

John Donald O'Shea

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I would like to thank those people at the Quad City Music Guild who encouraged me to write my first play, "Little Nell and the Mortgage Foreclosure."

I would also especially like to thank my friend Judy Tumbleson who "hired" me as a director at Edison Junior High in Rock Island, IL, where we have performed and honed my plays, and who has served as producer, reader and constructively blunt critic, and whose input has been invaluable to me.

Lastly, I would like to thank C. M., who encouraged me to rework and improve this play when I thought it was good enough.

Death Warrant for Dracula

4

Death Warrant for Dracula was first performed at Edison Junior High School, Rock Island, IL, in October 2003 under the title *Dracula Encounters Title IX*: John Donald O'Shea, director; Judy Tumbleson, producer.

RENFIELD: Trevon Smith
COUNT ALUCARD: Amanda Duncan/Tony Jones
MISS MACDONALD: Kaela Reger
REV. MATHER: Austin Roberts
MRS. HERRING: Kristine Garcia
MRS. EDGARS: Nikki Castillo
EVELYN HOWARD: Hannah Mattison
LUCY HOWARD: Alyse Foust
JANET NELSON: Kristin Lundberg
DR. VAN HELSING: Ketty Klauer

Death Warrant for Dracula

FARCE. Disguised as Professor Alucard (Dracula spelled backwards), Count Dracula takes a teaching position at a small women's college. But instead of preying upon hapless Victorian females, Dracula finds himself the victim of an accomplished student athlete, Lucy, who is more than happy to clobber him with her tennis racket and golf club. And if that isn't bad enough, Dracula encounters a host of zany faculty members including a biology professor who crawls on the floor and eats insects, a music professor who writes horrendous musicals, and a spooky poetry-reciting English professor who has corrected one too many exams. When Dracula is eventually captured, he discovers that modern vampire hunters aren't exactly "old school." Instead of simply driving a stake through Dracula's heart, these "civilized" vampire hunters can't stand the sight of blood and can't bring themselves to kill Dracula even though he has been dead for 400 years. To Dracula's horror, the hunters contemplate even more torturous ways to end Dracula's taste for human blood like filling his fangs with Super Glue and forcing him to become a vegetarian!

Performance Time: Approximately 60 minutes.

Characters

(4 M, 5 F, 1 flexible)

PROFESSOR VLADIMIR ALUCARD: Count Dracula and visiting professor at St. Vitus College; handsome, charming.

LUCY HOWARD: Dr. Howard's daughter; student athlete; assertive.

MRS. EDGARS: Head of the English department who has corrected one too many English exams.

PROFESSOR RENFIELD: Head of the biology department and assistant to Count Dracula; likes to eat insects.

REV. COTTON MATHER: Professor of Music and Doctor of Divinity; expert on witches; writes horrible musicals.

ANNETTE MAC DONALD: Professor of theater.

JANET BRISTOL: Lucy's friend; student athlete.

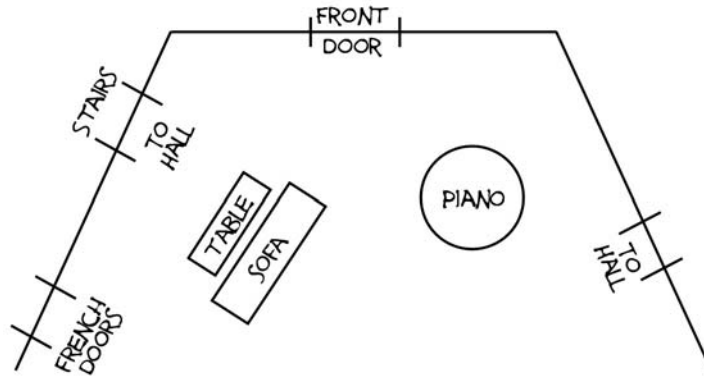
DR. EVAN HOWARD: Headmaster and a medical doctor; flexible. (If played as a female character, change the name to Evelyn.)

DR. FRANZ VAN HELSING: Noted vampirologist.

MS. HERRING: 27, administrative assistant; attractive, authoritative, and efficient.

Set

The great parlor of Howard Hall at St. Vitus College. French doors are located down SR; an entrance to a hallway is located up SL, another entrance is located up SR, and a front door is located upstage center. A sofa sits SR with a table positioned behind it. A piano sits SL.



Props

Bat	Night cap, for Mather
Flashlight	Bathrobe, for MacDonald
Rubber spiders	Glass of water
Rubber flies	Aspirin
Glass jar	Floor lamp with a shade
Music paper	large enough to cover
Vase of flowers	Alucard's head
6 Tennis rackets	Coffin, for Alucard
Pooper scooper	Dolly or cart for coffin
Tray	Bag of soil
Cotton swabs	Heavy rope
Bottle of rubbing alcohol	Hammer
Nightshirt, for Mather	Nails

Special Effects

Bat "flies" by securing bat to a fishing pole	"Doink" sound
Wolf howl	Sound of a head hitting a flower pot
Doorbell	Spooky music

*“I think I should have
stayed in Transylvania.
Things were simpler there.”*

—Van Helsing

Prologue

(Evening, the great parlor of Howard Hall at St. Vitus College. Stage is black with a just enough light to see shapes but not faces. A bat flies in from the slightly open French doors down SR and exits up SR into the hallway. Without turning on the lights, Professor Renfield enters the room from the hallway down SL. He carries a pen flashlight and begins hunting for bugs. He drops to his hands and knees, and begins searching the down stage center floor for bugs, using his penlight. He captures a bug, removes a bottle from his pocket, and puts the bug in the bottle. As Renfield searches the down stage floor for bugs, Professor Alucard enters from the hallway up SR. Dressed in formal attire, Alucard moves down stage unnoticed by Renfield and stands silently, just up stage of Renfield. About to move up stage to hunt bugs, Renfield spins around, and is startled to find Alucard standing there.)

RENFIELD: Oh! *(Renfield rises quickly and takes a backward step toward SL.)* Good heavens, you scared the life out of me! I didn't realize you were there! Can I help you?

(Alucard circles a step or two down SR, eying Renfield.)

ALUCARD: Look at me...look into my eyes...

RENFIELD: Why? Why would I want to look into your eyes?

ALUCARD: *(More menacingly.)* Look into my eyes... *(Gestures toward Renfield. Alucard's hand is not around Renfield's neck, but Renfield reacts as if being choked.)* I command you to look into my eyes!

(Renfield sinks to his knees.)

RENFIELD: Aargh! *(Alucard eases his grip.)* Who are you? Your eyes...yes, your eyes? *(Alucard tightens his grip.)*

Gleeeep! *(Alucard eases his grip.)* I am looking into your eyes.

ALUCARD: Deeper. Deeper.

Death Warrant for Dracula

11

RENFIELD: Yes, your eyes...your eyes. *(He is hypnotized.)*

ALUCARD: From this moment, I am your master.

RENFIELD: You are my...my master.

ALUCARD: You will obey all my commands.

RENFIELD: I...I will obey, master.

ALUCARD: You cannot escape my powers!

(Alucard gestures, as if choking Renfield. Renfield makes a sound as if being choked, and is unable to speak. Alucard's loosens his grip.)

RENFIELD: Aargh! *(Alucard eases his grip.)* I...I cannot escape!

ALUCARD: Where are the young women? The students?

RENFIELD: It is semester break, master. They're gone. Fort Lauderdale.

ALUCARD: All of them?

RENFIELD: No, Miss Howard, the headmaster's daughter...she is still here.

ALUCARD: Where is her room?

RENFIELD: I do not know, master.

(Alucard "chokes" Renfield again.)

ALUCARD: I asked you, which room is hers?!

RENFIELD: Aargh! *(Alucard's releases his grip and Renfield regains his breath.)* Please, master, do not hurt me! I am telling you the truth. I do not know.

(Alucard again tightens his grip.)

ALUCARD: Deceive me and you will die! *(Alucard tightens his grip again.)*

RENFIELD: Aargh! *(Alucard eases grip.)* I swear. All I know is that hers is one of the rooms down that hall. *(Gesturing up SR.)*

ALUCARD: Go. Say nothing of this to anyone, or...or else!

Death Warrant for Dracula

12

(Alucard again does the choking gesture, and Renfield again reacts.)

RENFIELD: Aargh!

(As Alucard releases his imaginary grip, Renfield recovers his breath, flees, and exits down SL. Alucard exits up SR into the hallway, in the direction that Renfield had pointed. Blackout.)

Scene 1

(AT RISE: *The next night, great parlor in Howard Hall. Rev. Mather sits alone at a piano. The keyboard is upstage. He is tapping a melody out with one finger. He is composing on paper. Annette MacDonald enters from hallway down SL. She crosses to the French doors down SR to enjoy one last look at the sunset.*)

MAC DONALD: Good evening, Reverend Mather. Wasn't the sunset lovely? (*Absorbed in thought, he doesn't answer. Turns to him.*) Still lavishing your efforts on your macabre musical play? (*Professor makes no answer.*) Try as I may, I cannot imagine the theater having interest in a musical about the Salem witchcraft trials. I had hoped that by now you would have overcome your mania.

PROFESSOR: "Springtime in Salem" is complete. It is presently in the hands of my publisher, Big Dog Publishing. I have no doubt it will be the featured work in their fall catalog.

MAC DONALD: (*To the heavens.*) I am always amazed at the author's exaggerated opinion as to the merits of his latest work. Genetic, I suppose. What are you working on now?

PROFESSOR: A piece that is sure to appeal to every red-blooded American male. And I should like your honest opinion as to the merits of my initial efforts

MAC DONALD: You realize, of course, Professor, that I am not a male. And some have even accused me of being a blue-blood. What's your piece about?

MATHER: The [Chicago Cubs]. [*Or insert the name of another school or professional baseball team.*]

MAC DONALD: Oh! Then you are writing a tragedy?

MATHER: There will, of course, be tragic elements interspersed with the comedic.

MAC DONALD: Yes, the [Cubs] are generally perceived as a perfect blend of tragedy and comedy.

MATHER: I had rather envisioned a folk opera.

MAC DONALD: But the [Cubs] always lose. Your audience will know the outcome in advance. Your ending is preordained. Or is this to be a fantasy?

MATHER: I was not aware you were a [Cardinal] fan. [*Or insert the name of another rival team.*] I do not find your attempts at [Redbird] humor helpful in the least.

MAC DONALD: You didn't ask me to be helpful. If that's what you want, I suggest you instead write your musical about my beloved [St. Louis Cardinals]. Musical comedies are supposed to have happy endings. With the [Cubs], that's quite impossible.

MATHER: For reasons of our former friendship, I'll forgive your sarcasm. Would you like to hear my production number?

MAC DONALD: I am certain it will be the highlight of my day. Play, maestro. (*She moves behind his shoulder.*) I'll look over your shoulder. (*Sings.*) "Hey, hey, and holy cow, let's play two! The wind is blowing out. The vines are green. Let's play two!" (*Speaks.*) Is it possible for one to be underwhelmed?

MATHER: I am not certain. Why?

MAC DONALD: Your lyrics are drivel. What sane individual would run around saying "hey, hey," or bellowing "holy cow?" I'm afraid you will have to do very much better. And unless you do, I shall be forced to decline the leading role when your show reaches Broadway.

MATHER: I shall miss you. But only slightly. There aren't going to be any parts for women, anyway. This is going to be a wholly authentic piece about baseball.

MAC DONALD: (*Still on her high horse.*) I could not possibly risk my reputation and my return to Broadway to assist an unknown playwright. Furthermore, without an established female lead...someone of my stature, it is my professional opinion that your musical will be an abject failure.

MATHER: Is that your honest opinion, Professor Mac Donald?

MAC DONALD: Yes. I am afraid it is.

MATHER: If you are going to be that negative, I suggest, that in the future, you keep your opinions to yourself.

(Ms. Mac Donald takes a step toward him.)

MAC DONALD: But you asked for my honest opinion. I thought you wanted it.

MATHER: Yes, of course. But I was seeking something...well...something...somewhat more positive.

MAC DONALD: *(Totally frustrated.)* Authors!

(Ms. Herring enters from down SL hallway, carrying a vase of flowers and speaks to Professors Mather and Ms. Mac Donald.)

HERRING: Arguing again, are we? And what is it tonight?

MATHER: *(Hurt.)* I have been working on my first act production number. Ms. Mac Donald objects to the lyrics.

(Ms. Herring crosses to the table behind the sofa and places the vase of flowers there.)

HERRING: That is the same argument you had last night, not to mention, the night before. You are disturbing our few remaining residents. If our faculty members can't comport themselves with decorum, how can we possibly expect our students to do so? *(Renfield crawls into the room from the down stage left hallway to down stage center. He is obviously pursuing something. Herring notices him.)* Mr. Renfield, whatever are you doing?

RENFIELD: Dessert!

HERRING: Mr. Renfield, you simply must quit chasing flies.

RENFIELD: *(Puzzled.)* But, Ms. Herring, I must chase them to eat them.

HERRING: You don't have to eat flies. The meals we provide you here in the faculty cafeteria are quite nutritious.

(Renfield continues to follow his prey as Ms. MacDonald moves down stage to watch him.)

RENFIELD: *(To a spider.)* There, there. I won't hurt you. *(He thrusts his hand out, catches the creature, and greedily eats it. He turns to Ms. Herring.)* I didn't disobey you...it wasn't a fly.

MAC DONALD: Ms. Herring, Mr. Renfield is crazy. I just saw him eat a spider.

(Suddenly defensive, Renfield rises and turns to confront Ms. MacDonald.)

RENFIELD: Why do you call me crazy?

MAC DONALD: Because you eat flies and spiders.

RENFIELD: Bats eat flies and spiders. They're not crazy.

HERRING: Ms. Mac Donald, we don't talk that way about members of our teaching staff.

RENFIELD: People who eat French fries are crazy. They make themselves fat. I'm not crazy, and I won't get fat. Did you ever see a fat bat?

HERRING: Mr. Renfield, that's quite enough!

RENFIELD: Spiders are really very tasty. And they're high in protein, and low in cholesterol. *(He removes a jar from his pocket, opens it, and offers a spider to the ladies.)* Here, try one!

(Mac Donald scurries behind Ms. Herring for protection.)

MAC DONALD: He's crazy! *(From DR.)* Crazy! *(As she crosses L past Renfield and runs out of the room into DSL hallway.)* Crazy! Crazy! *(Pokes her head in from hallway.)* Crazy.

HERRING: *(Distressed.)* Mr. Renfield, put your spiders away this instant, or I shall report this incident to the headmaster.

RENFIELD: But you don't understand. If I am to become the world's foremost entomologist, I must learn to think like an insect, to hunt like an insect, and to eat like an insect.

HERRING: *(Reaches out.)* Give me that bottle!

RENFIELD: *(Terrified.)* No, no. Please don't take them! Don't take them. *(He pulls the bottle away from her and runs into the garden.)* I'll behave. I'll behave.

(Mather rises from the piano.)

MATHER: Have you people no consideration? How can anyone write a musical? This place is a madhouse. I'm going to my room. Goodnight!

(Mather exits into the hallway down SL. Mrs. Edgars enters through the French doors down SR and crosses to the hallway down SL not noticing Ms. Herring, who is near the down stage end of the table behind the sofa.)

HERRING: Good evening, Mrs. Edgars. Did you enjoy dinner?

(Spooky music.)

MRS. EDGARS: *(She is like a ghost passing through the room, oblivious to Ms. Herring and totally stressed out. From Edgar Allen Poe's poem, "The Raven.")*

"Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,

Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore—

While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,

As of some one gently rapping—rapping at my chamber door."

'Tis some visitor,' I muttered, 'tapping at my chamber door—'

Only this and nothing more.”

(Mrs. Edgars fades out of the room and into the down SL hallway. Brief pause.)

HERRING: *(Stunned.)* Oh, dear! It seems poor Mrs. Edgars has corrected one too many English exams!

(Ms. Herring crosses to the piano to straighten up. Dr. Howard enters from front door upstage center and crosses a couple of steps down stage center.)

HOWARD: Good evening, Ms. Herring.

HERRING: Good evening, headmaster.

HOWARD: *(Unaware of what just happened.)* Ah! It's delightfully peaceful and quiet here. It's good to be back.

HERRING: *(Referring to what just went on.)* Isn't it, though. Did you have a good trip into the city?

HOWARD: It couldn't have been better. How's my daughter doing? Is she feeling any better?

HERRING: She perked up a little around noon. She's gotten herself dressed. She had a cup of chicken noodle soup for dinner, but she is still very weak and terribly pale. Do you suppose it's viral?

(Dr. Howard crosses down stage of sofa.)

HOWARD: I'm not certain. *(Turns to Ms. Herring.)* The headache, sore muscles, and stiff neck are certainly symptoms of the flu. I'm concerned about the two red marks on her throat...most likely insect bites. But she's young and strong. If, however, her symptoms get worse, we'll draw some blood and test it.

HERRING: Yes, that does seem prudent. *(She takes a step or two toward Dr. Howard.)* Doctor, I'm really quite concerned

about Renfield. Once again, he's eating flies and spiders from the floor.

(Dr. Howard thinks.)

HOWARD: I suppose that that's best. We certainly would not want him to eat them at the dinner table.

HERRING: No, Dr. Howard. I'm concerned that he's eating them at all!

HOWARD: I see, no need to worry. After all, I understand that they're quite high in protein and low in cholesterol.

(Ms. Herring looks at him like he is out of his mind.)

HERRING: Doctor, you don't understand. Normal biology department heads don't crawl about on the floors eating bugs.

HOWARD: I see. No need to worry. There are plenty of bugs around here. *(Thinks.)* But perhaps you should insist that he washes them before he puts them in his mouth?

HERRING: *(Disgusted.)* Dr. Howard, I'm not concerned about him washing them.

(Dr. Howard crosses SR to the bar between the French doors and the door to the hallway SR and looks for a bottle of wine.)

HOWARD: You're quite right, Ms. Herring. It's probably an unnecessary precaution. The fact that they are unwashed never seems to harm the bats.

HERRING: And I've been meaning to talk to you about the bats. I really do think we should call an exterminator.

HOWARD: I suppose, but when the occasional bat flies down from the attic, everybody seems to have such a good time. Even stuffy old Rev. Mather seems to immensely enjoy trying to knock them down with tennis rackets. And I dare say, I do, too.

HERRING: But isn't there a chance of rabies?

HOWARD: I'm afraid there is. Oh, I suppose you're right.

Why don't you call first thing tomorrow. We don't need to get sued. *(Pause.)* Do we have any wine on hand?

HERRING: Yes, of course. But I keep it under lock and key so our students can't get at it. Why?

HOWARD: Our visiting professor officially arrives tonight.

He's been in town about a week unpacking. I bumped into him last evening and invited him over for a drink.

HERRING: You've hired two new staff members. Which one is this? The one from Scotland, or the one from Romania?

HOWARD: Right region, wrong country. He's Hungarian. Transylvanian nobility. A count, I believe. He calls himself Professor Vladmir Alucard.

HERRING: If I remember correctly, he's the one who'll be lecturing on Eastern European civilization and culture?

HOWARD: Yes, indeed. By the way, he's quite handsome and rather charming. And I think he's single. You may enjoy his company.

HERRING: When is Professor Alucard expected?

HOWARD: I told him seven o'clock.

(Ms. Herring heads toward the hallway down SL.)

HERRING: Oh, dear, I best go and clean the dust off the wine glasses. *(Exits.)*

HOWARD: In the meantime, I'm going to check on Lucy.

(Dr. Howard exits into the hallway up SR. After they exit, Renfield enters DSC.)

RENFIELD: Yes, master. I am coming, master. *(He checks to see that no one is watching him.)* Don't be angry with me, master. *(His attention is diverted. He sees a fly on the piano. He stalks it, grabs it, and thrusts it into his mouth. He is very pleased with himself and laughs.)* He-he-he. *(He hears a voice, which is*

Death Warrant for Dracula

21

*inaudible to the audience, and turns to the French doors.)
Immediately, master.*

(Renfield goes to the French doors and throws them open. The howl of a wolf is heard. He looks around, afraid someone will catch him. Then he flees the room, exiting to the hallway down SL. A bat flies in through the French doors. It flies about the room. Janet Bristol enters the room from up SR, and immediately notices the bat and runs to the hallway down SL.)

JANET: *(Calls.)* Ms. Herring, there's another bat in the lobby.
(She runs to the hallway up SR and calls.) There's a bat down here!
(Dr. Howard and Lucy enter from up SR hallway. Lucy comes down SR near the French doors. Dr. Howard stays up stage of the sofa. Professor Mather and Ms. Mac Donald run into the room via the down SL hallway. They all grab tennis rackets, which have been left in convenient places, and join the hunt. The scene is chaos, with the Professor jumping up on the sofa to get a better swing at the bat. Mac Donald takes a position near the piano. Janet is in front of the front door. All are swinging at the bat and nearly clobber each other. Bristol points to the bat.) There he is!

MAC DONALD: Get him, Professor Mather!

(Mather swings at the bat and misses.)

MATHER: Drat, missed him!

(The bat flies near Mac Donald. Mac Donald puts her tennis racquet in front of her face.)

MAC DONALD: Don't let him get in my hair!

(The bat zooms by.)

MATHER: He's really fast!

HOWARD: Where did he go?

(Janet points in the general direction of Lucy.)

JANET: There!

(Lucy swings and clobbers the bat, knocking him through the French doors.)

LUCY: *(Proudly.)* How about that for an overhead?

MAC DONALD: Did you get him?

LUCY: Of course I got him.

(Ms. Herring enters from the hallway down SL with a pooper scooper to pick up the dead bat.)

HERRING: Where'd you knock him?

MATHER: Before we can give you credit, we must confirm your kill.

LUCY: *(Points.)* I knocked him through the French doors.

MATHER: Then he should be on the terrace. *(Steps down from the sofa.)* Miss Bristol, would you be good enough to make a search?

(Wolf howl.)

JANET: It's pitch black out there. And that dog sends chills up my spine.

MAC DONALD: *(To Janet.)* Why don't you wait until morning?

HERRING: A sound proposal. Now Professors Mather and MacDonald, I think, given your attire, you should return to your rooms.

(Mather checks his attire and is embarrassed.)

MATHER: Yes, I must write five more pages of my musical.
(He exits into the hallway down SL.)

MAC DONALD: And I must get my beauty sleep.

(She exits into down SL hallway. Howard crosses down center next to sofa.)

HOWARD: *(To Janet.)* It appears, my dear, you are putting all those tennis lessons to good use.

(Janet counters, moving a step or two toward Lucy.)

JANET: Yes, indeed. I think that is Lucy's seventh kill. Nobody else has more than one.

LUCY: Well, I am here on a tennis scholarship, you know.

HOWARD: Thank heavens. On my salary here, I could never have afforded your tuition. And to think I used to be against women's sports because I felt they would hurt football at the big colleges. Well, my dear, you've worked hard on your tennis, and it's paying off.

(Janet takes a step or two toward Lucy.)

JANET: And she's worked hard on her golf as well. I'm here on a golf scholarship, and the last time we played, she beat me by three strokes.

LUCY: And I beat Jonathan.

JANET: You keep beating him at golf, and he won't marry you.

LUCY: We've got an understanding. I promised him I'll let him beat me...after we're married.

HOWARD: That's what her mother told me.

JANET: Did she?

HOWARD: It was a campaign promise.

(Doorbell. Ms. Herring goes up stage to front door. Janet counters.)

HERRING: I'll get it.

(Ms. Herring opens the door. A disheveled Professor Alucard enters. He is in obvious discomfort. Howard crosses upstage and goes to him.)

HOWARD: My dear Count Alucard. What happened to you?

ALUCARD: Do you have an aspirin? I am in great pain!

HERRING: Goodness, you look awful. *(To Howard.)* I'll get alcohol and bandages. *(She leaves, crossing into the hallway down SL.)*

ALUCARD: I have a splitting headache.

(Alucard sits on the sofa. Howard crosses down to the Count to examine him. Howard sits on the sofa upstage of Alucard.)

HOWARD: You have a head wound. What happened to you?

ALUCARD: I don't know. I can't remember. Who am I?

JANET: *(To Dr. Howard.)* He must have amnesia.

HOWARD: *(To Alucard.)* You're Professor Vladmir Alucard.

ALUCARD: What am I doing here?

HOWARD: Don't you remember? You're our visiting professor. You're here to lecture on Eastern European culture. I invited you over for a glass of wine and to get acquainted.

ALUCARD: Ohhh! My head. It feels as if someone has hit me with a hammer.

(Ms. Herring enters from down SL hallway with a tray containing cotton swabs, rubbing alcohol, a glass of water, and an aspirin. She crosses to the sofa down SL of Dr. Howard.)

HERRING: Here, Dr. Howard. *(She sets the tray on the table behind the sofa.)*

HOWARD: Here, let me clean up your wound. (*He tends to Alucard's wound.*) This is really, quite strange. This wound is quite nasty, but there doesn't appear to be any blood.

ALUCARD: Perhaps I wiped it off with my hand when I regained consciousness.

(*Lucy crosses to the down stage table behind the sofa.*)

LUCY: Do you have any idea what happened to you?

ALUCARD: I cannot remember a thing. All I know is that when I came to, I found myself lying on your back terrace with this terrible headache.

HOWARD: Perhaps you tripped and hit your head on the bricks. Lay back for a second and open your eyes. (*Howard rises. Alucard lays his head back.*) Now, professor, look into my eyes. Look deep into my eyes...I see no dilation of the pupils...no evidence of a concussion.

ALUCARD: I feel awful. I want to go home. (*He starts to rise, but he is very dizzy and settles back down.*)

HOWARD: My dear Alucard. You are in no shape to go anywhere. Moreover, it's pitch black out there.

ALUCARD: I love the night. I am not afraid of the dark. If you will excuse me, I must be going.

HOWARD: You're in no shape to do so. You might fall and do further injury to yourself. Moreover, can you even recall where you live?

(*Alucard thinks for a second.*)

ALUCARD: Of course I can. I live in a castle in... (*Confused.*) No, I am afraid I cannot remember.

HOWARD: Then I must insist that you spend the night with us. I would be guilty of malpractice if I allowed you to stumble about through the night in your condition. We're between semesters here. We have plenty of dorm rooms

available. Ms. Herring, fix up the room next to Lucy's for Professor Alucard.

(Ms. Herring exits up SR to do so.)

ALUCARD: Thank you, doctor, for your concern. The aspirin seems to be helping; I feel somewhat better already.

(Alucard rises, still a bit wobbly. Janet crosses up stage of the sofa to assist Alucard. She helps him off up SR.)

JANET: Hold on to me, professor, I'll help you upstairs.

ALUCARD: *(As he exits.)* Oh, my head. My head...

(Janet and Alucard go upstairs.)

LUCY: Father, I'm still a little weak myself. I think I should retire now, too.

(Lucy kisses her father on the cheek and exits up SR.)

HOWARD: Get a good night's sleep, darling. I think you'll feel much stronger in the morning. *(Lucy goes upstairs to her bedroom. Mrs. Edgars peers around the corner of the opening to the hallway down SL. We only see her head. Dr. Howard notices her. To Mrs. Edgars.)* Good evening, Mrs. Edgars. Can I do anything for you?

(Mrs. Edgars enters from hallway down SL. She is in a world of her own.)

MRS. EDGARS: *(From Edgar Allen Poe's poem, "To Helen.")*

"On desperate seas long wont to roam,
Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,
Thy Naiad airs have brought me home *(In tears.)*
To the glory that was Greece

And the grandeur that was Rome.”

HOWARD: *(To himself, thinking out loud.)* I'd better check her blood levels. I may have to increase her medication. *(Doorbell. Dr. Howard crosses up stage center to answer the front door. Opens door.)* Van Helsing, my old friend. Come in. Come in.

(Van Helsing enters.)

VAN HELSING: Evan. It's wonderful to see you again.

HOWARD: You look terrific. When did you get back?

VAN HELSING: Only yesterday. How I've missed you all. How's Lucy?

(Howard crosses down stage of the sofa.)

HOWARD: *(Thinks.)* She's been a bit under the weather, but she appeared much better tonight.

(Van Helsing approaches Dr. Howard.)

VAN HELSING: What's wrong with her?

HOWARD: Headache, stiff neck, aching joints. She's been very weak, and her color's been ashen.

VAN HELSING: *(Concerned.)* Have you done any blood work?

HOWARD: Not as yet. I assumed it was just a touch of the flu.

VAN HELSING: Any rashes or marks?

HOWARD: Now that you mention it...yes! There are two small red marks on her throat, perhaps two inches apart. She often sleeps with her window open. I assumed they were insect bites. Why? Do you think they are significant?

VAN HELSING: I'm not sure. But they could be. Evan, to be safe, I think I should examine her immediately. Do you suppose she's still awake?

HOWARD: Why? What concerns you?

VAN HELSING: The marks. I'll explain, after I've seen the marks.

HOWARD: Very well. I'll go up and see if she's awake.

(As Dr. Howard takes a step or two to leave up SR, there is a loud commotion offstage up SR. He stops and listens.)

LUCY: *(Offstage.)* Professor Alucard, what are you doing here? *(Pause.)* I will not look into your eyes. Get your eyes and the rest of your stupid self out of my room this instant, or I'm going to clobber you with this five iron. *(Pause.)* All right, you pervert, you asked for it...

ALUCARD: *(Offstage. Screams.)* Oooooouch! I'm leaving. I'm leaving! Do not hit me with your niblick, again.

(Howard and Van Helsing look at each other. Howard runs offstage up SR to help Lucy.)

LUCY: *(Offstage.)* It's not a niblick, you creep. It's a mashie. Now get out of here before I use it to mash your head.

ALUCARD: *(Offstage.)* All right. All right, already. I'm going! Gangway!

HOWARD: *(Offstage.)* Lucy! Lucy, darling! Are you all right?

(Lucy enters the room from up SR, with Dr. Howard following her.)

LUCY: I'm fine, Dad. I'm fine. *(She crosses down right of the sofa. Dr. Howard remains up SR of front door.)* But I think your creepy professor friend is going to need another handful of aspirin.

(Responding to the commotion, Janet Bristol enters from up SR and takes a position between Dr. Howard and Lucy.)

JANET: What's going on? Lucy, what happened?

LUCY: Professor Alucard snuck into my room, and tried to get me to look into his eyes. When he wouldn't get out, I grabbed the five iron I keep by my bed and clobbered him.

HOWARD: Janet, please ask our guest to join us.

(Janet heads for the hallway up SR.)

JANET: Yes, sir.

(Just after Janet exits, a woozy bat comes from the hallway, pauses, and then flies out the French doors. As it flies out, a wolf howls and then there is "doink" sound. Lucy goes to the French doors.)

LUCY: Did you hear that? That sounded like a wolf!

HOWARD: Probably just a dog. There are no wolves around here.

LUCY: If that was a dog, he needs barking lessons.

HOWARD: Lucy, dear, you remember Dr. Van Helsing?

LUCY: Yes, of course. Good evening, doctor.

HOWARD: Lucy, Dr. Van Helsing would like to examine the marks on your throat.

(Lucy crosses to Van Helsing. Dr. Howard counters. Janet rushes into the room from the hallway up SR and stands behind the sofa.)

JANET: He's gone! Professor Alucard is gone! I searched the whole wing. I can't find him anywhere!

HOWARD: Did you see anyone there?

JANET: Not a soul. Just one of those stupid bats.

VAN HELSING: Did you hear anything unusual?

JANET: Now that you mention it, I think I heard a wolf.

HOWARD: *(Unconvinced.)* Oh, for heaven's sakes! There hasn't been a wolf around these parts for 100 years.

(Wolf howl.)

JANET: Then what was that?

VAN HELSING: You're quite correct, young lady. That was a wolf. I have just returned from Transylvania. I heard many there. I know a wolf when I hear one. And that, Evan, was a wolf!

HOWARD: Next you'll tell us that the bat that just flew through here was a vampire!

VAN HELSING: Excuse me a minute, Evan. (*Examining Lucy's throat.*) Yes. Un-huh. Yes, just as I thought. (*Turns to Janet.*) You're quite right, Evan. That is exactly what I am going to tell you. That bat that just flew out those French doors was indeed a vampire.

(*Dr. Howard crosses to Van Helsing as Lucy counters.*)

HOWARD: You can't be serious, Franz? What on earth are you talking about?

VAN HELSING: Evan, what I am about to tell you will probably convince you that I'm crazy.

JANET: Well, if you are, you've certainly come to the right place.

HOWARD: Crazy is not a recognized medical condition. Why will I think you're insane?

VAN HELSING: Evan, listen to me carefully. (*Van Helsing crosses to Lucy. Dr. Howard counters.*) These marks on Lucy's neck are not insect bites. Lucy has been bitten by a vampire! Do you understand?

HOWARD: Of course I understand. You're crazy!

VAN HELSING: Evan, don't scoff at what you don't understand. Vampires exist! At first, I doubted it, too. But my studies these last five years in Transylvania have convinced me beyond a shadow of a doubt that vampires do exist.

JANET: Next you're going to tell us you believe in werewolves! (*Wolf howl.*) Then again, who doesn't?

(Van Helsing brings Howard a couple steps down SL.)

VAN HELSING: *(To Dr. Howard.)* You must believe me. Lucy is in great danger. Set aside your prejudice and look at the facts. First, the distance between the bite marks on your daughter's neck corresponds to the distance between the human canines. And second, what happened minutes ago when Alucard slipped into Lucy's room?

LUCY: He stared at me and told me to look into his eyes!

JANET: Holy cow! That's what vampires always do! In the movies, I mean. *(Sheepishly.)* I haven't actually really met any real live vampires...

VAN HELSING: And Evan, what do you get if you spell "Alucard" backwards?

HOWARD: Don't be ridiculous, Franz, now is not the time for childish word games.

JANET: Dr. Howard, you get... "Dracula"!

HOWARD: It must be some sort of a coincidence.

JANET: Sure, there are lots of people around town named Dracula. Judge Dracula, Father Dracula, Sister Mary Dracula—

LUCY: It's no coincidence, Dad. Dr. Van Helsing is right. Look at the facts. I clobbered Alucard with my five iron. He fled from my room. I ran down here. You sent Janet upstairs to get the professor. She saw a bat. Then we saw the same bat when it flew from the hallway into this room and out the French doors.

JANET: That explains why I couldn't find him. Vampires can change into bats. Your friend, Alucard, changed into a bat and made his getaway.

VAN HELSING: And where there are vampires...

LUCY/JANET: There are wolves!

VAN HELSING: Alucard is Count Dracula!

(Wolf howl.)

JANET: But according to the vampire legends, once a person is bitten by a vampire, that person becomes a vampire herself.

VAN HELSING: The legend is imprecise. It is not the bite of the vampire that transmogrifies the victim. Rather, it is the draining of the victim's blood.

(Janet crosses to Van Helsing.)

JANET: But if Lucy was bitten by a vampire, why didn't he drain all her blood then and there?

VAN HELSING: I can only speculate. According to the expert literature, transformation does not occur until after the victim is bitten for the third time. Then again, perhaps he was simply interrupted before he could get the job done—

JANET: Or perhaps, Lucy had forgotten to shower!

LUCY: That would explain why he came into my room tonight!

VAN HELSING: He, no doubt, came to finish what he had begun. Lucy must not be left alone while Dracula is on the prowl. Janet, can you stay with her at all times?

JANET: You're asking a great deal. She snores!

(Renfield enters from hallway down SL and crosses to Howard.)

RENFIELD: My master has sent me for some more aspirin.

VAN HELSING: Who's this?

HOWARD: *(To Van Helsing.)* It's Renfield. He's the chair of our biology department. Renfield, who's your master? Why does he need aspirin?

RENFIELD: Why, Professor Alucard, of course. His headache is suddenly much worse.

VAN HELSING: Where is your master now?

RENFIELD: I don't know. The last I saw him, he was out in the garden. He said he had a tremendous headache, asked

me if I had an aspirin, and told me he needed to find a place where he could lie down.

(Renfield removes a small jar from his pocket, opens it, and stuffs a fly or two in his mouth. Van Helsing crosses to Renfield.)

VAN HELSING: What did you just put in your mouth?

RENFIELD: A horsefly. Would you like one? I have another.

VAN HELSING: Thank you, Renfield, but no thanks. I just had dinner.

RENFIELD: But they're dessert!

VAN HELSING: Thank you, but I'm on a strict diet.

RENFIELD: So am I. That's why I eat them. They're high in protein and low in cholesterol...and no sugar. Are you sure you won't have one?

VAN HELSING: Thank you, but not now. Mr. Renfield, where is your master now?

RENFIELD: I just told you, I don't know. *(Hesitates.)* I can't tell you. *(Crosses far right.)*

VAN HELSING: Tell me, and I'll give you a one-pound box of nice fat horseflies.

RENFIELD: My master will get angry if I betray his secrets.

HOWARD: We will get angry if you don't, and we'll put your flies under lock and key.

JANET: Offer him a two-pound box.

VAN HELSING: Two pounds!

RENFIELD: *(Looking out the French doors.)* I'm sorry, master. Don't be angry. *(To them.)* My master spends his nights in the carriage house at Kennelworth mansion. Where are my flies?

VAN HELSING: I'll catch them for you tomorrow.

RENFIELD: But I want them now! You cheated me! *(He rushes out the French doors.)* I'm going to warn my master!

VAN HELSING: Stop him!

(Janet pursues Renfield.)

Death Warrant for Dracula

34

JANET: I'll get him! *(She exits through the French doors.)*

LUCY: *(Calls.)* Be careful, Janet..watch out for the hanging flowerpot!

HOWARD: Don't let him get away!

VAN HELSING: It's a matter of life and death! Or something like that!

(Sound of a head hitting a flowerpot. Janet staggers back in, disheveled.)

JANET: He got away.

LUCY: Are you all right? *(Lucy approaches Janet.)* What happened to you?

JANET: I ran into a stupid flowerpot. *(To Lucy.)* You hung it too low.

(Lucy goes to nurse Janet's wound.)

VAN HELSING: Evan, there's no time to lose. Get some flashlights, a large hammer, and a sharpened stake.

HOWARD: What on earth for?

VAN HELSING: We must find Count Dracula before dawn and drive a stake through his heart!

HOWARD: Good heavens, Franz, I can't do that!

VAN HELSING: For the love of heaven, why not?

HOWARD: You're asking me to violate my Hippocratic oath. I'm a doctor. I have sworn to heal. I can't kill.

VAN HELSING: Evan, you won't be violating your oath. Dracula's been dead for 400 years!

HOWARD: Oh! Then why must we drive a stake through his heart?

VAN HELSING: To make sure he stays that way!

HOWARD: Oh.

VAN HELSING: Quickly now, there's no time to lose!

(Wearing a nightshirt and nightcap, Mather enters from down SL hallway. He is extremely disgusted. He is followed by Miss Mac Donald, who is wearing a bathrobe. They stop near the entrance.)

MATHER: This is intolerable! Simply intolerable!

MAC DONALD: How is anyone supposed to get any sleep around this place?

MATHER: I am a genius. I need peace and quiet. Instead, there are people running through the halls, doors slamming, and people screaming at all hours of the night.

MAC DONALD: Why, this isn't a college...it's a nuthouse!

(Mrs. Edgars sweeps in from stairs up SR followed by Ms. Herring. Edgars takes position upstage of sofa, and Dr. Howard and Van Helsing a take a step back.)

MRS. EDGARS: *(From Edgar Allen Poe's short story, "The Cask of Amontillado.")* "The thousand injuries of Fortunato I had borne as best I could; but when he ventured upon insult, *(Very broadly.)* I vowed revenge! You, who so well know the nature of my soul, will not suppose, however, that I gave utterance to a threat." *(She looks around at everyone in the room.)*

HERRING: Mrs. Edgars, that's quite enough. *(To others.)* Her medications are not quite right. *(Ms. Herring starts to lead Mrs. Edgars away. To Mrs. Edgars.)* Let's go back to our room.

MRS. EDGARS: *(As she is being lead away. (From Edgar Allen Poe's short story, "The Cask of Amontillado.")* "It must be understood, that neither by word nor deed, had I given Fortunato cause to doubt my good will."

HERRING: Come, dear, you have English papers to grade.

(Mrs. Edgars and Herring exit into the hallway down SL.)

MATHER: *(To Miss Mac Donald.)* I never noticed before, but it is a nuthouse, isn't it?

MAC DONALD: *(To Mather.)* I think you should sit down at the piano and play your new song for them.

MATHER: Yes, sort of an invited dress rehearsal. *(He crosses up to play the piano.)* I will play, if you will you sing!

MAC DONALD: Professor Mather as been kind enough to agree to play selections from his new musical for all of you, if you will be kind enough to please be seated.

HOWARD: Miss Mac Donald, thank you, but not now. At present, we have a vampire to deal with.

MATHER: *(Still standing up stage of piano. To Mac Donald.)* Did I hear him correctly? Did he say "vampire"?

MAC DONALD: I think he did. *(To Dr. Howard.)* Did you just say "vampire"?

VAN HELSING: Yes, he did!

(Mather crosses to Miss Mac Donald.)

MATHER: My dear Ms. Mac Donald, I think we should get out of here immediately. *(Stage whisper.)* Just between the two of us, they're all crazy!

MAC DONALD: They're not crazy...they're bonkers! *(They begin to exit and stop.)* Do you suppose they're dangerous?

MATHER: I don't think we should wait to find out!

(They exit into hallway down SL.)

VAN HELSING: Hurry. We have lost precious time!

(Doorbell. Janet goes to answer the door.)

JANET: I'll get it. *(She opens the door and is startled to see Alucard. She takes a step back.)* Professor! Or perhaps I should say...Count—

ALUCARD: One, two three, five, 27... *(He enters.)* I don't want to count! My head is throbbing! I am in terrible agony! Is there a doctor in the house?

(Van Helsing approaches Alucard and extends his hand to him.)

VAN HELSING: Professor Alucard.

(Alucard shakes his hand.)

ALUCARD: Professor Alucard, I am delighted to make your acquaintance. My name is...my name is...I cannot recall what my name is. Are you a doctor?

VAN HELSING: I am. You look terrible. What happened?

ALUCARD: I have a splitting headache. In fact, I have at least two spitting headaches! *(Looks up and sees Lucy.)* No! No! Keep her away from me!

(Lucy is holding a tennis racquet.)

LUCY: If you ever come in my room again unannounced, you'll have at least three!

(Lucy raises the racquet menacingly. Alucard ducks and covers up his head with his hands, and in the process, finds he already has three lumps on his head.)

ALUCARD: I may have three already. As I fled from your room, in an effort to avoid becoming better acquainted with your five iron, I vaguely recall banging my head on a flowerpot hanging out on your terrace. *(Indicating through French doors.)*

(Janet checks the bump on her head.)

JANET: You, too?

(Lucy approaches Alucard.)

ALUCARD: Please, no! Not again. *(Hides behind Van Helsing.)*
Keep her away from me! She is a maniac! Oh, my aching head...

LUCY: What were you doing in my room?

COUNT: I was coming back from the bathroom...I opened the wrong door.

HOWARD: Then why did you tell her to look into your eyes?

ALUCARD: I was worried about a concussion. As long as I was already there, I simply wanted her to see if my pupils were dilating.

(Renfield enters from the French doors and stops down SR.)

RENFIELD: Master, master. Please don't harm me! I didn't mean to betray you. I couldn't help myself!

ALUCARD: *(Confused.)* Who is this lunatic?

RENFIELD: Do you not recognize me, master?

ALUCARD: At the minute, I do not even recognize me!

RENFIELD: If you will forgive me, I'll share all my bugs with you.

ALUCARD: Bugs? You Americans eat bugs? I thought I was coming to a civilized country?

(Van Helsing leads Alucard to the sofa.)

VAN HELSING: Sit down a minute. Howard, here, will clean your wound.

(Alucard sits.)

ALUCARD: Have you any aspirin?

VAN HELSING: Of course. Lucy, will you get him some?
(Lucy goes to the table for aspirin. To Alucard, making it up as he goes along.) Your name is George Alucard. You are my lab

assistant. You are suffering from amnesia. We are going to drive you back to my clinic and look after your medical needs. Then we'll get you a good night's sleep. In time, I think your memory will return...

(Lucy brings the aspirin and glass of water and gives them to Dr. Howard.)

HOWARD: *(To Alucard.)* Now then, here's your aspirin.

(Alucard swallows the aspirin.)

ALUCARD: Thank you for your kindness, doctor.

(Alucard lays his head back and falls asleep. Howard draws Van Helsing aside.)

HOWARD: Franz, I need to speak with you briefly. *(Howard and Van Helsing move aside to confer.)* I think you're being reckless. What if his memory returns?

VAN HELSING: I'll meet you at my car in five minutes. When we get back to my place, we'll put him into bed. I've got stakes at my place. As soon as he falls asleep, I'll drive one through his heart.

HOWARD: Franz, I am deeply disturbed by this deception. We are medical doctors. What you are proposing is nothing less than the cold-blooded murder of our own patient!

VAN HELSING: My dear Evan. As I explained before, Dracula has been dead for 400 years. It's impossible to murder someone who is already dead!

HOWARD: But he doesn't look dead.

VAN HELSING: That's the advantage of being a vampire. They never look a day over 47.

HOWARD: If he's dead, why doesn't he stay in his coffin?

VAN HELSING: Insomnia? Lumpy mattress? How should I know?

HOWARD: But you're an expert. You're supposed to know.
VAN HELSING: It's a vampire thing. It's what they all do.
That's why they're called the "living dead."
HOWARD: I'm not used to dead men walking around.
VAN HELSING: You haven't met enough vampires.
HOWARD: I need more proof that he's really dead.
VAN HELSING: Would you be satisfied if he signed an affidavit?
LUCY: I hope you two have got a plan. *(To Howard.)* I think your friend over there is coming to.
HOWARD: Franz proposes that we take Alucard to his place, put him to bed, and then drive a stake through his heart.
LUCY: That sounds like a good plan to me!
HOWARD: *(Appalled.)* Lucy!
LUCY: What's wrong? That's what they do in all the vampire movies.
VAN HELSING: Your father has ethical reservations.
LUCY: Why? Wait! I've got reservations, too. You're proposing to do the stake bit back at your place. I thought you had to do it while he was asleep in his own coffin?
VAN HELSING: Good heavens! I had quite forgotten. You're entirely correct, my dear.
HOWARD: But where is his coffin?
LUCY: Didn't Professor Renfield say Alucard had rented Kennelworth Mansion?
VAN HELSING: *(To Howard.)* Evan, would you be convinced Alucard's already dead, if you found him in a dank basement of a desolate mansion passing the night in a coffin?
HOWARD: Certainly not. What if Alucard is a perfectly normal middle-aged male and prefers a coffin to a king-sized bed? *(Van Helsing and Lucy look at him in utter disbelief.)* Moreover, I'm an internist. I can't stand the sight of blood.
LUCY: Dad, don't you remember? When you cleaned his wound, there was no blood!
VAN HELSING: There's your proof, Evan!

HOWARD: Huh?

VAN HELSING: Every living creature has blood.

LUCY: If Alucard has no blood, that conclusively proves that he is one of the living dead...that he is a vampire!

HOWARD: It's no good, Franz. I'm a doctor. Even if he is a vampire, I'm required by my Hippocratic Oath to seek to cure him.

VAN HELSING: And just how do you propose to do that? Neosporin? Antibiotics? Ace bandages?

HOWARD: Why are you asking me? You're supposed to be the expert on vampires. How do you cure a vampire?

VAN HELSING: It's simple. You drive a stake through the heart of the vampire who bit Alucard and turned him into a vampire.

LUCY: It won't work. Dad would object to killing our new vampire to cure our old one. We'd have to cure both of them.

VAN HELSING: Or we could just find the third vampire who bit our second vampire and drive a stake through his heart, instead.

LUCY: That would cure vampire number two, but would it fix Alucard?

HOWARD: Surely, there must be a simpler way.

LUCY: Janet's a big Buffy ["Buffy the Vampire"] fan. Maybe she knows. *[Or insert the name of another vampire hunter from a movie or TV show.]*

HOWARD: Janet, Ms. Bristol, could you join us a second?

(Janet joins them.)

JANET: More aspirin?

LUCY: No, Janet, we need your advice. How do [Buffy and her friends] cure vampires?

JANET: I think they cut off their heads...

HOWARD: That's barbaric. That's even more hideous than a stake through the heart.

JANET: ...then they put the severed head between the vampire's feet.

HOWARD: I'm a doctor committed to the welfare of my patient. Moreover, his relatives might sue me.

VAN HELSING: I think I should have stayed in Transylvania. Things were simpler there.

JANET: If decapitation seems overly invasive, maybe you could just extract his fangs?

LUCY: Good idea!

JANET: Or better yet, fill them with Super Glue?

LUCY: That way, if he bites anybody, he won't be able to drain their blood. He'll be out of business.

VAN HELSING: You could put the glue in a hypodermic syringe and inject it into his fangs. Think of it. You'll win a Nobel prize for finding a cure for vampirism.

HOWARD: I'm still not comfortable. That might be considered the unlicensed practice of dentistry. I would have to check with the Medical Licensing Board to see if I'm licensed to fill teeth.

JANET: *(To Van Helsing, serious.)* In the meantime, why don't we talk him into becoming a vegetarian?

VAN HELSING: *(Exasperated.)* I'm taking the next plane to Transylvania!

LUCY: I think we should consult Professor Mather. He's an expert on witches. Perhaps he knows something about vampires.

JANET: I'll go get him.

VAN HELSING: What time is it?

HOWARD: It's almost 5:30 in the morning. Goodness, we've been up all night. It's nearly dawn.

VAN HELSING: Sunrise will be at 5:35 a.m. If the sun comes up, our problem may be solved.

HOWARD: Why's that?

VAN HELSING: Vampires are creatures of the night. They are allergic to the sun. If they are unable to find sanctuary in their coffins before sunrise, the sun destroys them.

HOWARD: I'd better get him some sunscreen.

(Mather enters with Janet.)

MATHER: Ms. Bristol woke me and told me it was urgent that I come at once. What was so important that I must be deprived of my well-earned repose?

HOWARD: We need your advice, professor. We need to know how to treat a vampire?

MATHER: *(Sarcastically.)* Very carefully. *(They all look at him as if he were nuts.)* I understand they bite.

LUCY: We knew you were an expert on witches. We thought you might know something about vampires as well.

MATHER: You people are crazy. Perhaps because of my name, I have always been fascinated by the hysteria surrounding the trials in Salem, but I've never believed in witches. And I certainly don't believe in vampires. Now, if you don't mind...

(Mather exits in a huff. Renfield sneaks in from the French doors.)

RENFIELD: Master. Master. You must wake up. Please wake up. We haven't much time. They mean to harm you.

(Van Helsing approaches Renfield and Alucard.)

VAN HELSING: Mr. Renfield, what on earth do you think you are doing?

RENFIELD: I'm waking my master up so he can go to sleep.

VAN HELSING: I'm afraid we can't permit you do that.

(Undeterred, Renfield yanks Alucard's arm.)

RENFIELD: Hurry, master! This sun rises in two minutes. Follow me! Please!

Death Warrant for Dracula

44

(Renfield bolts toward the French doors. Alucard, still dazed, tries to follow Renfield but runs as if he's tipsy.)

VAN HELSING: Lucy, Janet, stop him! We can't let Alucard escape!

HOWARD: Wait! Each of you grab a weapon!

(Lucy and Janet stop and find tennis rackets. This will give Renfield a chance to pull Alucard out the door. Before Lucy and Janet can stop him, Renfield stops to assist Alucard, who is lurching to and fro.)

RENFIELD: Hurry, master, I won't let them harm you.

(Howard grabs Alucard's arm and yanks him back through the door. The girls, now armed, begin the chase.)

VAN HELSING: Quick, girls. Don't let him get away. *(To Howard.)* Follow me, Evan. We'll head him off if he doubles back around front.

(Van Helsing and Howard race out the front door.)

JANET: *(Hailing them.)* Stop in the name of the King!

(Janet and Lucy chase Renfield and Alucard out the French doors.)

LUCY: King? Which king?

JANET: I haven't the faintest idea. It was all I could think of. I don't want to get arrested for impersonating a policeman.

LUCY: *(Offstage.)* Where'd they go?

ALUCARD: *(Offstage.)* I am preparing for take off. All systems are go.

RENFIELD: *(Offstage.)* The hanging pot, master. Beware the pot!

ALUCARD: *(Offstage.)* We have lift off. *(A loud "boink" is heard.)* Lift off has been aborted. Ohhhh! My head.

JANET: *(Offstage.)* I hear them! They went that-a-way.

LUCY: *(Offstage.)* I'll check the front.

RENFIELD: *(Offstage.)* Quickly, master, hide!

(Howard runs in from the French doors, just as Lucy enters via the front door.)

HOWARD: I was afraid they might have doubled back.

LUCY: I heard a boink. I think Alucard flew into the pot again. I heard Renfield tell him to hide.

HOWARD: You check the hall. I'll check upstairs.

(Lucy exits to the hall and Howard exits up the stairs. MacDonald enters from hall.)

MAC DONALD: What is all the racket? There are people trying to sleep! *(Noticing that nobody is around to hear her, she heads for the front door.)* Where did they all go?

(Ms. Mac Donald exits via the front door to look for them. Wobbling, Alucard enters from the French doors.)

ALUCARD: *(Aside.)* The villagers pursue me. This happens every few hundred years. I must find a sanctuary.

(Alucard hears a noise and hides behind the sofa. Janet enters from the French doors and hears a noise in the hallway. She hides at the hall door, ready to clobber whoever comes forth from the hall. Mather runs in from the hall. Janet almost hits Mather.)

JANET: Professor Mather, what are you doing up? I nearly clobbered you.

MATHER: I can't sleep with all the commotion. What are you doing with that club?

JANET: Alucard has escaped. I heard a noise. I thought you were him. You check upstairs, and I'll look out front.

MATHER: You check upstairs. I told you before, I don't believe in vampires. I'm going back to bed.

(Mather exits into the hall and Janet follows. Alucard rises from behind sofa.)

ALUCARD: *(Aside.)* Too close for comfort! Next time they will come with hounds. They always use hounds. I must find a better hiding place. *(As he starts to look around, he hears others approaching from all directions. He can't find a good place to hide.)* Trapped! Trapped like a dog! *(He spies a floor lamp.)* Then again, maybe not.

(Alucard goes to the lamp, unscrews the shade, pushes the lamp back against the wall, puts the shade over his head, freezes, and pretends he is a floor lamp. Howard enters from the stairs. Janet, followed by Lucy, enters from the hallway. Mather pokes his head out of the hallway. Van Helsing comes in from the French doors. Mac Donald enters from the front door and takes position L of Alucard, who is pretending to be a lamp.)

JANET: I thought I heard a noise.

LUCY: Me, too.

MAC DONALD: What's all the commotion?

VAN HELSING: I could find no one out back.

MATHER: It appears your "vampire," has escaped.

(With that, Alucard sneezes. As soon as he sneezes, he starts to edge toward the French doors, with the lampshade still over his head, hoping no one will notice him.)

HOWARD: *(To Mac Donald.)* God bless you!

MAC DONALD: Thank you, but I didn't sneeze.

MATHER: Somebody did. I distinctly heard a sneeze.

Death Warrant for Dracula

47

(Mac Donald points to the spot Alucard has just vacated and to the lamp base, which no longer has a shade.)

ANNETTE: I think it was that lamp.

MATHER: Oh...wait! Lamps don't sneeze!

(Van Helsing notices Alucard edging toward the French doors.)

VAN HELSING: But vampires do! Get him, ladies!

(Janet seizes Alucard's left lower leg. Mac Donald grabs Alucard's right lower leg. Lucy, with her racket, runs behind Alucard, and gets ready to clobber him if he makes one false move.)

ALUCARD: *(To Van Helsing.)* Call off your hounds. *(Janet and Mac Donald hold him even tighter.)* Help! Help! Do not let them bite me. I have very sensitive shins.

[END OF FREEVIEW]