

DRACULA

Adapted by Phil Willmott
from Bram Stoker

Characters:

Mina Harker
Lucy Westenra
Professor Abraham Van Helsing
Dr John Seward
Lord Arthur Holmwood
Jonathan Harker
Renfield
Count Dracula
A prostitute

Lunatics, asylum attendants, party guests, vampires, mob.

SETTING:

THE STAGE IS HUNG WITH A WEB OF GAUZE THROUGH WHICH CHARACTERS CAN APPEAR AND DISAPPEAR EFFORTLESSLY.

IT CAN, WITH A CHANGE OF LIGHT, APPEAR EITHER SOLID OR BECOME TRANSPARENT. YOU CAN THROW HUGE SHADOWS ON TO IT FROM IN FRONT OR BEHIND.

IT'S COLOUR IS PREDOMINANTLY WHITE\GREY TO SUGGEST THE CLINICAL LUNATIC ASYLUM BUT IT IS FILTHY, RIPPED AND STAINED. IF YOU LOOK CLOSELY IN A CERTAIN LIGHT YOU CAN SOMETIMES MAKE OUT TWISTED FACES STARING OUT AT YOU, AT OTHER TIMES THERE ARE THE FAINT COLOURS OF THE UNION JACK SO THE STAGE LOOKS AS IF IT'S HUNG WITH A HUGE, DECAYING, MOTH EATEN FLAG.

THROUGH THE GAUZE, AND MANY OF THE COSTUMES, THIN BLUE AND RED THREAD WEAVES DELICATELY LIKE VEINS.

THE PRODUCTION SHOULD BE UNDER SCORED LIKE A MOVIE.

Scene 1

THE WEDDING BANQUET OF LUCY WESTENRA AND ARTHUR HOLMWOOD. ALL THE WEDDING GUESTS ARE GATHERED EXCITEDLY AROUND THE HAPPY COUPLE.

THEY PICK UP THE KNIFE TO CUT THE WEDDING CAKE. AS THEY LIFT IT HIGH THE LIGHTS CHANGE, A BEAM OF LIGHT CATCHES THE CRUEL LOOKING BLADE.

EVERYONE MOVES INTO SLOW MOTION EXCEPT FOR LUCY WHOSE NIGHTMARE THIS IS.

THE KNIFE IS PLUNGED DOWN INTO THE CAKE AND IT BEGINS TO BLEED. BLOOD TRICKLES DOWN FROM THE TOP, DOWN EACH TIER, THE TABLE BEGINS TO SLOPE AND THE BLOOD RUNS DOWN IT TO FORM A POOL, FROM THE POOL A NAKED MAN, DRENCHED IN BLOOD, CRAWLS HIS WAY UP THE TABLE TOWARDS LUCY, WHEN HE REACHES HER HE DRAWS HIS HAND ACROSS HER BODY, SMEARING IT WITH BLOOD.

THE VISION BREAKS UP AND SHE IS IN HER NIGHTDRESS BEING HELD IN THE ARMS OF HER FRIEND MINA HARKER WHO IS TRYING TO WAKE HER.

MINA: Lucy, Lucy wake up.

LUCY: Where am I?

MINA: You've been sleep-walking again.

LUCY: I dreamt.. I dreamt.. I had the most terrible dream.

MINA: It's all over now. I've got you safe. To bed now my dearest.

LUCY: So much blood. Why is there always so much blood?

Scene 2

IN FRONT OF THE GAUZE SHY, YOUNG, DR SEWARD ON A LECTURING PODIUM. THE LUNATIC RENFIELD, TERRIFYING, IS AT HIS SIDE.

SEWARD: "Blood", Mr Chairman, members of the Royal Society of Lunatic Control and Management, "blood".

I am Dr John Seward of The Carfax Maximum Security Residential Home for the Psychotic. With your gracious permission I humbly beg to place before our annual conference the future bound up in one word "blood".

I have a vision gentlemen, of a great lunatic asylum, its monolithic grey walls stretching high above us. Its endless corridors ringing out with the cries of the deranged clamouring for the peace that they know I can bring to their tortured minds. The peace that can only come of The Seward Van Helsing Patented Blood Purification Process.

You look sceptical gentlemen but it is the culmination of many years of research by my mentor, the acclaimed Dutch academic Professor Abraham Van Helsing. The theory is a simple one.

AS HE DESCRIBES THIS WE SEE (BEHIND THE GAUZE) A PATIENT TREATED IN THIS WAY. IT SHOULD BE SILENT BUT THE RESTRAINT AND THE VICTIM'S WRITHING SHOULD BE EXTREMELY VIOLENT AND UGLY.

The violent criminal is strapped onto a chair and blood is pumped from him so that he is within the very last heart beat of death. The blood is passed through this unique patented cleansing solution to be purified of its evil. The clean blood is then pumped slowly back through the hungry, waiting veins, replacing criminal psychosis with the full moral responsibilities with which the criminal can be released back into the community.

THE IMAGE FADES.

Gentleman, there stands before you living testimony to the success of the Seward Van Helsing Patented Blood Purification Process. This man at my side is George - Slasher - Renfield.

Do any of you recall this name gentlemen? Ah I see some of you do. Only a few years ago it was a name to strike terror into the heart of any good Christian, long was his horrific and tyrannical rein over our darkest fears. Tell them what you used to do Renfield.

RENFIELD: I used to cut 'em up.

SEWARD: Who Renfield?

RENFIELD: My little pretties.

SEWARD: Renfield, you may recall the case, is referring to young barely pubescent girls.

RENFIELD: I used to slice 'em from their gizzards to their vitals.

SEWARD: Yes, thank you Renfield.

RENFIELD: I used to tear out the ruby red ribbon from inside them and wind it in their hair.

SEWARD: Thank you, Renfield.

RENFIELD: Then I used to sit them on a park bench so the fine ladies and gentlemen could see them sat so pretty.

SEWARD: (GETTING RATTLED) Yes, thank you Renfield that will be quite sufficient.

RENFIELD: But I cut their face off so they wouldn't blush.

SEWARD: That will be all Renfield! (REGAINING HIS COMPOSURE) As you can see, thanks to this pioneering technique Renfield has been completely restored to sanity and is there man amongst you who would not happily have him for a neighbour, merrily doffing his hat to you, with a cheery good morning.

RENFIELD: (LEERING MOST UNCONVINCINGLY) A very good morning to you, your misses keeping well? And your little girls? God bless 'em.

SEWARD: Quite so. In fact the police are so impressed with Renfield's recovery they've called upon him to advise them on the current grisly crop of murders in our city's parks. Rest assured gentlemen, whoever it is that is nightly terrorising our pleasure gardens, were he to submit to The Seward Van Helsing Patented Blood Purification System we could have him cured and riding the wonderful new London Underground System with the rest of us.

A LUNATIC ENTERS WITH AN ENVELOPE.

SEWARD: Yes, what is it Hodgkiss?

LUNATIC: (TRYING HARD WITH THE LONG WORD) Telegram.

SEWARD: Thank you.

HE READS IT.

SEWARD: Gentlemen, glorious news indeed. This is from Professor Van Helsing himself. He is arriving here tomorrow. I should like to invite you to join the patients and neighbours of Carfax asylum at a masked ball to welcome him to our shores.

LIGHTS CHANGE.

Scene 3

SEWARD TURNS TO FACE THE TWISTED AND GIBBERING SHAPES OF HIS PATIENTS (BEHIND THE GAUZE). MOANS AND SHRIEKS SURROUND THE AUDIENCE THROUGH OUT THE AUDITORIUM.

SEWARD: Right, pay attention. I want you on you best behaviour this evening. As you know

we're all going to have a little party.

LUNATICS: PARTY!

SEWARD: I should like you to remember at all times that you are ambassadors for the asylum. And I'm counting on you to perform your allotted tasks with the upmost decorum.

RENFIELD PRACTICES OFFERING A TRAY OF HORDEURVES.

RENFIELD: Canape!

SEWARD: Very good Renfield. Alright places everyone. I'm sure it's going to be a wonderful success.

A CASCADE OF STRAUSS-TYPE OF MUSIC.

THE GAUZE CURTAIN IS SWEEPED BACK TO REVEAL

A GLITTERING CHANDELIER-LIT BALLROOM BUT ADAPTED FROM ONE OF THE ROOMS IN THE ASYLUM. A RATHER MACABRE EFFECT.

THE ACTORS WHO RECENTLY MADE THE SHAPES OF THE LUNATICS BEHIND THE GAUZE NOW "STRAIGHTEN" AND ARE REVEALED AS MASKED PARTY GUESTS IN SUMPTUOUS EVENING DRESS.

THE MASKS ARE ALL VARIATIONS ON DEATH HEADS AND IF YOU LOOK CLOSELY AT THE RICH WAISTCOATS OF THE MEN THE DECORATION IS BASED ON THE MUSCLE TISSUE IN GREY'S ANATOMY. THE TRIMMING ON THE BEAUTIFUL WOMEN'S DRESSES IS ALSO BASED ON VEINS, BRAIN TISSUE, INTESTINE ETC. ETC.

PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS HAVE SMALLER MASKS. BIGGER MASKS CAN "NEUTRALISE" THE APPEARANCE OF THE OTHER ACTORS TO GIVE THE IMPRESSION OF A LARGE ANONYMOUS CROWD.

MOST BEAUTIFUL OF ALL IS LUCY WALTZING WITH HER HANDSOME FIANCE ARTHUR HOLMWOOD. MINA IS ALSO THERE.

PROFESSOR VAN HELSING IS VERY OVER-EXCITED, PARTICULARLY BY THE BEAUTIFUL WOMEN.

A LUNATIC IS DANCING IN A STRAIGHT-JACKET AND HAVING A LOVELY TIME. TWO ASYLUM KEEPERS COME AND DRAG HIM OFF.

RENFIELD IS AGGRESSIVELY THRUSTING CANAPES AT PEOPLE.

RENFIELD: Canape!

PROFESSOR VAN HELSING HAS A DUTCH ACCENT

VAN HELSING: (TO SEWARD) Delightful, quite, quite delightful! What it is John to be young and have so many delightful friends. It quite takes me back to when I was a student in Vienna. So many pretty ladies.

HE BLOWS KISSES. WOMEN LOOK COQUETTISH WITH FANS ETC. VAN HELSING IS PARTICULARLY DRAWN TO LUCY.

And who is that vision of light that graces the very air that she breaths?

SEWARD: Ah, here you cause me some sadness Professor. That lovely creature is Lucy Westenra. I confess I had harboured some hope that she might be my wife but alas it was not to be.

VAN HELSING: How so?

SEWARD: Unbeknownst to me she was also the object of my friend Arthur's attention. That fine figure you see dancing with her now.

VAN HELSING: Oh, but young John you are a match for him I think.

SEWARD: He is generally regarded to be the handsomest man in our circle, besides which, upon his father's recent death, he became Lord Holmwood and our member of parliament.

VAN HELSING: Ah to be so destined for greatness.

SEWARD: He was always the most frightful fat-head and used to bully me terribly at school.

VAN HELSING: But you command an enormous lunatic asylum.

SEWARD: Do you know it's funny, the girls just never seem to go for that. Please excuse me, I haven't yet enquired after Mrs Van Helsing.

VAN HELSING: We will speak no further of her, if you please.

SEWARD: Oh I'm so sorry.

VAN HELSING: No, not all my friend. It is I who am sorry for you. To lose such a beautiful wife must have fallen heavily upon you.

SEWARD: At first but I have the work to sustain me.

VAN HELSING: Ah yes, the work.

RENFIELD: Canape!

SEWARD: Thank you Renfield. These really are quite delicious. What's in them?

RENFIELD: My own secret recipe, Dr.

SEWARD: Well, excellent. Wouldn't you say Professor?

RENFIELD: (TO VAN HELSING) Canape!

VAN HELSING PICKS ONE UP AND IS ABOUT TO PUT IT IN HIS MOUTH WHEN HE CATCHES A WHIFF OF IT. HE HAS A GOOD SNIFF AND RETURNS IT GINGERLY TO THE PLATE.

VAN HELSING: I ate earlier.

SEWARD: Oh well, waste not want not. (HE EATS IT) Carry on Renfield.

RENFIELD WANDERS OFF.

(WATCHING HIM GO) Our greatest success. Few are as blessed as us Professor. It is our destiny to change the shape of psychiatric thought. Perhaps the celibate life might be a blessing. We can not be distracted.

VAN HELSING: And we shall not be my friend.

MINA APPROACHES THEM.

SEWARD: Ah Mina. I should like you to meet Professor Van Helsing. Professor, this is Mrs Mina Harker the wife of my friend and solicitor Jonathan Harker.

MINA: An honour to meet you professor. We've heard so much about you.

VAN HELSING: The honour is all mine dear lady.

RENFIELD APPROACHES.

RENFIELD: Canape!

MINA: No Renfield.

HE WANDERS OFF.

SEWARD: Jonathan still not up to a party then?

MINA: Alas my husband is still very weak. I wondered John if you could escort me home later. I don't feel safe with this murderer on the loose.

SEWARD: Absolutely.

VAN HELSING: Your husband has been ill?

MINA: He has recently returned from business in Eastern Europe. The rigours of the trip seem to have completely exhausted him and he spends long hours deep in thought as if greatly troubled.

VAN HELSING: My dear you must not worry yourself. Just as travel can often be invigorating it can sometimes also provoke melancholy and introspection. This soon passes, especially in the tender embraces of one such as you. Am I going too fast for you my dear?

MINA: No, I think I just about grasped that professor. I do so hope you're right.

SEWARD: Jonathan's trip, Budapest wasn't it?

MINA: Transylvania.

VAN HELSING: A hauntingly beautiful land, but its people are backward and superstitious. Plenty of ghosties and ghoulies to frighten the little popies like Miss Mina, here.

MINA: Do you find so professor? I must say I find the Slovak and Roman influence, particularly on the folklore to the north especially fascinating. Where do you stand on the correlation between pagan ritual in central Europe and Bulgarian monastic practices in the celebration of high mass during Ascension?

VAN HELSING: (DISCONCERTED) Delightful, quite, quite delightful.

SEWARD: Just a minute. Transylvania, there's a chap here tonight from Transylvania. What was his name? Our new neighbour at Carfax Abbey. Count something or other. In fact he asked after Jonathan.

MINA: It was the purchase of Carfax Abbey by a Transylvanian aristocrat which took my husband abroad. It must be this same Count. I will talk with him. Perhaps he may be able to

shed some light on Jonathan's affliction.

VAN HELSING: I could mediate for you, dear lady.

MINA: You speak Transylvanian?

VAN HELSING: No, but there may be confusions I could clear up.

MINA: (IRONICALLY) I expect my silly little head will muddle through. Would you excuse me for one moment, Professor? I need to consult Dr. Seward in his professional capacity.

VAN HELSING: I am intrigued dear lady.

SEWARD: I assure you Mina, you can speak openly in front of Professor Van Helsing.

MINA: It concerns Lucy.

SEWARD: Please continue, I beg of you. Is Lucy in some kind of distress?

VAN HELSING: The enchanting creature we spoke of earlier? Let us pray not.

MINA: She is deeply troubled with some kind of sleeping disorder. As you know she is staying with me whilst we prepare for her marriage. She seems to be suffering from the most terrible nightmares so that in her sleeping state she rises from her bed and walks about the house and grounds. I keep watch as best I can but twice I have discovered her at the open window that looks out over the park. It's as if she's watching for something.

SEWARD: My poor Lucy.

VAN HELSING: Oh bless her little heart. She will be troubling herself with her forthcoming nuptials, worrying about what little trinkets to wear, what little baubles to hang about her beautiful neck. I'm sure I will be able to bring her some peace of mind. A simple exercise in Mesmerism.

MINA: Mesmerism?

VAN HELSING: Hypnosis. Don't be frightened pretty lady, it is quite painless.

MINA: I'm sure you are aware Professor that serious moral questions have been raised concerning the susceptibility of the human mind to abuse in such circumstances.

SEWARD: Mina, I'm quite sure we can trust the Professor.

MINA: (SUDDENLY AWARE OF HER RUDENESS) Well, if you think it would put her mind at rest. (BEAT) I shall give her the good news.

VAN HELSING: I am so sorry to hear about your husband. It must be frustrating for so beautiful a lady to be without the attentions of a healthy male. If I can be of any assistance..

MINA: Thank you Professor but my husband is a very attentive and virile lover. I fear we would both regret your inadequacies.

VAN HELSING: We shall speak later, friend John.

HE MOVES OFF.

MINA: Creep.

SEWARD: Mina! These modern ideas of yours are all very well but you take things too far with your outspokenness.

ARTHUR AND LUCY CROSS.

ARTHUR: The kraut gone now has he?

SEWARD: The Professor is a world-renowned academic. He heads Holland's foremost lunatic asylum. One of the biggest in the world.

ARTHUR: The place is crawling with foreigners. There's another of 'em over by the terrace. Introduced myself, could barely make out a thing the bleeder said.

SEWARD: That will be our new neighbour. Count something or other.

LUCY: Dracula, John.

SEWARD: Thank you Lucy.

ARTHUR: Rum kind of name. Yes, well you always were drawn to the fruitbats, Sewey. At least when you were my fag I could knock a bit of sense into you.

SEWARD: The Professor is not a kraut, a fruitbat or a creep.

MINA: I'm sorry John I didn't mean to upset you. If he's a friend of yours then of course we shall respect him. I don't want him interfering with Lucy, that's all.

ARTHUR: What's this, what's this?

MINA: Nothing Arthur. In fact I think if you spoke to the Professor you may find you have a lot in common.

ARTHUR: Hunting man is he? Where's old Jonathan tonight?

MINA: Still weak I'm afraid.

ARTHUR: That's from eating all that foreign muck I'll wager. D'you know they were trying to serve us up some stinking curried pulp at the club the other night? I soon gave them what for. Good British beef steak, blood-red raw with greens, that's what you need. Few slices a day, set you up for life.

MINA: Yes Arthur. Lucy are you alright?

LUCY: Oh quite, thank you Mina. Just a little flushed from all the dancing. Arthur does twirl me around so.

ARTHUR: (GOOD NATUREDLY) Can't help it. I've the prettiest girl in the land and I want to show her off, damn it.

MINA: Well if you don't mind, I shall steal her away from you for a few moments.

ARTHUR: Girl talk, eh?

MINA: Absolutely Arthur.

ARTHUR: That's alright, I need a word with Sewey.

MINA: Boy talk, eh?

ARTHUR: Nothing worth bothering your pretty little head about.

MINA: I can imagine. Come along Lucy.

RENFIELD RETURNS.

RENFIELD: Canape!

MINA: No Renfield.

LUCY AND MINA MOVE AWAY.

ARTHUR: Can't Harker keep her in her place? By God, I'd take a horse whip to that woman if she were mine. Mind you she's a looker, wouldn't be too much of a chore eh Sewey?

SEWARD: Do have a canape Art. They're very good.

ARTHUR SHOVELS DOWN A HANDFUL.

ARTHUR: Not bad at all. (TO RENFIELD) Now, make yourself scarce loony.

RENFIELD GOES.

SEWARD: Arthur, Renfield is a rehabilitated member of the community.

ARTHUR: That's what I want to talk to you about. The Prime Minister's going on and on about law and order at the moment. Absolutely top of the agenda and meanwhile there's a murderer loose in my constituency. It doesn't look very good.

SEWARD: I suppose not.

ARTHUR: And it's not just the PM. breathing down my neck. There was a public meeting at the Town Hall last night. They want to close you down.

SEWARD: What?

ARTHUR: Well, you can hardly blame people can you? These are very brutal killings. A new stiff practically every morning. And here we all are living underneath a bloody great asylum for the criminally insane. Understandably people are putting two and two together and coming up with - loony breaks out, loony runs around a bit dribbling, loony knocks someone off. And I think it's that one. (INDICATING RENFIELD)

SEWARD: Renfield? why?

ARTHUR: You know he gets out don't you?

SEWARD: He doesn't Art. This is a maximum security asylum.

ARTHUR: Couple of workmen at the meeting claimed they'd been attacked by him. They were unloading large crates of earth, or something, over at Carfax Abbey. Your man was running all over the place ranting on about looking for "the Master". One of the crates got smashed open. Quite put the wind up them.

SEWARD: "the Master"? What did he mean "the Master"? and how do they know it was Renfield?

ARTHUR: They don't but I recognised the description. Anyway that's not the point, the point is that even mention of this place had the crowd in a frenzy. I swear, Sewey, if I hadn't calmed

them down they would have rushed round here and torched it to the ground.

SEWARD: Arthur. It can't be Renfield. Renfield would never harm anyone. I'd stake my professional reputation, everything I've ever worked for, on it.

ARTHUR: Shall we put it this way? My constituents are baying for my blood and my cabinet prospects are on the line. If I don't produce a killer for the public to tear to pieces I'm in big trouble. I want your loony. You hand him over. I'll string him up and we'll both be heroes.

SEWARD: But he's innocent. I know it.

ARTHUR: It doesn't matter. He'll do.

SEWARD: I will not let you take him. He's the living embodiment of my life's work.

ARTHUR: Well, you'd better pray they catch the killer soon because if they don't I'm taking your dangerous little Dolly and showing everyone I'm a no nonsense man of action. Now Councillor Garndice is next door. If you want an asylum left we'd better get in there and start explaining just how secure it is.

SEWARD: Yes, yes.. absolutely.

MINA AND LUCY.

MINA: Lucy darling whatever is the matter?

LUCY: Please, please. Get me out of this place.

MINA: Do the lunatics frighten you?

LUCY: I don't mean the asylum, I mean out of London. Couldn't we go to the country? To Whitby even? We were happy there.

MINA: What is it. What's troubling you?.

LUCY: I can't tell you. I can't, it's too terrible. Please believe me we have to get away. There is great evil here.

MINA: Lucy, I'm getting very impatient with you. Tell me what's the matter.

LUCY: I can't.

MINA: Why not?

LUCY: Please, please don't make me tell you what I know.

MINA: Lucy -

LUCY: Promise. I need you to promise me. Promise me on all that we've been together. Will you do that?

MINA: Alright. I promise. Now let us talk of happier things. The wedding dress. Have you made your selection?

LUCY: Mina, I'm not going through with the wedding.

MINA: What do you mean, my darling?

LUCY: How can I stand there before God, before all my family and friends, smiling at everyone when all I feel... is hate?

MINA: Lucy, You don't hate Arthur!

LUCY: Yes, I do. No I. I hate men.

MINA: How can you say such a thing?

LUCY: They are so crude, nothing more than beasts ruled by their lust. I have seen them. I have seen their faces twisted and deformed by their appetites.

MINA: Where have you seen such things?

LUCY: In my dreams. The faces of the men who are so courteous, polite and handsome to me by day are transformed into wild animals baying to paw my body, their rough fingers clawing ribbons of blood across my flesh.

MINA: These are nightmares. Nothing more. Arthur wouldn't hurt you. He adores you.

LUCY: Will I ever feel as safe as in his arms as when you held me?

MINA: Lucy, listen to me. The nights we shared were as sisters. Young innocent girls exploring the sensations of our changing bodies. The pleasure we may have felt is as nothing compared to the touch of a man's body. To want him so utterly and to feel his desire for you pump through the sinew and muscle. I wish that Jonathan... Jonathan is so changed since his return.

LUCY: He no longer desires you?

MINA: He used to be so passionate. At every opportunity we would take pleasure in each other but since his return he will not touch me. If you had experienced as I have the ecstasy of lying with a man whom you desire and to then have that pleasure denied you, my darling, you would think no further of the childish, sinful fumbblings of our bodies.

LUCY: When your lips would caress my bare neck as gently as the opening of a rose bud.

MINA: Forget that now.

LUCY: Forget it and submit myself to a man who will behave as monstrously as Jonathan to you?

MINA: Oh Jonathan is not monstrous to me. Far from it, he is devoted, too devoted. It's as if he wraps me in tissue paper. Where once he made my skin alive as my blood tingled to his rough caress now I feel like a cold china doll. (BEAT) Lucy we have always shared everything since childhood, may I confide in you now?

LUCY: Of course.

MINA: A few weeks ago I met a man, a stranger to us. I was walking in the park. It was before all these dreadful murders made such a thing unthinkable. There had been no news from Jonathan and I was feeling so terribly lonely, when I saw the handsomest man you could possibly imagine. When I caught his eye it was as if my heart leapt, he wished me good morning and immediately I felt a warmth towards him. We talked all afternoon. His enthusiasm for local knowledge was insatiable and matched only by his interest in me and my state. He became a true friend over the weeks as I waited for news of Jonathan's. Once he had returned I felt it imprudent that I should consort further with the dark stranger but as time passes and Jonathan's indifference to the marital bed becomes more and more marked and his reactions to anything I have to say more and more impatient I seem to miss my friend and to

even - and this is truly wicked Lucy - wonder how the physical pleasure I enjoyed with my husband might seem with my confidant.

LUCY: Mina!

MINA: Jonathan.. It's as if he were a stranger to me. Our courting was so swift, barely a month. I though I got to know him a little after our wedding but now he has returned I'm living with a stranger. I feel so much more for my new friend although, of course I wouldn't dream of telling him that.

LUCY: Is it so wonderful, the solace that men can bring?

MINA: You will learn my darling. (BEAT) My goodness look at the moon out there. Full moon tomorrow. Dr. Seward will have a busy night. Isn't it beautiful? What's the matter? Have I shocked you?

LUCY: How can I be shocked by something which makes my friend so happy? It's the moon I fear. Its cold watery light. Take me home now Mina.

MINA: But don't you want to dance some more? Arthur will be very disappointed.

LUCY: He's out there. Can't you feel it?

IN ANOTHER PLACE A GIRL IS BEING PURSUED. SHE IS TERRIFIED, HER CLOTHES TORN, EXHAUSTED, WE HEAR THE SOUND OF HER HEARTBEAT. OMINOUS MUSIC. THE WOMEN CONTINUE THEIR CONVERSATION

MINA: What are you talking about?

LUCY: Our monster, getting nearer, closing in.

MINA: What monster?

LUCY: The one who slashes at our throats and feeds on our blood. Feel the heavy footstep on the earth, the rank breath polluting the air, as the darkness falls all around like a thick black cloak.

LIGHT ON THE GIRLS FACE AS SHE FALLS TO HER KNEES.

Stifling our cries as, unfeeling, the creature begins to feast.

THE GIRL'S LIGHT SNAPS OUT.

MINA: I'll keep you safe. He won't harm you. And we'll get Dr. Seward to give you some morphine. It will chase away the bad dreams.

LUCY: But will it help me forget?

MINA: Forget what?

LUCY: Arthur will be waiting. You're right, let's join the dancing.

MINA: How I wish Jonathan had never gone away.

Scene 4

(GAUZE PULLED ACROSS?) SEWARD, FURIOUS, VISITING RENFIELD IN HIS CELL. RENFIELD IS BEING RESTRAINED BY ATTENDANTS.

RENFIELD: Sir, I can't talk to you long sir, I've got to feed your guests. Keep their bodies full and satisfied.

SEWARD: How could you? How could you do this to me?

RENFIELD: I did my job like you told me sir. No one's wanting for a nourishing bite.

SEWARD: Not the party nibbles, the murders! When I think of every thing I've done for you. (BEAT) When I first visited you, a pitiful wreck in the condemned cells, you begged me to listen to you, pleaded for a second chance and I thought I saw something deep within those mad red eyes, some flicker of humanity in the far recesses of your evil mind. I spent months draining the putrefied, rancid blood from your stinking veins, pumping you full with pure fresh blood. You promised me you were cured of your old desires.

RENFIELD: I need more blood.

SEWARD: You don't need more blood. It doesn't work like that. One clean renewal of blood. That's all. Why do you keep asking for more? You're breaking my heart, Renfield.

RENFIELD: I have to have more blood. Nice new clean blood. I'm hungry sir, all the time. So hungry.

SEWARD: So you broke out in the dead of night and ploughed the veins of innocent young women?

RENFIELD: No sir, I swear. Renfield swears. That weren't me.

SEWARD SIGNALS TO AN ATTENDANT WHO HITS RENFIELD.

SEWARD: Don't lie to me! You were seen! Over at Carfax Abbey.

RENFIELD: I didn't mean no harm sir. And I certainly didn't touch no nice ladies, sir I swear I didn't. I had to ask him for a cat sir. Get myself a pretty little kitten. You wouldn't let me have a kitten to play with, it gets so lonesome in my cell. A little kitten to lap away with its little tongue.

SEWARD: So that you could add it to your macabre collection of dead insects. I think not. Just a minute, where are they?

RENFIELD: Begging your pardon?

SEWARD: All the flies. There were jars and jars of dead flies, and cockroaches, and maggots on the window ledge.

RENFIELD: Didn't you like them, sir? I though you liked them.

SEWARD: What do you mean?

RENFIELD: The canapes. My own recipe.

SEWARD: I've been serving half of the home counties with dead maggots?

RENFIELD: But for you Dr. only the best for you. He sent me a rat yesterday, sir. A fat, juicy rat but I saved it for you, minced him up with my teeth sir and spat him into the little pastry cases, all for you.

SEWARD: Who? Who sent you a rat?

RENFIELD: the Master.

SEWARD: What "Master"?

RENFIELD: the Master. Oh he told me not to tell but I know I can trust you Dr.

SEWARD: Who is this "Master"?

RENFIELD: the Master understands I must have fresh blood. He's the same. I saw him from my window feeding on the pretties. I knew he'd understand me. There's precious little blood in a dead fly, Sir. I thought he'd get me a little kitten, he brought me my rat instead. Our rat.

SEWARD: LIAR. LIAR. There is no "Master". It's you, Arthur's right, the killer is you. How could I have been so deluded? I thought the future of lunatic control was in my hands. Now it seems I must have been mad myself. Judas!

RENFIELD: Don't say that of me sir. Please don't say that. I wouldn't touch a human. I listened to all the things you told me under the hypnosis. To kill a human is wicked for Renfield. I listened and I learnt. I won't let you down sir. I fed you good and proper tonight, sir. Do you feel full? Do your belly feel warm and round and satisfied?

SEWARD: This can't be true. All my work, has it been for this? I took a savage and created a monster.

RENFIELD: A little kitten that's all I ask. The tiniest little kitten or a little puppy dog. Till he sends me more rats to drink.

SEWARD: There's nothing for it. I shall go back to the party and give myself up. This is the end, the end of everything.

RENFIELD: The Master! can you feel it? He's so near now. So near. The master will help you, Dr. Reach out to him, sir.

SEWARD: (TO THE ATTENDANTS) Beat the living hell out of him.

RENFIELD IS SAVAGELY BEATEN. (GAUZE SWEEPED BACK?) WALTZING COUPLES WHIRL AROUND HIM - LUCY AND ARTHUR. VAN HELSING AND A BEAUTIFUL GIRL.

VAN HELSING: Delightful, quite, quite delightful.

SEWARD STAGGERS AMONGST ALL THIS.

SEWARD: (INJECTING HIMSELF WITH MORPHINE) My Guts! My guts are burning. There's a rat inside me. The rat is eating away my intestines.

ALL THIS MOVEMENT FALLS AWAY.

Scene 5

STILLNESS. MINA ALONE IN THE MOONLIGHT.

SUDDENLY DRACULA IS THERE.

DRACULA: The moon is beautiful tonight is it not?

MINA SPINS AROUND STARTLED.

MINA: Count Dracula.

DRACULA: Why do you hide from me?

MINA: I'm not hiding I simply.. please it is not seemly that we are seen talking together.

DRACULA: Not seemly. To talk at a party?

MINA: We are not strangers, Count.

DRACULA: It is as if you hide something. We have nothing to hide. Except perhaps in our dreams of each other.

MINA: (INDIGNANTLY) I beg your pardon, Sir.

DRACULA: Why have you turned from me?

MINA: My husband has returned.

DRACULA: Ah yes, your husband and you feel guilty?

MINA: Perhaps.

DRACULA: But why? Not, I believe, for anything that was. Can it be for what you desire?

MINA: How dare you?

DRACULA: Can we not speak our minds? I think of nothing but you, every moment I have spent haunting the places where you walk, so that I might see you. Tonight this boring party, these ugly small minded people.

MINA: I have avoided anywhere that we might meet.

DRACULA: Why is this?

MINA: Because I am a married woman.

DRACULA: Who desires another.

MINA: How dare you? -

DRACULA: "Dare" again. I dare to match the desire heart beat for heart beat.

MINA: Please -

DRACULA: Can you not hear it? From across the ballroom I heard your heart calling.

MINA: What can you mean?

DRACULA: And out here in the moonlight. It is almost as if it sings to me. You think that still I "dare" too much?

MINA: I think it's the orchestra, you hear.

DRACULA: There is no instrument can give voice to our loneliness.

MINA: Oh but I'm not lonely.

DRACULA: Aren't you?

MINA: Not at all. It is your own heart you hear.

DRACULA: It is true I am lonely. A loneliness that comes from nights such as this, a moon such as that and a love such as ours.

MINA: Count Dracula. You go too far. Again I must ask you to remember I am a married woman.

DRACULA: It fills my thoughts dear Lady. It clouds the moon up there as if a measure of blood red silk caressed it.

MINA: The Moon is red behind that cloud. What can it mean?

DRACULA: You know what it means to my people. What does it mean?

MINA: You're right. I do know. How strange to be asked to share my knowledge rather than suppress it.

DRACULA: Your husband is close by.

MINA: What do you mean?

DRACULA: We have so little time. I wish to ask you to run away with me. To leave this damp, grey little island and be my wife in Transylvania.

MINA: I couldn't possibly -

DRACULA: Do not answer now. Think on what I have said. And when you are alone tonight in the cold bed that your so called husband has abandoned, listen for the beating of my heart in the darkness. See if your heart does not echo its song. Meet me here tomorrow night as the full moon wanes.

MINA: I will think about what you have said.

DRACULA: You will meet me?

MINA: I will think about what you have said.

THE WIND BEGINS TO MOAN SOFTLY AROUND THEM.

The Scarlet Moon. In your mythology does it not herald the approach of evil? Shall we go in? Suddenly the air is chill.

DRACULA: It is the earth sighing. Nature shudders at what must be.

MINA: It's not a cloud at all but.. a swarm of bats. They're blocking out the moon.

THE LIGHTS BLACK.

MINA SCREAMS.

MOON LIGHT RESTORED. DRACULA AND MINA ARE EXACTLY WHERE THEY WERE BEFORE BUT JONATHAN STANDS BEHIND THEM.

JONATHAN: What the devil's going on?

DRACULA AND MINA TURN TO HIM.

MINA: Jonathan.

DRACULA: You!

JONATHAN: You! How dare you come here? What are you doing with my wife?

MINA: I was frightened Jonathan, just for a moment - a cloud covered the moon. It looked like.. silly really. the Count has been most polite.

JONATHAN: Keep away from her, you understand? Keep away from my wife.

DRACULA: You think you can control me?

JONATHAN: If needs be. You're not on your filthy foreign soil now.

MINA: Jonathan what is going on?

EVERYONE RUSHES ON TO THE TERRACE.

ARTHUR: Is everything alright? We heard a scream.

JONATHAN: This gentleman had startled my wife.

MINA: Not at all I simply..

JONATHAN: It was a misunderstanding. the Count is leaving.

THROUGHOUT THIS LUCY STANDS ROOTED TO THE SPOT AS IF IN A TRANCE.

ARTHUR: (THREATENINGLY) Yes I think you'd better. We don't like your sort around here.

MINA: I should like the Count to stay.

JONATHAN: There are things you do not understand.

DRACULA: How true that is Mr Harker.

JONATHAN: Get Out!

DRACULA: Do not think you have seen the last of me.

ARTHUR: Is that a threat, sir?

DRACULA: No, Arthur Holmwood. It is a warning. I bid you goodnight. Remember. At the full moon's wain.

JONATHAN: Mina, what does he mean?

DRACULA GOES TO LEAVE BUT AS THE CROWD PART TO LET HIM THROUGH HE COMES FACE TO FACE WITH VAN HELSING. THERE IS A MOMENT IN WHICH THEY HOLD EACH OTHER'S GAZE AND THEN the Count SWEEPS OUT.

ARTHUR: Our guest seemed to recognise you Professor.

VAN HELSING: I have travelled the world. There have been so many faces. I can't quite place.. but it will come to me.

ARTHUR: I don't hold with all that travel broadening the mind business. What do you think Sewey?

SEWARD: You'll have to forgive me, I'm feeling a little queasy.

ARTHUR: Something you ate I expect. Good to see you up and about Harker.

JONATHAN: To think, that creature with my wife. How could this happen?

MINA: I'm ashamed of your behaviour, all of you. He is a guest in our country.

ARTHUR: Now, now, Mina don't take on so. Lucy, I hope you're not going to be so troublesome to me. No offence Harker.

JONATHAN GESTURES IT'S OKAY.

MINA: Lucy, Lucy? Are you alright?

EVERYONE SUDDENLY NOTICES LUCY'S SCARED EXPRESSION.

LUCY: I can't hide it any longer. I know who it is. I know who the killer is. I saw him from my window in the moonlight. I saw him feed.

JONATHAN: What!

SEWARD: Oh God. This is the end, the end.

MINA: Lucy, Lucy tell us who? You must. We can save other women's lives. Tonight even.

BUT LUCY FAINTS. EVERY ONE RUSHES FORWARD.

VAN HELSING: Let me to her. Let me to her. I have seen this before . I will take charge here. The poor child is in a terrible emotional state. Set her down here.

LUCY IS PLACED ON A COUCH PROPPED UP ON CUSHIONS.

VAN HELSING: Now everyone stand back and please I beg of you - as silent as the grave.

MINA: What are you going to do?

VAN HELSING: I am going to hypnotise her.

MINA: No I won't let you.

ARTHUR: What is all this?

VAN HELSING: It is very simple sir. I am going to relax Madame Lucy into a mild trance-like state until she is able to reveal to us the secrets of her heart and tell us who the bad, bad man is.

MINA: You can't do this. You cannot plunder someone's thoughts while they know nothing of it. It would be like desecrating a sacred trust. A rape of the mind.

ARTHUR: Can't we just stick some smelling salts under her nose?

VAN HELSING: Mr. Holmwood, with respect I do not think you quite realise the situation here. Your wife is very weak. She cannot restore until we wash some terrible memory from her mind. If we were to coax it from her while she is waking the strain of this may break her forever. It is far better that we do this whilst her body do not fight us. That fight could kill her.

JONATHAN: I say we put her to bed.

MINA: But the murderer may strike again.

ARTHUR: My constituents want answers.

MINA: The Professor knows I am watching him very closely. I will see nothing happens to Lucy.

JONATHAN: Seward, can't you make them see reason? For God's sake, you loved the girl.

SEWARD: Do it! Do it now. Do it before everyone. The truth must out.

ARTHUR: Do you want me to hold her down?

VAN HELSING: That will not be necessary. Madame Mina will you gently wake Miss Lucy.

MINA: (GENTLY SHAKING) Lucy, Lucy. Lucy my darling. Wake up now. Lucy.

LUCY: Where am I? What's happening?

VAN HELSING: Do not worry my child. You are in safe hands. Safe, safe hands. Now I am going to take you on a journey, a wonderful journey. Watch my finger pass before your eyes, tick tock, tick tock. It is the clock on the nursery wall, tick tock, can you hear it Lucy? Nanny has made a fire in the grate, can you see the glowing embers dancing, see their pretty shapes twisting and turning?

LUCY: I see them.

VAN HELSING: Dance with them little Lucy. In your pretty white night dress, in your warm cosy nursery, all your friends are here, pretty dollies, pretty, pretty and who's that in the corner?

LUCY: Rocking horse.

VAN HELSING: Rocking horse, good, good. Dance little Lucy, dance for dolly, dance for rocking horse. Tick tock, rock, rock, rock. Dance little Lucy.

IN HER TRANCE LUCY STANDS AND DANCES. HER MOVEMENTS ARE INNOCENT BUT THE EFFECT IS STRANGELY SEXUAL AS IF SHE WERE WRITHING WITH PLEASURE.

VAN HELSING PRODUCES A LITTLE LUCY DOLL FROM HIS POCKET AND HANDS IT TO LUCY. LUCY HOLDS THE DOLL.

VAN HELSING: Lucy? Lucy? Can you hear me?

LUCY: Yes Daddy.

VAN HELSING: Are you warm?

LUCY: Yes daddy.

VAN HELSING: Are you comfy?

LUCY: Yes daddy.

VAN HELSING: Comfy cosy. Little Lucy.

LUCY: Comfy cosy.

VAN HELSING: What's that noise Lucy? Someone is coming to Lucy's room. Can you hear the footsteps, closer now, closer, closer, closer.

LUCY: No.

VAN HELSING: The door handle is turning. Can you see it little Lucy, slowly the handle is turning.

LUCY: (SOFTLY) No.

VAN HELSING: And now very slowly the door is opening, slowly, slowly. Someone is coming into the room.

LUCY: No, no.. please don't hurt me.

VAN HELSING: See him silhouetted in the light of the door. You know who it is, don't you Lucy? Someone who wants to hurt little girls, who wants to break them.

SEWARD: (TO HIMSELF) Oh my god. What did I create?

VAN HELSING: He's come to hurt Lucy. Can you feel his hot breath, in your eyes, in your nose, in your ears, he's breathing faster and faster, he wants you. Look at his teeth Lucy. Sharp little teeth, his mouth close to your mouth, look at his tongue, Lucy, his thick, red tongue.

LUCY: It's so cold.

VAN HELSING: The fire has gone out now. The dollies are crying, the rocking horse is hiding his head. Feel the big rough hands over your body forcing you. (RAISING HIS VOICE NOW) Dance! Dance! Dance! Dance!

LUCY IS DANCING WILDER AND WILDER. CRYING.

VAN HELSING: Tell us. Tell us who it is. Who is with you?

LUCY: I can't.

VAN HELSING: Yes you can, tell us now. Who is it?

LUCY: I mustn't.

VAN HELSING: Tell us! Tell us. Tell all your friends. Tell the dollies and the rocking horse. Tell us.

LUCY: No, no, don't make me please.

VAN HELSING: Is it man?

LUCY: Yes.

VAN HELSING: Is it a little man? A nasty little man. A nasty, nasty man.

LUCY: No, no. Not a little man.

VAN HELSING: Is he dark?

LUCY: Yes, yes dark. Dark and strong and hurting me, hurting me. Stop him, stop him now.

VAN HELSING: Do you know his name?

LUCY: Yes.

VAN HELSING: Say it. Say the name.

LUCY: I can't. I can't.

HARKER PUSHES VAN HELSING OUT OF THE WAY.

JONATHAN: Lucy, Lucy it's Jonathan, Jonathan can you hear me?

LUCY: Yes.

JONATHAN: I'm here to help you Lucy. Let me help you and the pain will stop, the pain will go away. Do you hear me? Trust me Lucy, trust me.

LUCY: GET HIM AWAY FROM ME!

JONATHAN: He's going Lucy, he's going. Just as soon as you say the name. It will stop, I promise you it will stop. The name? The name is (THE PROPER PRONUNCIATION) Dracula. Isn't it Lucy? Say it Lucy. Say it and this will all be over. Say It! Say it! Dracula.

LUCY: (SHOUTS) Dracula!

AND SHE FAINTS.

MINA: No!

ARTHUR: Good God!

SEWARD: I knew it! I knew it!

ARTHUR: That foreigner who was interfering with your wife Jonathan? Good God! Good God! Of course it all make sense now.

MINA: (WITH LUCY) Lucy, Lucy is this true?

VAN HELSING: Let her sleep now. She will sleep easy.

MINA: (GENUINELY) Let us be thankful for that. Jonathan, you're shaking.

UNNOTICED BY EVERYONE VAN HELSING TAKES THE DOLL FROM LUCY AND HOLDS IT CLOSE TO HIM, APART FROM THE OTHERS.

JONATHAN: It will pass. Seeing that man here in our homes, amongst our friends, talking with my wife.

ARTHUR: Of course. Harker, how did you know it was him?

JONATHAN: Oh, my friends, my friends. I have remained silent for so long. I have tried to keep all this from you, to banish it to some dark corner of my mind but now this creature is amongst us I must tell you of my adventures in Transylvania so that you can arm yourselves or at least understand what we are up against. It is a strange story far removed from the common sense and decency that walks our great land, of terrible things in far off places. But please believe me, every word of this is true.

ARTHUR: I wonder if.. the ladies, Jonathan.

MINA: I'm not leaving.

JONATHAN: We're all in great danger. Please listen. As you know my firm recently sent me to Transylvania to undertake some business for one Count Dracula.

VAN HELSING: Dracula. I'm sure the name is ringing the bells. If only I could remember.

JONATHAN: My journey was long and full of incident. The beauty of the country by day in marked contrast to the long black nights full of wolf cries and the dark superstitions of the native people. Whenever they heard of my destination they would mutter strange oaths and little prayers under their breath, and would press religious charms and garlic flowers into my hand. How grateful I was to become for their small comfort.

VAN HELSING: (TO HIMSELF) Garlic.

JONATHAN: After many days journey I reached Castle Dracula at the dead of night. From the outside it appeared no more than a ruin of something once magnificent, now a series of broken battlements in a jagged line against the moonlit sky. Not a single ray of light pierced the gloom from the tall black windows. I wondered if there had been some error but as I crossed the vast empty courtyard a great door, old and studded with large iron nails, swung open, and I caught a first glimpse of my client.

A VISION OF DRACULA APPEARS HOLDING ALOFT A CLUSTER OF CANDLES.

HE ADDRESSES A FIGURE REPRESENTING HARKER. THE REAL HARKER CONTINUES TO NARRATE.

DRACULA: Welcome to my house. Come freely, go safely, and leave something of the happiness you bring. I am Dracula and I bid you welcome Mr. Harker to my house. Come in; the night air is chill, and you must need to eat and rest.

JONATHAN: I followed my host, grateful for the chance of refreshment after my long journey.

VAN HELSING: May I ask you something Mr. Harker. Did you at any time observe the Count eat or drink anything?

JONATHAN: I.. well no. Come to think of it, I always ate alone.

VAN HELSING: Interesting. Please continue with your story.

JONATHAN: As we passed through the castle I was able to observe the Count in more detail. There was something about him which disconcerted me and yet I could not put my finger on it. He seemed so much a part of the crumbling stone around me, of the impenetrable darkness, of the melancholy howling of wild beasts.

WOLVES HOWL.

DRACULA: Listen to them - the children of the night. What music they make! Ah sir, you dwellers in the city cannot enter into the feelings of the hunter. Through here you will find a bedroom prepared for you. When you awake tomorrow I shall not be here. I am away on business until after dusk but please feel free to enjoy the castle as if it were your home, except if the doors are locked, where of course you will not wish to go. There is a reason that all things are as they are. This is Transylvania and Transylvania is not England. Our ways are not your ways, and there shall be to you many strange things. Let me warn you in all seriousness, that should you leave these rooms you will not by any chance go to sleep in any other part of the castle. It is old, and has many memories, and there are bad dreams for those who sleep

unwisely. Be warned, should sleep now or ever overcome you then haste to your own chamber. I bid you good night Mr Harker. Pleasant dreams.

JONATHAN: I did not dream that night. Heavy sleep fell upon me like a drug and when I finally disentangled myself of its grip I found the sunlight hours had all passed and moonlight hung about the ancient stone. Upon dressing I moved to my window to try and glean some idea of my surroundings in the pale light. Nothing could prepare me for the sight which met me. I did not see the face, but I knew the man by the neck and the movements of his back and arms.

SEWARD: the Count?

JONATHAN: I saw him flit shadow-like across the open courtyard wrapped in a long black cloak. In his hand he clasped a rough sacking bag and when he reached the castle wall he began to crawl upwards, fingers and toes grasping the corners of stones, and with considerable speed, just as a lizard moves along a wall. He crawled higher and higher above that dreadful abyss but with his cloak spread out around him like great wings.

VAN HELSING: The wings of a bat.

MINA: What was in the bag?

JONATHAN: I was to discover that soon enough. I determined to leave the castle once and for all and put its strange inhabitant far behind me, however my efforts to move downwards were continually thwarted by the locked doors the count had spoken of. My only choice was to keep moving forward but at each turn of the maze I seemed to be moving further and further towards the castle's enclosing heart and away from the fresh air and escape. Eventually I threw myself down upon a couch, exhausted as much from my frustrations as my attempted flight and almost immediately I fell into a sleep as the count had so vehemently warned me not to do.

WE WATCH THE JONATHAN HARKER IN THE VISION ATTACKED AS DESCRIBED BY THE ACTUAL JONATHAN:

When I awoke the room was as I remembered and yet something felt very different. As if from the dust which swirled around me three figures appeared. I seemed somehow to know their faces in connection with some dreamy fear but as to how or why.. All three had brilliant white teeth, that shone like pearls against the ruby of their voluptuous lips. It was as if I was trapped with in the castle's spell for, forgive me Mina, I felt in my heart a wicked, burning desire that they would kiss me with those lips. As if they read my mind they laughed a strange silvery laugh and each fell upon my body. I tried to fight them off but I found I could not move as they buried me in their voluptuousness, with bitter underlying the sweet as one smells in blood. They licked their lips like animals and all the time I could feel the soft, shivering touch of their tongue and lips until just as it seemed that this sickening ecstasy would turn my wits, each froze in their devilish task.

IN THE VISION the Count APPEARS

DRACULA: How dare you touch him, any of you? How dare you cast eyes on him when I had forbidden it? This man belongs to me! When I am done with him, you shall kiss him at your will. For now you must satisfy your cravings with this.

JONATHAN: And he handed his creatures the sack I had observed earlier. Now I was so much closer to it I could observe with sickening realisation that something inside it was moving and, horror of horrors, I detected the low wail of a half-smothered child. The monsters fell upon the bag like hounds might a cornered fox and I watched transfixed as they ripped apart and devoured the innocent flesh. My fevered brain could endure no more and I lost consciousness. I awoke in my own bed where the Count must have returned me.

ARTHUR: Good God.

SEWARD: And this man is now in our very midst.

JONATHAN: There is worse, far worse. He sleeps in a coffin.

MINA: Jonathan, no.

JONATHAN: I saw it with my own eyes. I saw so many, many terrible things that I could not tell if I was awake or in a dream. How often I prayed it was a dream and that I would waken in your arms my love.

MINA: So you did. So you did. The Holy sisters in Budapest wrote me that you were found wandering the mountains with a brain fever, ranting of the most terrible things. But you had been ill my love. This is simply the imaginings of your poor fevered brain.

VAN HELSING: Do you think so Miss, oh so clever, Mina? Perhaps you recall the words of Hamlet Prince Dane? - "There are more things in heaven and earth.."

ARTHUR: Don't you see this is the perfect explanation for these grisly murders? They were all the work of this fiend.

SEWARD: I do believe you're holding out on us Professor. I remember that expression of old. You have a secret to share.

VAN HELSING: No secret, young John. The truth was there for all to read in my last book that was rubbished by the so-called experts. In my book all this can be explained.

JONATHAN: I beg of you explain now, please bring me some relief from my doubts. Am I mad?

VAN HELSING: No, no my dear boy, very far from it. I believe we have in our midst a Vampire.

MINA: Professor, you are not serious?

VAN HELSING: I am deadly serious. Many will ridicule such things, forcing them underground, but they are still in men's hearts, in a child's fear of the dark, in the chill of our bones in a cemetery by night.

ARTHUR: Who goes to a cemetery at night?

SEWARD: A Vampire, you say?

MINA: This is ridiculous. How dare you torment us like this?

SEWARD: Mina, I think we should listen to what the Professor has to say. It could explain so much.

ARTHUR: It certainly could. What's a Vampire? Something foreign I'll wager.

VAN HELSING: These creatures are of the old world. Tortured souls they roam the earth for generations. Undead.

ARTHUR: Undead?

VAN HELSING: They cannot die, poor souls. They are the outcasts of heaven, destined to roam the earth for eternity. Their youth is preserved by the drinking of fresh blood like the bat whose name they share. I would be prepared to guess that all the unfortunate victims of your murderer have one thing in common. Puncture marks here on the jugular, where the monster

has pierced the skin to feed.

JONATHAN: John, you've attended several of these autopsies. Did you notice anything like this?

SEWARD: It's possible. I... How small would these marks be?

VAN HELSING: Think of them as teeth marks.

ARTHUR: Good god.

SEWARD: The bodies are always in such a state. But it's possible, yes.

VAN HELSING: I believe it ties in with Mr Harker's story. Remember how he recalled the sharp white teeth against the red lips of his tormentors. But we must come to the most important piece of evidence. You say that the Count sleeps in a coffin?

MINA: Jonathan, I beg of you proceed no further with this. The doctors in Budapest warned us of such indulgences. It is common sense that will pull you through now. Not superstitious nonsense.

JONATHAN: He did sleep in a coffin. One day I decided to follow my captor's course along the castle wall. My despair of ever seeing you again made me care little of the cavernous drop beneath me. I entered a ruined chapel. I can not describe to you the foul stench of that place. There, amongst fifty or so boxes of stinking and rancid earth, lay the Count. He was neither dead nor asleep for his eyes, though open, were stony but without the glassiness of death. Yet there was no movement, no pulse, no breath, no beating of the heart and there was such a look of hate, though unconscious of me, that I fled.

SEWARD: What could the boxes of earth signify, Professor?

VAN HELSING: These creatures cannot venture into the sun as the God-fearing do and must spend their daylight hours digesting their foul pickings in a coffin of their native soil.

SEWARD: Arthur, didn't you tell me they were unloading boxes of earth at Carfax when Renfield arrived?

ARTHUR: By George, yes! The devil has obviously shipped the rank earth of some foreign graveyard here to make his bed. It's intolerable. I vote we go round there now and give him a good seeing to.

VAN HELSING: Ah not so fast. There are many things you need to know. These creatures have survived the centuries and are not so easily dispatched. They can change shape at will, how will you deal with your quarry should he turn into a huge bat with long and deadly fangs.

ARTHUR: I'd blast its head off.

VAN HELSING: An enormous rat with teeth like razors?

ARTHUR: Same.

VAN HELSING: A wolf with vice-like grip in jaws of death.

ARTHUR: A single bullet.

VAN HELSING: A vaporous fog of deadly poison.

ARTHUR: You've got me there.

VAN HELSING: This must be carefully planned. He is angry now at Mr. Harker's words and will be strong. Tomorrow night we will catch our fox, when he is unaware. (SUDDENLY ANGRY) But what is the use? As you saw the Nosferatu, the undead, recognise and fear me but the living for whom I carry out my crusade grant me nothing but contempt. In my own country I was ridiculed in the press, my book was burnt.

ARTHUR: I can't speak for foreigners but I promise you this - if you can bring this killer to justice I'll personally see to it that they parade you down the mall, to the feet of her gracious majesty herself. You'll be a national hero. Then you can show your krauty friends how to shift a book or two.

VAN HELSING: You have this faith in me?

SEWARD: Of course we do Professor. People must understand that none of this has been my fault. It wasn't Renfield. It was quite clearly was one of these Vampire things.

JONATHAN: I cannot tell you how happy your words have made me. Mina, my darling, I am not mad. The Professor has freed me of that burden.

ARTHUR: Mina?

MINA: (SADLY) How do you recognise a Vampire?

VAN HELSING: (SOFTLY) You listen to the sounds of the night, to the earth moving, to the shifts in the darkness, to the whiff of evil souring the sweet spring air and you will sense they are there. You look deep into the eyes of the people around you, deep into their souls and you trust no one. Stay alert to the little disloyalties of colleagues, the tiny betrayals of loved ones, seemingly unimportant but a pattern will emerge and you will recognise them. Beware a complex web of evil is being spun about you. Listen. (VERY SOFTLY) Can you hear evil out there? Spinning, spinning.

BLACKOUT.

Scene 6

A BLOOD-CURDLING SCREAM RIPS THROUGH THE DARKNESS.

LIGHTS UP ON DR. SEWARD.

A LUNATIC WOMAN HAS THROWN HERSELF ON HIM AND IS TRYING TO CLAW HIS FACE. HE FIGHTS HER OFF, SURROUNDED BY RAVING LUNATICS AND ATTENDANTS TRYING TO BEAT THEM BACK. WILD MUSIC.

SEWARD: Full Moon in fifty seconds. Stand by everyone. Full emergency procedure.

Forty seconds. Bolt shut caging sections 3 through to 7.

CLANGING OF CAGES BEING SHUT

Thirty seconds, tighten restraining chains on all untreated class 3 psychopaths.

CHAINS.

Twenty seconds. Train water cannons on patients, stand by with whips and nail guns.

Ten seconds.

SCREAM FROM LUNATICS.

Nine.

AT EACH COUNT THEY MOAN AS IF BUILDING TO ORGASM.

Eight (MOAN) Seven (MOAN) Six (etc) five, four, three, two, one

THE MOANS CLIMAX AND FADE AWAY.

Thank you gentlemen, we have full moon.

Scene 6A.

ANOTHER PART OF THE STAGE. MINA IS ALONE. SHE LOOKS UP AT THE MOON.

MINA: A full moon hangs as round and fat in the sky as so many before it and yet nothing within the cold fingers of it's touch is the same.

LUCY ARRIVES IN HER NIGHTGOWN.

LUCY: Mina.

MINA: Lucy, my darling! Why aren't you safe in bed?

LUCY: There is no safety there for me. It is the place of nightmares, with each drop of my eyelids I prey God will take pity on me and keep me from falling into that sleep I dread.

MINA: But you must sleep my love, it is sleep that will make you strong again.

LUCY: I daren't give in to it's spell. Sit with me a while. My aunt has sent me a number of improving pamphlets with which to prepare me for the sanctity of my marriage vows but they are too hard for me. You are so clever Mina could we not consider them together, and prey that the goodness within them will ward off the evil of the night.

MINA: of course my love.

THEY SETTLE TOGETHER ON THE COUCH.

LUCY: (READS) A great poison infects our land, it's insidious tentacles reach to every human heart. The demon Charles Darwin seeks to persuade us that we are little more than the descendants of apes. Daughter of Eve pay no heed to this blasphemy. Clever men may try to persuade you to their cause but look around you at civilised society, high tea on the mint green lawn of a summers day, the devotion of the young husband to his pretty bride, the freshly scrubbed faces of children all in white as they skip to sunday school. Look all around you. Can you give credence to this disgusting, perverse notion of man as animal?

LIGHTS CHANGE.

DRACULA, STRIPPED, ANIMAL LIKE, HIS HAIR LONG AND MATTED, RISES BEHIND THE COUCH THROUGH SMOKE. THIS IS MINA'S FANTASY. SHE RISES TO HER KNEES ON THE COUCH ARCHING HER BACK IN RESPONSE TO THE CREATURE BEHIND HER. THROUGH ALL THIS LUCY CONTINUES READING AS IF NOTHING IS HAPPENING. AS LUCY CONTINUES THE CREATURE MOVES AWAY FROM THE COUCH AND DRAWS MINA TO HIM AS IF SHE IS HYPNOTISED BY HIS EYES. HE SNIFFS HER WHOLE BODY AS AN ANIMAL WOULD. HE TEARS AWAY HER DRESS AND BURIES HIS FACE IN HER

FLESH. SHE MAY HAVE HER BACK TO THE AUDIENCE IF NECESSARY. HE WORKS HIS WAY UP HER BODY. SHE IS PROFOUNDLY AROUSED BY THIS. HIS MOVEMENTS ARE STRONG, POWERFUL AND ANIMALISTIC.

Beneath the skin is he merely a sweating beast of the field, a pulsating mass of ravening hungers and desires that must be satisfied at all costs. Has he no finer feelings than a wish for animal satisfactions, the base wants of the sweating, rutting, brute, consumed with inhuman appetites and passions for the depraved and ungodly. Can he not turn his back on the perverse lust of the barbarous feeding of the brute. Must we believe mankind to be at the mercy of forbidden cravings that repulse the christian heart and make us little more than monsters, fiends driven by unyielding, all pervading lust for the brutish pleasures of the flesh.

THE CREATURE IS NOW RUNNING HIS TONGUE OVER MINA'S NECK IN LONG BROAD STROKES. SHE IS MOANING IN SEXUAL ECSTASY.

Flesh, the soft, glistening, pure, untainted, innocent, yielding, soft, glistening, sensual,

THE CREATURE LIFTS ITS HEAD AND PREPARES TO BITE INTO LUCY'S NECK, AS IT TILTS ITS HEAD UP AND OPENS ITS MOUTH CRUEL FANGS GLISTEN IN THE MOONLIGHT.

soft, yielding, soft, soft, so soft...

flesh,

THE CREATURE BITES DOWN INTO MINA'S NECK.

SHE SCREAMS AND THE CREATURE VANISHES.

LIGHTS RESTORE TO NORMAL.

LUCY: Mina! What ever is the matter.

MINA: (DISTURBED) Nothing. Nothing. I drifted off to sleep for a moment. It was a bad dream nothing more. (PULLING HERSELF TOGETHER) But you are right Lucy. We can not sleep. We must not rest until the evil is destroyed.

BLACKOUT.

Scene 6B

LIGHTS UP ON SEWARD VISITING RENFIELD WHO IS LYING ON THE FLOOR LIKE A SICK ANIMAL BADLY BEATEN.

SEWARD DROPS DOWN TO HIM, CRADLES HIM GENTLY IN HIS ARMS AND ROCKS HIM.

RENFIELD: (QUIETLY THROUGH SWOLLEN CRACKED LIPS) Master, master.

SEWARD: There, there. I won't let them hurt you any more. I knew you didn't commit those murders. They had me all confused. That fathead Arthur Holmwood. That ignorant philistine local council. Where was their vision? We have achieved a miracle of clinical psychology whilst they cling to ignorant petty-minded prejudices. Couldn't they see it was all the work of a Vampire? How could I have thought you would have betrayed me? You're cured, cured. We're going to be famous you and I. We'll tour the world, giving lectures, demonstrations. Everything's going to be alright. I'm sorry I doubted you, please forgive me, please forgive me.

HE KISSES HIM (NOT SEXUAL)

THERE IS A SUDDEN NOISE IN THE DARKNESS AROUND THEM.

SEWARD: (FRIGHTENED) Who's there? Who is it?

VAN HELSING STEPS FROM THE SHADOWS.

VAN HELSING: Friend John.

SEWARD: Professor.

VAN HELSING: You do not need to explain, John. I know how it is to have a secret, a little one to hold and caress in the small hours.

SEWARD SUDDENLY BECOMES SELF-CONSCIOUS THAT HE IS STILL CRADLING RENFIELD. HE MOVES AWAY.

My wife took my little girl away from me. She did not understand how we needed the warmth of each other. It is not for me to judge, one such as I who has been called, evil, the devil - within my own family. A classic case my dear wife. To see evil where there is none. I had to have her put away in my own asylum. Screaming of devils until she beat her head open on the bars of her cage. In time my little daughter too. So sad to be all alone in the world but it is for their own good is it not, friend John?

SEWARD: You locked your wife away for trying to protect your daughter?

VAN HELSING: Be careful my boy that you too do not begin to see the devil.

SEWARD: I don't know what I see any more. I think... I think.. I think I should like you to leave. I don't think I like you very much. Go home please and we'll say no more of what you have just told me.

VAN HELSING: Alas, my friend that is not possible. I have so much work to do here. I should like to speak with you further. It seems we have much in common.

SEWARD: We have nothing in common, Professor Van Helsing, nothing. Do you understand?

VAN HELSING: As you wish. Would you be so kind as to fetch me the keys to the library? There is much work to be done if we are to defeat our friend the Count.

THEY LEAVE.

RENFIELD ALONE. HE STIRS AND LOOKS UP.

RENFIELD: Master, you're here. I knew you would not forsake me. Master why are you looking at me like that? The Lucy lady? No, Master I didn't tell her. Renfield wouldn't tell. Renfield loves the Master. Did the Master bring fresh blood for Renfield? Renfield must have blood. the Master knows that. He promised. Nice plump rat, little puppy dog all squirmy, squirmy. Little pussy cat for Renfield?

RENFIELD'S EXPRESSION TELLS US the Master IS SPEAKING TO HIM.

Blood? Lots of Blood? Where? Oh yes. Yes. the Master is so clever. Yes. All that blood for Renfield. Thank you Master. Nasty lady, spying on the Master. Renfield will see to everything. Thank you Master. Thank you. Thank you.

THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT. MINA ARRIVES TO MEET DRACULA.

MINA: (TO HERSELF) "At the full moon's wain" he said (WHISPERS) Count, Count. Are you there?

SHE WAITS.

JONATHAN APPEARS.

JONATHAN: Mina! What on earth are you doing here?

MINA: Jonathan! I... came to find you. I was so worried. You should not be wandering the grounds. You're still weak, my darling.

JONATHAN: Oh, for one nights sleep.

MINA: I know my love.

VAN HELSING IS SUDDENLY THERE.

VAN HELSING: Miss Mina, out so late and with a killer on the loose. Why, one might almost think you sought him out.

MINA: I am curious as to how you consider it any of your business.

JONATHAN: Mina! The Professor is our honoured guest.

VAN HELSING: You are so kind, Mr Harker. Mevrow Harker, I do so hope we can be friends there is much work for you to do.

MINA: What do you mean?

VAN HELSING: You are to be our scribe.

JONATHAN: I told the Professor you could type, Mina.

VAN HELSING: How delightful and diverting a talent. I think we may have found a way for you to deploy such charming industry most fruitfully.

MINA: I don't understand.

VAN HELSING: Together we will prepare a new edition of my book on the nosferatu to include testimony from all you kind good, wonderful people.

HE HANDS DOCUMENTS TO MINA.

Here are the case notes of my friend Dr. Seward on the lunatic Renfield and the incidents surrounding the Count's arrival. Here are my notes on our endeavours so far, your husband tells me he will recall his adventures at Castle Dracula in diary form and the excellent Arthur Holmwood is preparing a report. You will all be immortalised in your support of my theories on vampires. With such credentials as my friends will provide, who then will dare to question my genius. You will please to type all these up.

JONATHAN: It could do all our careers a great deal of good.

VAN HELSING: Such a wonderful future for us all. Will you help us?

MINA: I do not entirely trust you Professor. I believe you will try to place my husband in danger. If this is the case I wish to be at his side.

VAN HELSING: My dear, sweet child, what extraordinary notions you have. A woman's role is to stay steadfast in the home. A beacon of hope to your heroes.

JONATHAN: If you'll excuse us Professor I think it is high time we retired. Leave the manuscripts with us, I shall convince Mina of your wisdom.

VAN HELSING: Ah what it is to have the solace of a wife.

JONATHAN: Were you never married Professor?

VAN HELSING: There has been much unhappiness in my life.

AN ALARM SOUNDS. GUN SHOTS THROUGH THE AUDITORIUM.

MINA: What's that noise?

VAN HELSING: Some of the lunatics must have got loose.

SEWARD ENTERS.

JONATHAN: John?

SEWARD: It's Renfield. He's escaped. One of my men saw him heading for Carfax Abbey.

VAN HELSING: He may alert the Count to our plans. We must stop him at once. Will you help Mr Harker?

JONATHAN: Of course. John, is there anywhere Mina can wait for us in safety?

SEWARD: My study is open, there is a couch in there for you to sleep on and a fire made up. If you lock the door you will be quite safe.

JONATHAN: (TO MINA) You know the way?

MINA: Of course. Go now I'll be alright.

SHE GOES TO KISS HIM GOODBYE BUT HE PULLS AWAY.

JONATHAN: I will collect you on our return.

THE MEN LEAVE.

DRACULA APPEARS.

DRACULA: Like crude children running to throw stones at a halfwit. (BEAT) You came. I did not know if you would.

MINA: Yes I came. I had no choice. I did not wish to spend the rest of my life wondering.

DRACULA: So you will join me?

MINA: You misunderstand me Count. Your very presence disgusts me but I wanted to meet you one more time so that I might see if there was something I had missed. Some little clue to tell me that the man who had so vehemently declared his love to me was nightly stalking our streets, cutting down young women and indulging his perverse lust.

DRACULA: I do not understand.

MINA: You have murdered 18 innocent people.

DRACULA: Is this your English humour? I do not understand.

MINA: You so nearly succeeded. I was beginning to believe your words. When you spoke of our love I almost felt it, of our future together, to see it but I did not see this. What was to be my fate? Would I too have ended out there in the darkness, my body mutilated and plundered. I only wish you had killed me straight away like the others. Better than this torture. To have every hope cruelly dashed, every memory exposed as an ugly mockery of the truth.

DRACULA: I love you.

MINA: You disgust me.

DRACULA: I do not understand what it is you accuse me of.

MINA: Please. I beg of you. Toy with me no further. My friend Lucy saw you at work. Poor child, can you imagine what it did to that innocent creature to see you kill?

DRACULA: She said this? She said I was a killer?

MINA: Yes.

DRACULA: I do not believe you. This is some trickery.

MINA: I heard her. My husband drew it from her.

DRACULA: I see. Tell me everything you know about these murders.

MINA: What kind of foul devil are you? Will it give you some perverse thrill to listen to the victim of your seductions incant a roll call of your infamy?

DRACULA: You must help me to piece this puzzle together. And yet it is not so hard.

MINA: I have heard enough. My husband and his friends will hunt you down like a mad dog and I am glad of it.

DRACULA: Wait. Listen to me I beg you.

MINA: Goodnight Count Dracula.

DRACULA: Show some mercy.

MINA: This from you?

DRACULA: You must listen to what I have to tell you. It may save many people's lives. Hear me out I beg of you. If at the end of what I have to say you still despise me, then I will save your friends their bloody task and end my lonely life myself but I beg of you listen to me.

MINA: I will grant you a moment but only in the hope that you will keep your bargain.

DRACULA: Beware. Since I have ventured beyond the protection of my ancient home I have felt an emotion which had long been a stranger to me. I look at the cold faces of the English as their eyes turn upon a stranger. I listen to the sharp tones in their voices, observe the preposterous shouting and waving of the arms that they believe will make me understand their

stunted thoughts but worse of all I listen to the sanctimonious tones with which they pronounce judgement on that of which they are ignorant. I observe these things and I feel something long lost to me. I feel fear. Fear at the injustices that will be whilst Englishmen seek easy solutions born of their ignorant prejudices. Their stubborn determination that everything that is orthodox is unquestionably right and anything which is other must be evil. I have heard it said often since my arrival that mine is a backward country and perhaps I too looked enviously out from my lonely stone towers across the mountains and distant seas to where I believed civilisation lay; but now I have tasted the bitter intolerance my soul aches for my homeland and to rescue you from this kingdom where you are regarded as a fool because you are a woman and I must be a killer because I do not fit in.

MINA: What fantasy are you weaving now, Count? Would you have an innocent man take the blame for your rein of terror? Perhaps in Transylvania. Not here.

DRACULA: Justice is vital to all that we believe.

MINA: You will understand then my abhorrence at every moment we spend together.

DRACULA: I will trouble you no further. I was wrong. I believed you felt for me as I did for you. Perhaps I overestimated you. Perhaps English women deserve their men.

MINA: I cannot believe I have ever done anything so wicked as to deserve you.

DRACULA: Look at me please.

SHE DOES

Do you really believe I am the killer?

MINA: Then who is?

DRACULA: It is not for me to say.

MINA: I have heard enough. All I want is the truth.

DRACULA: No. It is their truth you want to hear. That is very different.

MINA: Who is the killer?

DRACULA: I could tell you, it would hurt you but I could tell you. But then what is the use? The important thing is not who did these things but that you can so easily allow yourself to believe it was I. I shall leave you now and do not worry, you have listened to me and I will keep my side of the bargain. You will not see me again.

MINA: I shall pray for your eternal soul.

DRACULA: Thankyou at least for that. What hope for my garden?

MINA: Your garden?

DRACULA: As I journeyed to England I planned the most beautiful garden for my new home. Huge crates I filled with seeds and bulbs I gathered from every country I travelled through. As I planted I dreamt of us walking through the flowers together. How quickly dreams fade. That is never to be. Could even flowers grow in this desolate wasteland that chokes anything of beauty?

MINA: Crates of earth.

DRACULA: Yes, the alien planned a flower garden. How could I have been so naive? Goodbye - My angel of death.

HE IS GONE.

RENFIELD IS SUDDENLY THERE WITH MINA.

MINA: Renfield, what are you doing here? Go back to your cell at once. The men are after you and it will be the worst for you if they catch up with you.

RENFIELD: Be careful Miss. The Master is walking tonight. Be sure you don't meddle. The Master is good to Renfield.

BLACKOUT.

Scene 8

LIGHTS UP ON LUCY STRAPPED INTO THE BLOOD PURIFICATION MACHINE WHICH IS PRIMED TO PUMP HER BLOOD INTO A TANK ABOVE HER.

LUCY: (WEAKLY) Who's there? Who are you? What do you want? Someone help me. Help me please.

ON ANOTHER PART OF THE STAGE. ARTHUR OUT WALKING LOOKING SLEEK HANDSOME AND SINISTER IN HIS SILK TOP HAT, RICH BLACK OVERCOAT AND WITH SILVER TOPPED CANE.

A PROSTITUTE APPROACHES HIM FROM THE SHADOWS.

PROSTITUTE: Good evening sir. Beautiful evening ain't it? With the moon hanging, so round and fat and full in the sky. Walking my way are you?

ARTHUR: Don't you realise there's a killer at large? Hacking up young things such as you like pieces of pig liver.

PROSTITUTE: He'd get a piece of my mind if I ever met him. The streets are deserted, business is awful.

ARTHUR: A piece of your mind eh? and a slice of your tongue, I'll warrant.

PROSTITUTE: I speaks as I finds.

ARTHUR: And how about a sliver of thigh? A cut of rump? a leg or a firm succulent breast?

PROSTITUTE: If I saw the colour of his money who knows what he may find on his plate.

ARTHUR: Aren't you frightened?

PROSTITUTE: 'Got to make a living haven't I? A girl's got to live.

ARTHUR: Oh yes, girls like you - you've got to live.

PROSTITUTE: Where d'you want it?

ARTHUR: Against the asylum wall and be quick about it.

BACK TO LUCY. THE MACHINE RUMBLES INTO ACTION. BLOOD BEGINS TO FILL THE

TANK. LUCY TWISTS AND TURNS STRAPPED TO THE CHAIR. HER BREATH ESCAPES IN SOFT LITTLE SCREAMS.

THE SOUND BECOMES MINGLED WITH THE NOISE OF ARTHUR FUCKING THE PROSTITUTE.

IN THE DARKNESS THE LUNATICS BEGIN TO HOWL LIKE WOLVES.

LUCY'S DEATH AND THE SEXUAL CLIMAX COINCIDE WITH ONE FINAL TRIUMPHANT HOWL FROM RENFIELD.

ARTHUR AND THE PROSTITUTE:

ARTHUR THROWS A COIN AT THE GIRL.

PROSTITUTE: Is that all?

ARTHUR: Be grateful for what you can get. I presume you've heard of "Enterprise Culture" even in the gutter.

PROSTITUTE: Bastard.

ARTHUR: Ah, market forces can be such a bother can't they. We're all of us at the mercy of supply and demand.

END OF SCENE. BLACKOUT ON THEM.

VAN HELSING APPROACHES LUCY'S BODY.

VAN HELSING: Hello, my little pretty. Have you come to look for daddy? All pretty in your pretty, pretty nightie. Hair all combed nice and neat and shiny for daddy. What's that you say? you want to dance. Come along then.

HE UNSTRAPS HER FROM THE CHAIR AND BEGINS TO DANCE WITH HER.

SEWARD ARRIVES.

SEWARD: What are you doing?

VAN HELSING: Greetings friend John. I fear our killer has struck again.

SEWARD RUSHES TO TAKE LUCY IN HIS ARMS.

SEWARD: Lucy? No, it can't be true. My Lucy.

VAN HELSING: I found her strapped into the machine. The Monster had used it to drain her blood.

SEWARD: My wonderful machine of life and hope. Perverted to destroy the only person I've ever loved. How can there be a merciful god? How can any power of goodness have allowed this?

VAN HELSING: My friend. Those powers have not deserted us. They have given us the greatest weapon to destroy our enemy. Knowledge.

ARTHUR ENTERS.

ARTHUR: What's going on here?

SEWARD: Arthur, Lucy is dead.

VAN HELSING: Oh gentlemen, let us pray that is the truth.

SEWARD: What!

VAN HELSING: You must listen to what I have to say very carefully. Take Miss Lucy's hand.

SEWARD DOES.

VAN HELSING: What do you feel?

SEWARD: (HEARTBROKEN) My God, it's still warm.

ARTHUR: You think Lucy lives?

VAN HELSING: It is possible there is a more terrifying explanation.

SEWARD: The body is warm because this angel has only just met her death.

VAN HELSING: In normal circumstances we might assume that but I fear something more sinister may have occurred.

ARTHUR: Explain your meaning, Sir.

VAN HELSING: In many instances the vampire destroys his victims utterly. But in a very few cases he contaminates the body with his same foul appetites and creates a fresh vampire.

ARTHUR: My God! What are you saying?

VAN HELSING: I am saying that unless we act quickly Miss Lucy may join the ranks of the living dead. Condemned to walk the earth for all eternity, a scourge on mankind.

SEWARD: This beautiful creature? Never.

VAN HELSING: She is indeed beautiful. Even in death she puts the stars to shame. It is for this reason I fear the worse.

ARTHUR: How could we save her from this terrible fate?

VAN HELSING: Do you recall the chapter in my book?

ARTHUR: I have not had the time to study it.

VAN HELSING: The way to destroy a nosferatu is to drive a stake into the still-beating, bloated heart, stuff the mouth with garlic and slice off the head.

SEWARD: That's obscene. We cannot desecrate her body like that.

ARTHUR: This will stop her becoming one of those creatures?

VAN HELSING: Yes.

ARTHUR: Then it must be done.

SEWARD: Arthur, No!

ARTHUR: Always the same aren't you? You pathetic little worm. You always did shirk your responsibilities. For once its time to stand up for yourself.

SEWARD: I won't let this happen.

ARTHUR: And what do you suggest we do? Weep over the body like a lot of women? My fiancée has been murdered. My honour is at stake, can't you see that? Our motive now must be revenge. I shall gather everyone in the town square and we shall assemble to destroy Carfax Abbey and this scum. You two will stand beside me as testimony to what this creature has done. I have much to organise. In the meantime you will do everything the Professor suggests to save Lucy's soul.

SEWARD: Me?! But I couldn't possibly. You must help me.

ARTHUR: You told me once you loved her.

SEWARD: I did. More than anything in the world.

ARTHUR: And yet you stepped aside and let me steal her from you like the maggot you are. Do you know something? I only seduced her to see if you'd let me. It wasn't difficult at all, of course. Well now she's all yours. When you're through here, if you don't want this asylum torched to the ground alongside Carfax Abbey then I suggest you stand beside me and lead the mob into battle. The Town Square in half an hour, gentlemen.

HE EXITS.

VAN HELSING: Do it John. Show Lucy how much you love her, that you will do this thing. Be brave. Drive a stake through her heart, fill her beautiful mouth with garlic and cut off her head. Take this bag, I had armed myself for the Count, it contains everything you need.

SEWARD: Professor Van Helsing I would like you to know that when this living hell is over I shall write to the board of your asylum raising serious questions as to your suitability to run such an institution.

VAN HELSING: Friend John, you are under an illusion I fear. If I return to Amsterdam they will punish me. Alas, I am no longer senior physician at that institution. Until my recent escape to you I was a patient, although perhaps that word suggests hope, perhaps it might be truer to say I was an inmate.

SEWARD: No, it's not true!

VAN HELSING: Now, prepare this pretty corpse as my book instructs and record every detail for Miss Mina to type or I shall inform your colleagues that this ridiculous machine on which you have built your empire is nothing more than the ranting of a lunatic.

SEWARD: (SOBBING) Don't make me do this. I beg of you.

VAN HELSING HANDS HIM THE BAG.

Please...please .. no.

VAN HELSING: Do it.

SEWARD SCREAMS AND HURLS HIMSELF AT LUCY'S BODY.

VAN HELSING EXITS.

SEWARD HACKS AT THE CORPSE. IN THE FRENZY THE TANK TIPS OVER AND DRENCHES HIM IN BLOOD. STILL HE HACKS UNTIL LUCY'S HEAD COMES OFF.

Scene 9.

VAN HELSING JOINS ARTHUR ON THE STEPS OF THE TOWNHALL. THE SOUND OF THE CROWD ASSEMBLING.

ARTHUR: They're pouring in from miles around. This is going to be a glorious night for us. Where's Seward?

VAN HELSING: He will be here, Lord Holmwood.

ARTHUR: Now, what do I do when I get the devil in my sights? Stab him through the heart and lop his head off isn't it?

VAN HELSING: Your Lordship, this is no humble Vampire we are dealing with. People must be made to understand this. He is the king of the Nosferatu, a worthy opponent for us and our place in History. First I recommend you disable him.

ARTHUR: How do I do that?

VAN HELSING: Step aside and I will tell you. And you mentioned you had collected some of your thoughts on paper. May I take them from you before all the excitement starts? It is important that Miss Mina has everything with which to chronicle our achievements.

ARTHUR: Of course. This way.

HE LEADS VAN HELSING OFF.

SEWARD CROSSES. COVERED IN BLOOD. A CRAZED LOOK IN HIS EYE.

MINA INTERCEPTS HIM.

MINA: Dr. Seward. John? I.. (SHE IS STARTLED BY HIS APPEARANCE) are you alright?

SEWARD: Yes, of course. Why shouldn't I be?

MINA: I.. please. You've got to help me. I have all the documents relating to the murder. I was looking through the coroner's reports. I'm afraid we may have made a terrible mistake. This vampire idea, I'm beginning to doubt if there was a word of truth in it. I mean.. it was so fantastical and.. well, the reports have no mention of blood being extracted from the victim. In fact there's nothing supernatural about any of this. They are simply horrible brutal rapes on women carried to hideous extremes. The only link between them seems to be a syphilis. None of this is making any sense yet but we have to get to the Count before the mob. I don't think we can be certain he's the killer.

SEWARD: (SINGING FROM A NURSERY RHYME. HIS WITS TURNED) Here comes the chopper to chop of her head. Chop, chop. Here comes the chopper and now she is dead.

MINA: Help me please. I said terrible things to the Count. I'm frightened he may even take his own life before they get to him. Help me to fight through the crowds to him.

SEWARD: Chop. chop. Dead. Dead. Dead but not dead.

MINA: Why does nothing make sense any more?

SHE RUNS OFF.

ARTHUR COMES FORWARD TO ADDRESS THE MOB. VAN HELSING, LOOKING THE KINDLY WISE OLD MAN, AND SEWARD, MACABRE WITH HIS STAINED CLOTHES AND STARING EYES, FALL IN BEHIND HIM.

THE THREE LIT STARKLY FROM BENEATH, THROWING HUGE FLICKERING SHADOWS. VERY NUREMBERG.

ARTHUR: I am so happy to see so many of you here this evening. It is true testimony, if testimony were needed, that we are sick to death of foreigners in our midst. Stealing our jobs, our houses, raping our women and corrupting our children. Let us show these aliens once and for all that they are not welcome here. Their leader is housed in the ruined Abbey at Carfax. Join me in burning it to the ground, and this foreign devil with it. Inspired by the words of the master vampire slayer, Professor Abraham Van Helsing, we shall paralyse Dracula with a crucifix, burn out his eyes with holy water and let God's glorious light incinerate his flesh as the sun rises on our glorious new day.

VAN HELSING: It is all in my book. You too will all be in my book.

ARTHUR: Assemble at the gates of Carfax Abbey just before dawn when the monster's powers will be at their weakest and we shall send a message loud and clear to distant lands everywhere that England is for the English.

A ROAR FROM THE CROWD.

(IN LONDON THE AUDIENCE WERE ASKED TO LEAVE THEIR SEATS AND TOLD THEY WERE TO BE LEAD TO CARFAX ABBEY.

MEMBERS OF THE CAST SHEPHERDED THEM OUT ON TO THE THEATRE'S CENTRAL STAIRCASE WHICH HAD BEEN DRESSED DURING THE COURSE OF THE PLAY, LIT WITH CANDELABRA AND RICHLY HUNG WITH TAPESTRIES ETC. MAGNIFICENT AND SPOOKY.

THE REST OF THE ACTION WAS THEN PLAYED OUT ON THE STAIR CASE.)

Scene 10.

MINA IN THE SILENCE OF CARFAX ABBEY, GLOOMY AND MAGNIFICENT AROUND HER. THE SHADOWS LIT WITH GUTTERING CANDLES.

SHE CALLS UP INTO THE DARKNESS.

MINA: Count! Count? Where are you? Please speak to me. I pray I'm not too late. I have seen the mob. They're preparing to march on the Abbey.

You must leave now.

I don't understand what's happening.

I don't know if you killed those women or not but...

Nothing is as clear as it was..

Talk to me please. I have so many questions I need to know..

None of this matters, any more. I just want to be with you.

I love you.

I loved you from the very first moment we met.

If we lose each other now, we will never know such love again.

Count? Count?

JONATHAN HARKER STEPS FROM THE SHADOWS.

JONATHAN: Mina. I did not realise you were so well acquainted with the Count.

MINA: As there is obviously little point in lying any further - Yes. An understanding has developed between us.

RENFIELD IS THERE.

RENFIELD: (TO HARKER) Master would you like me to dispose of this pretty like the last one? I could, you know? I'm still so very thirsty, Master. Miss Lucy's blood got all spilled. Just say the word and this one won't trouble you no more either.

JONATHAN: Thank you Renfield but it seems my wife and I should have a little chat.

RENFIELD: Yes Master.

MINA: Jonathan, what does he mean about Lucy?

JONATHAN: She is dead, Mina. Renfield drained her blood to drink. I told him to.

MINA: I don't understand.

JONATHAN: She knew too much. I was frightened she might tell you what she knew. I couldn't allow that. I wanted you to remain pure. You were the only thing left that wasn't squalid and soiled. I didn't want you touched with my filthy disease. But all the time you were playing whore to that foreign scum.

MINA: Jonathan, you're frightening me.

JONATHAN: Did you know about me? He must have told you. Just how much of my horror story has he pieced together? Did he make enquiries about me in the brothels of budapest. Of course he did. Revenge has brought him across continents to find me.

MINA: Revenge?

JONATHAN: Isn't it time to stop pretending? Your lover will hardly have spared your feelings for me.. spared you any of the sordid details, the animal I became in the whore houses of Budapest. I spread the terror and syphilis of those brothels through the women of my client's house until I burst out of there, roaring like a wild beast, to roam the mountains. When I returned to our home, to your side my love, I preyed the appetites would leave me. They didn't of course. It is the prostitutes of London that must feed me now. I sought to spare you but now it seems I need not have bothered. Knowing all this you even wanted me back in your bed. Wasn't he enough for you. All the while I could have let you have it instead of the pox-riddled whores in the park each night. I should have pumped you full of my disease ridden seed.

MINA: I never guessed. I never guessed for a moment. Of course it was you that created the Vampire for us. You stood over Lucy as she tried to name the killer, you made her name the Count when all the time it was you she had seen from her bedroom window. Jonathan you must confess. There's still time. We can stop Arthur at the gates, they're coming to kill the

Count, we have to save him.

JONATHAN: Why should I? Don't you think my life is punishment enough? Why should I let myself get strung up by that filth.

MINA: You can't get away with this. If they kill the Count that won't be the end of the story. You will still be free and the killings will continue.

JONATHAN: Oh no, my dear. Why would I trouble myself outside our lovely home knowing I have a whore for a wife to gorge myself upon when ever I feel the need? Now I know the depths to which you can sink there are plenty of little tricks I can teach you with which to satisfy me. Prepare yourself for the pain, my love. There will be so much pain. Pain like you cannot imagine.

MINA: Will you kill me too?

JONATHAN: Not for a very long time. You must be punished and I want you to feel very, very sorry.

MINA: He will come for me.

JONATHAN: Who? Count Dracula?. A man who so used you. Toying with your affections, seducing you to get back at me for what I did to his sisters. He doesn't care for you. All he has ever wanted is revenge on me. It's as sordid as everything else.

THE COUNT IS SUDDENLY THERE.

DRACULA: Perhaps at first. But I love this woman. Let us not mistake that. Forgive me Mina for leaving you so long to the mercy of this man but I felt it better you hear the truth from his poison lips. And he is right, so much here has been ignoble and full of deceit, now it is time for us to behave with honour. I challenge you Jonathan Harker to a dual for the love of your wife and the honour of the household you destroyed.

MINA: Count, no!

JONATHAN: Renfield, take my wife down to the crypt and secure her there.

MINA: No!

DRACULA: Do not fear my love, we shall be reunited soon. (TO RENFIELD) Harm her in any way and it will be the worse for you.

MINA: Be careful!

RENFIELD TAKES MINA OUT.

JONATHAN: My dear Count Dracula, I should be delighted to fight you. I trust you will find my swordsmanship a fine advertisement for an English Pubic Schooling.

DRACULA: I am not afraid of the English.

A SPECTACULAR SWORD FIGHT.

DRACULA IS WINNING BUT THE MOB BREAK IN AND RESTRAIN DRACULA.

VAN HELSING DOES NOT ARRIVE YET.

ARTHUR PUTS A REASSURING ARM ON HARKER'S SHOULDER.

ARTHUR: Well done Harker. You can leave the freak to me now.

ARTHUR ADVANCES ON DRACULA WHO IS BEING HELD.

HE THRUSTS A CRUCIFIX AT DRACULA. NO REACTION. DRACULA JUST STARES DEFIANTLY, UNFLINCHING.

ARTHUR: Give me the holy water.

SOMEONE HANDS HIM A CONTAINER OF HOLY WATER. HE THROWS IT IN DRACULA'S FACE. AGAIN NO REACTION FROM DRACULA.

A MURMUR FROM THE CROWD.

ARTHUR: What's going on?

VAN HELSING IS HERE.

VAN HELSING: This is very interesting. A Vampire resistant to God's judgement.

ARTHUR: (THREATENINGLY) You'd better explain this Van Helsing.

VAN HELSING: There was once a case of.. there is a legend which says...

ARTHUR: The dawn is breaking, Professor. Your time is running out.

VAN HELSING: Ah, the dawn. One moment. There was something. Something I meant to put in my book but alas time and space..

ARTHUR LOOKS THREATENING.

Legend tells us that if the monster can persuade a woman to come to him at night of her own free will and declare her love with the dawn then he will return to human state.

ARTHUR: This vermin has slaughtered scores of women, my own fiancee. Who could love this creature?

MINA HAS RETURNED.

MINA: For Lucy's sake, for some kind of future from all this hatred and for this gentle, kind and heroic man let everyone bare witness - I love the Count.

JONATHAN: Renfield! I told you to lock her away!

MINA: Rusted locks and splintered wood will never hold a heart when it must beat with another's.

ARTHUR: What? Harker what does she mean?

MINA: I love him.

ARTHUR: You stupid bitch!

HE HITS HER HARD, ACROSS THE FACE, TO THE GROUND. DRACULA TRIES TO INTERVENE BUT HE IS STILL HELD BACK.

ARTHUR: I'm sorry Harker but she's needed that for years and if I'm the only one around here

man enough to do it then I won't shirk my responsibility. (TO DRACULA) So, Freak, it seems this nagging shrew loves you.

DRACULA: My heart has long been hers.. My darling it is useless to reason with a pack of such wolves.

MINA: Can nothing save us?

VAN HELSING: The Vampire is no more. You are like us now.

DRACULA: Never. May I never be like you.

VAN HELSING: Once more I have saved the day. It will all be in the new book.

ARTHUR: But what do we do with him now? What will be his punishment now we cannot peg him out to shrivel in the daylight?

MINA: Leave him! For pities sake can you not see the truth? He is mortal as we are.

VAN HELSING: Today we will invent a new daylight. We stand at the gateway to a new era. We have defeated the monsters of the past with knowledge and reason. It is fitting that this creature from superstition and darkness should be destroyed by the new light.

MINA: What new devilry are you stirring now?

VAN HELSING: Bring in the chair!

MUSIC. THE CHAIR FROM THE BLOOD PURIFICATION MACHINE IS BROUGHT IN.

AS THIS HAPPENS:

VAN HELSING: (TO MINA) Miss Mina, it is fitting that you should be punished for your betrayal but do not worry little Miss, your deceit will be lost to history in your greater role as chronicler of this glorious hour. Mr. Harker I trust your wife will now be locked away until she has collated, in type, the documentation which records my triumph.

JONATHAN: She will not see daylight again until I have been satisfied.

DRACULA: (TO VAN HELSING) Is there no place for justice in this new world you speak of?

THE CHAIR IS IN PLACE.

VAN HELSING: My dear Count Dracula let us see what justice the future holds for such as you. Strap him into the chair.

THEY DO.

MINA: What are you going to do?

VAN HELSING: From the darkness is born a new daylight which will never end. Electricity!

MUSIC. A TERRIFYING MACHINE OF WIRES AND BATTERIES ETC IS LOWERED FROM THE SKY AND ATTACHED TO THE CHAIR.

VAN HELSING: Creature of shadows let a new light banish for ever the fear and barbarism of ancient times. Mevrow Harker, watch very closely, memorise each moment, treasure every testimony. Let them become our blueprint. Deliver us, oh Lord, through the daylight of

tomorrow.

MINA IS LYING ON THE FLOOR WHERE ARTHUR THREW HER. WHILST EVERY ONE LOOKS AT THE CHAIR SHE PULLS ASIDE A YOUNG MAN FROM THE MOB.

MINA: You, take this key. Go to the house beside the millstream. In the cellar you will find piles and piles of documents. Burn them all, sink them to the bottom of the ocean. I don't care what you do but get them right away from here. Not a word of this evil must ever reach the outside world. Will you do that?

MAN: Yes Miss.

MINA: Wait. What's your name?

MAN: Stoker, Miss, Bram Stoker.

MINA: Heaven bless you Mr Stoker.

VAN HELSING PULLS A SWITCH. SPARKS, BRIGHT LIGHT IN THE AUDIENCES EYES. SCREAMS OF AGONY FROM DRACULA.

FINAL CHORDS OF MUSIC.

BLACK OUT.

END OF PLAY

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