NOSFERATU: THE LEGEND OF DRACULA

A Thriller in Two Acts

Adapted from the Bram Stoker novel

By L. Don Swartz

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DEDICATION

For my big brother Tim Swartz
who introduced me to *DRACULA* on the
Friday Fright Night Late Late Show
The Playwright

STORY OF THE PLAY

No modern-day monster can equal the chill factor than that of Dracula and his nosferatu, the undead who must feed on the blood of the living to exist. Their lust, shown only in the darkest hours, haunts even the bravest of us mortal souls.

This adaptation of Bram Stoker's 1897 novel is done with a sure and steady hand by frightmesiter L. Don Swartz. We encounter Dracula's horror from his centuries-old castle in Europe, to the ship he travels on, and finally to his new feeding grounds near an English asylum.

When Dracula causes the death of a young woman named Lucy, her fiancé Holmwood, her friend Mina, Mina's husband Jonathan Harker, a physician Dr. Seward, and others must conquer their fears to become vampire "hunters." In order to free Miss Lucy's soul, they must destroy her body, and more importantly, the Count's as well.

The hunters are lead by Dr. Van Helsing, in a daring character departure portrayed here as a woman. Another departure is a tight, sharp ending focusing on Mina and her role in the vampire's destruction. Rather than a love story which asks us to sympathize with the Count, a 20th-century invention, this version remains true to Stoker's thematic core, the power of good over evil.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(21 characters. 6 to 8 men, 8 to 10 women, 1 flexible, 1 boy, 1 girl)

MARY: A little girl who reads to her blind grandmother.
GRANDMOTHER: A blind woman who sees too clearly.
JONATHAN HARKER: Count Dracula's favorite lawyer and guest at Castle Dracula.
COUNT DRACULA: King of Vampires.
FIRST SISTER: Vampire at Castle Dracula.
SECOND SISTER: Vampire at Castle Dracula.
THIRD SISTER: Vampire at Castle Dracula.
CAPTAIN: Aboard the doomed ship, Demeter.
FIRST MATE: Aboard the doomed ship, Demeter.
LUCY WESTENRA: A young woman with a strange illness, engaged to Holmwood.
DR. JACK SEWARD: Head of Seward's Asylum in London.
MINA MURRAY HARKER: A school teacher, wife to Jonathan Harker.
SIMMONS: An attendant at Seward's Asylum.
MRS. MACDOOGLE: A maid at Seward's Asylum.
SISTER AGATHA: A nun at St. Joseph and St. Mary's Hospital, Budapest.
PROFESSOR VAN HELSING: A brilliant scientist. She is also a vampire hunter.
ARTHUR HOLMWOOD: A rich nobleman who loses his love to Count Dracula.
RENFIELD: An inmate in Seward's Asylum with a link to the Count.
MESSENGER BOY: Delivers an important message from Mina.
Also: AGONIZED MOTHER, NOVICE, MORTICIAN

DOUBLING: *Holmwood can double as the ship's Captain and Renfield as the First Mate. The three sister vampires can double as Sister Agatha, the Novice, and the Agonized Mother. Mortician can be either male or female. Girl playing Mary could possibly double as Messenger Boy.*

TIME: The end of the 19th century.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT ONE

Prologue: A bench by the sea, Hampstead
Scene 1: Castle Dracula, Transylvania
Scene 2: A bench by the sea, Hampstead/
Aboard the Demeter, at sea
Scene 3: Seward's Asylum, London/
St. Joseph and St. Mary Hospital, Budapest
Scene 4: Seward's Asylum, London/
St. Joseph and St. Mary Hospital, Budapest

ACT TWO

Scene 1: Seward's Asylum, London
A bench near the sea, Hampstead
A train station, London
A street corner, London
Seward's Asylum
Scene 2: The churchyard at Kingstead
Scene 3: Seward's Asylum, London
Scene 4: Seward's Asylum, London/
Dracula's house at Piccadilly
Scene 5: Seward's Asylum, London
Scene 6: Castle Dracula, Transylvania

Production Notes are at the end of the script.

ACT I
Prologue

(AT RISE: A bench near the sea. SOUNDS of the sea are heard. MUSIC: "SEASIDE THEME." MARY, a young girl, is reading a newspaper to her blind GRANDMOTHER.)

MARY: “The Crown, in a terse statement, rebuked the folly ...”
GRANDMOTHER: Enough of the politics, let's have some serious journalism. Read from the gossip page.
MARY: Grandmother, it's called the Society Page.
GRANDMOTHER: Same difference. Something juicy, if you please.
MARY: Something juicy ... let's see. It says here that an anonymous source claims that a nobleman from a distant land has purchased Carfax Abbey.
GRANDMOTHER: Well, that's odd. Who would want that ruin? It's not fit for the living.
MARY: According to the article, a solicitor, named Jonathan Harker from the Peter Hawkins Firm, is traveling to Transylvania to finalize the transaction.
GRANDMOTHER: What would anyone possibly want with Carfax Abbey?
MARY: I can't even imagine. The children in town say the place is haunted.
GRANDMOTHER: Haunted? Nonsense. What is the name of our new neighbor?
MARY: It says here ... ah, blah, blah, blah, old family, wealthy ... here it is ... his name is ... Count Dracula.

(A distant SOUND of thunder.)

GRANDMOTHER: *(Standing.)* Storm's comin'. Take me home, Mary.
MARY: Yes, Grandmother. *(SHE takes HER hand.)*
GRANDMOTHER: *(Looking out to sea, SHE whispers.)* Dracula.

(THEY exit. It begins to rain.)

(BLACKOUT.)

End of Prologue

Scene 1

(AT RISE: Castle Dracula. May 5th. It is late at night. SOUNDS of the creatures of the night. We hear a carriage approach, stop briefly and leave quickly. JONATHAN HARKER enters, dragging a very heavy trunk, and approaches the massive steps of Castle Dracula. Reaching in his pocket he finds a golden crucifix on a chain. He smiles at it, and swinging his arm; he intends to throw it away. He stops. Opening his fist he looks at the religious trinket. A bat swoops down on him – he swats it away. After a moment of hesitation, he puts it back in his pocket and dragging the trunk up the steps, knocks on the massive door. MUSIC: "DRACULA'S THEME." The door opens and DRACULA appears, holding an ancient lantern. He is an old man dressed from head to foot in black. His face and hands are extremely pale; his fingernails, long and sharp.)

DRACULA: Welcome to my house. Enter freely and of your own will. Come freely. Go safely and leave something of the happiness you bring.
HARKER: Count Dracula?
DRACULA: I am Dracula. I bid you welcome, Mr. Harker, to my house. *(HARKER hesitates to step over the threshold.)* Come in, the night air has a chill.

(HARKER enters. DRACULA smiles and picks up Harker's trunk with no effort.)

HARKER: Please, Count, allow me, it is very heavy.
DRACULA: Nay, sir, you are my guest. It is late and my people are not available. Let me see to your comfort myself.

(DRACULA leads HIM off. A moment later they appear in the SR tunnel at a well-set table with bright candles.)

DRACULA: I pray you, be seated and sup how you please.

(HARKER sits. DRACULA raises the lid on a chicken dinner.)

HARKER: Thank you.

(DRACULA crosses away from the table and stands in front of the SR tunnel.)

End of Freeview

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