: *darkness 15' radius, detect invisible, ESP, forget, know alignment, Melf's acid arrow, mirror image, preserve*

Level 3: *dispel magic, explosive runes, hold person, Melf's minute meteors, sepia snake sigil, tongues*

Level 4: *dimension door, Evard's black tentacles, hallucinatory terrain, polymorph other, wizard eye*

Level 5: *animate dead, contact other plane, feeblemind, magic jar*

The other book has no title on the outside, but the first page reads "Alchemy Notes" in a careful script. The contents that follow aren't quite so neat, and much of the text is marked

by so many notes, additions, comments, and corrections as to make it look like a first-draft module manuscript. One formula is written out clearly; it is for a *potion of restoration* (see room 4 and the end of the module). The instructions are fairly complex, but understandable by any alchemist. The basic ingredients are the venom of an adult crystal spider (see end of module for stats), three tadpole brains, and the tongue and eye of a snake, all to be boiled in marsh water.

The birdcage is occupied by Gorum Grimbeard, *polymorphed* into a booka (AC 7; MV 12"/18"; #AT nil; Dmg nil; SD invisibility). Though he has booka shape and abilities, Gorum has retained his own hit points, personality and mentality. A dose of the *potion of restoration* in the laboratory (room 4) or a successful *dispel magic* restores him to his true form.

Gorum sits despondently on the floor of his cage, lost in depression over his captivity and *polymorphed* state. He won't react immediately to the party's entrance and is 90% likely to be *invisible*. But, when the party begins to rummage around the study, he peers between the golden bars to see who's there — the vampire has probably never made so much noise. He is ecstatic to recognize Candor. If Candor isn't with the group, he is still happy to see anyone who is neither undead nor ensorcelled.

After attracting the characters' attention, Gorum explains his condition and asks to be freed. He then relates what he knows of what happened after Candor left. He killed all of the giant bats (the 12 now in the kingdom were either out hunting at the time or chased Candor beyond the kingdom's edge). During the fight, the vampire disappeared, as did Tandis and Antonius. Gorum began to search the castle and was ambushed as he left the dark stairwell on this floor. The vampire cast a spell on him that cursed him to his present misshapen form and imprisoned him in the birdcage. He knows nothing else of the castle except that Kenither seems to spend a great deal of time in this room, often in the company of the homonculous. Gorum believes the homonculous is a familiar of some sort, perhaps a quasit or imp (neither of which, like the homonculous, Gorum has ever seen before).



6. Roof

The round tower has two doors, locked from the inside, at the top of a spiral staircase. The doors lead to the roof and battlements. The south door faces 20' of walkway which ends a short flight of open-air stairs to the top of the square watchtower. The other door leads to a walkway that makes a 90° right turn after 15', continues for 35', turns right again, and ends at the locked door to the watchtower.

It is conceivable that the characters may have climbed the castle wall or flown here to gain entrance. Because all the doors leading down are locked from the inside, characters must either force them open or pick the locks.

Flying over the castle has a 5% chance per turn of attracting the vampire's attention. He may decide to pretend he does not see the flier, preparing elaborate indoor traps instead, or he may cause the local giant bats to attack — whichever course seems to have the best chances of destroying the invader.

7. Watchtower

The inside of the tower is filled with fine, weblike, glassy strands. The effect is strange, giving the room a wintry aura that contrasts sharply with the humid, tropical swamp.

Cleaning away the webs reveals this room to have been a guard's room, with broken table, stool, and bed. There is an intact, locked box containing the possessions of the room's former inhabitant: clothing, a silver dagger with a topaz set in the pommel (worth 520 gp total), and a *Manual of Bodily Health*.

A crystal spider (AC 4; MV 15" *18"; HD 4+4; hp 36; #AT 1; Dmg 1-3; SA crystalization; AL N) of the largest size lairs here. It lives well, preying mostly on the small creatures (snakes, lizards, rats, and an occasional bird) of the kingdom. It is relatively safe from harm because the swamp's larger creatures have learned to avoid the kingdom for a few centuries now. The spider once had a mate, but Kenither killed it and used its venom for the creation of his *potion of restoration* (see room 4 and the end of

module).

The spider, sensitive to the vibrations caused by the characters' movements, hangs from a web immediately above the doorway. It thus has a 4 in 6 chance of surprising the first character. Even if it doesn't, it automatically gains the initiative for the first round of combat.

8. Cellar

The stairs descend to a cellar, but an iron gate bars entrance. The gate is locked. The cellar has a musty smell and appears not to have been disturbed for some time. Everything is covered by a thick layer of dust. Barrels, crates, and four wooden coffins are spread about the room in a disorganized mess.

The key to the locked iron gate is in the bedroom (room 3). If the key is not found, the lock may be picked or the characters may attempt to *bend bars* to gain entrance.

The five barrels each hold twenty gallons of oil. The crates contain assorted weapons, including many arrows and crossbow bolts. These stores were intended for siege defense but haven't ever been needed. Three coffins are Kenither's spares. The other contains a flesh golem and leans against a secret door.

Beyond the secret door is a small room with a trap door in the floor. A ladder disappearing down into the dark is revealed when the trap door is opened. The ladder leads to the crypt (room 9). There are several tiny holes in the secret and trap doors through which Kenither can pass in gaseous form.

The flesh golem (AC 9; MV 8"; hp 40; #AT 2; Dmg 2-16/2-16; SD normal weapons do no damage, most spells do no damage, but fire- and cold-based spells slow it for 2-12 rounds, electrical attacks restore 1 hit point per die of damage; AL N), created by Kenither through the use of a *Manual of Golems*, is instructed to attack anyone who opens or tries to destroy the coffin in which it resides. It is also instructed to break out and attack if its coffin is moved.

9. Crypt. This dusty side room is reached by a ladder descending from the cellar trap-door. The door to the crypt is oak, painted umber to hide the *sepia snake sigil* drawn upon it. The *sigil* is

set off if the door is touched. The door is also locked; because Kenither is able to pass through the keyhole in gaseous form, he keeps the key inside his sarcophagus.

The crypt itself lies beyond the door. The walls, ceiling, and floor are of black rock. Just 10' beyond the door and a little to the right stands a white marble pedestal. A black iron brazier filled with incense lies upon it. There are four white marble sarcophagi on each side of the room, leading to Kenither's sarcophagus, made of blackest marble, at the far end of the room.

The sarcophagi, including Kenither's, are labeled A through I on the map. Each sarcophagus holds a removable wooden coffin. Their other contents are as follows (all creatures are hostile to the party):

A: Holds 5,000 cp.

B: The inside of this coffin is infested by a growth of yellow mold (AC 9; MV 0"; HD n/a; hp n/a; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8; SA poison spores; SD affected only by fire-based attacks; AL N).

C: Although it appears to be empty, the wooden coffin is itself actually a killer mimic (AC 7; MV 3"; HD 10; hp 42; #AT 1; Dmg 3-12; SA glue; SD camouflage; AL N).

D: Empty.

E: A mummy (AC 3; MV 6"; HD 6 + 3; hp 29; #AT 1; Dmg 1-12; SA fear, disease; SD harmed only by magical weapons, which do half damage; magical fire does +1 damage per die; AL LE) is entombed here. It wears a bejeweled necklace worth 2,350 gp.

F: This coffin is filled with treasure: 2,000 sp, 1,500 ep, 200 gp, and 20 gems (base 10 gp each).

G: Empty.

H: This coffin is filled with rocks. One, on the bottom, is a *philosopher's stone*.

I: Two things are of note on the outside of Kenither's regal sarcophagus. On top of the black marble sits a candleholder with two unlit tapers in it. The candleholder is, in fact, a *dicerion of light and darkness*, but the candles are not of the specially prepared variety. Secondly, there is an inscription on the foot of the sarcophagus. It is in an archaic dialect of Common and reads:

Better to hold myself deathless
Than to rule the world for a century.

There is a small hole going through the top of the coffin and sarcophagus, allowing gaseous entrance and exit by

Kenither. The coffin is of exotic teakwood, the inside lined with red satin quilted over waterfowl down. A magnificent crown rests atop a down-filled satin pillow. The crown is of silver, decorated with gold leaf and wire and set with four jewels: a diamond, a ruby, an emerald, and a sapphire. The whole piece is worth 8,500 gp. Next to the pillow lies a scepter. It, too, is of silver decorated with gold. The head of the scepter has four faces, each enameled with Kenither's coat of arms, and is tipped with a black sapphire. The scepter is worth 6,000 gp.

If Kenither was previously reduced to zero hit points, he is in his coffin regenerating, with the crown on his head and the scepter in his hands. If the party has not yet defeated him, he waits until they have opened the other sarcophagi, hoping that they will be weakened by the monsters therein. When his own sarcophagus is opened, he coalesces from gaseous form and attacks.

Concluding the Quest

After the rescue, Candor and his friends thank the party. They have no valuables but instead relinquish their rights to a share of the treasure. They then travel upriver with the intent to apologize to Melstu's people and perhaps even get back their equipment. The adventure could be extended if some or all of the party would like to go along.

"Featherhead," actually named Udebaban, is the village priest (3rd-level cleric). He was extremely disturbed by the sacrilege and is against returning anything to the party. After a good deal of coercing from Melstu (who understands Candor's bad habits), he gives Candor and his friends a chance: if they fulfill a small quest, he will return their possessions and forgive them.

Fifteen years ago, a strong young warrior named Durbassa entered the swamp on a hunting expedition. He did not come out. Since the swamp is taboo, no one was allowed to go in to look for him (the reason for the taboo, the vampire Kenither, has been long forgotten). Durbassa had stumbled upon Kenither's kingdom and was drained, becoming a vampire himself. During a great storm a year ago, he was in bat form and was blown out of the swamp and into the rain forest. Once beyond the confines of Kenither's kingdom, Durbassa became a free-willed vampire and returned to

the village of his former life to prey on the living. He has stolen the life of more than one villager, and now people are afraid to enter the rain forest even in daylight. The PCs' quest is to slay Durbassa and the three lesser vampires he has created.

Durbassa is a vampire as per the *Monster Manual* (AC 1; MV 12"/18"; HD 8 + 3; hp 36; #AT 1; Dmg 5-10 + energy drain; AL CE). To summarize the characteristics of the lesser vampires: AC 2; MV 12"/18"; HD 6 + 2; hp 29, 25, 22; #AT 1; Dmg 5-10; SA energy drain (1 level, 50% chance of 2); 18/76 physical strength; subject to a *raise dead* spell (saving throw vs. magic to prevent being brought back from undeath); under control of Durbassa; otherwise like the vampire as described in the *Monster Manual*. The vampires all have graves in the rain forest, side by side. Durbassa's original grave is in Kenither's kingdom (on the zombie hill), but he only returns there in dire circumstances, since he would not know of Kenither's demise. The vampires have no treasure.

After a successful vampire hunt with whatever details the DM devises (having one simple encounter with all of the vampires would be very poor, not to mention overly dangerous for the party), the participating characters are invited back to Melstu's village for a big celebration, after which Candor and his friends are reunited with their possessions. Player characters who helped destroy the vampires are each given a gift of one of the following in gratitude: a gold-inlaid ivory statuette of a peacock (worth 2,000 gp), a star ruby (worth 2,000 gp), a *spear* +2, a pouch of *dust of dryness*, a coral necklace (2,000 gp), or a potion of *extra healing*.

New Monster and Magical Item

SPIDER, CRYSTAL

FREQUENCY: *Very rare*

NO. APPEARING: 1 (5% chance of 2)

ARMOR CLASS: 4

MOVE: 15" *18"

HIT DICE: 4 + 4

% IN LAIR: 95%

TREASURE TYPE: Q (x3), see below

NO. OF ATTACKS: 1

DAMAGE: 1-3

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *Crystalization*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *Nil*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: *Standard*

INTELLIGENCE: *Semi-*

ALIGNMENT: *Neutral*

SIZE: *M*

LEVEL/XP VALUE: IV/165 + 5/hp

This giant arachnid bears some distinct characteristics that separate it from other spiders. In appearance, it looks as if it were made of glass or rock crystal. The webs of this creature are stiff and thin, and have a crystalline glow. It travels swiftly across its webs, almost like skating on ice.

The most dreaded power of this creature is in its bite. Although its mandibles are small and rather weak, a bitten victim must save vs. petrification or suffer the following effects:

Round	Effect
1-5	slows
6-30	paralyzes
31 +	crystalization

The *slow* effect reduces the victim's number of attacks and movement by one half; a victim is able to attack only during rounds 1, 3, and 5, at which point the victim become immobile. The victim usually dies of suffocation by the fifth round of paralyzation, since the diaphragm (which works the lungs) is affected as well as all other muscles. The body gradually stiffens as the spider's powerful venom crystalizes substances or replaces them with minerals. A crystalized victim may be revived by *resurrection*, *alter reality*, a *wish*, or a *potion of restoration*. *Limited wish* brings a victim back only temporarily; after a week the victim must save vs. petrification or begin to recrystallize.

The venom of the crystal spider loses its properties if outside of a body for more than one hour. It cannot be used as an insinuating, contact, or ingestive poison. No weapon has yet been developed that effectively duplicates the spider's injection method.

Crystal spiders have an affinity for gems of the transparent sort, and these are often found stored in web bundles in the centers of their webs.

Potion of Restoration

This magical fluid was first created by Kenither the Gaunt. Each dose negates the effects of the following spells and powers, restoring the affected creature to its normal state: *charm monster*, *charm person*, *feign death*, *forget*,

friends, *haste*, *hold person*, *polymorph other*, *polymorph self*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *sepia snake sigil*, *sleep*, *slow*, *stoneskin*, *strength*, and *Tasha's uncontrollable hideous laughter*.

A *polymorphed* creature restored by this potion need not make a system shock roll. The liquid also cures blindness and deafness, and restores a crystalized character (see description of *Crystal Spider*). The potion can be administered by pouring a dose on the subject or by the creature ingesting it. In either case, it can negate more than one spell. For example, if applied to a creature under *Tasha's uncontrollable hideous laughter* and *haste*, both spells would be negated.

XP value: 300

GP value: 2,000

Leaving your lair?



If you're moving, please mail your old and new addresses (and your account number) to: Address Change, DUNGEON™ Adventures, P.O. Box 110, Lake Geneva WI 53147. Write to us at least six (preferably eight) weeks before your move to insure uninterrupted delivery.