

COUNT CATULA



Lavinia Roberts

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COUNT CATULA
3

COUNT CATULA

CHILDREN'S COMEDY. One dark and stormy night, the Myers receive an unexpected visit from their new neighbor, the Graves family, who live in a creepy house next to the cemetery. The Graves are looking for a cat sitter to watch their beloved feline, Count Catula, while they go on a family vacation to Transylvania. The Myers family agrees to watch Count Catula, but it becomes increasingly evident that Count Catula is no ordinary cat. A delightfully frightful comedy for children that is easy to stage and sure to please the living and *undead* alike! Perfect for Halloween.

Performance Time: Approximately 25 minutes.

CHARACTERS

(4 M, 8 F, 8 flexible)

(With doubling/tripling: 3 M, 5 F, 5 flexible)

- BERT MYERS:** Dad who likes to cook spaghetti and meatballs a lot; male.
- NANCY MYERS:** Outgoing mom who likes to play board games; female.
- BAILEY MYERS:** Reads a lot of horror novels; flexible.
- VERONICA MYERS:** Bailey's big sister who is constantly on her phone; female.
- WILBERT MYERS:** Bailey's little brother who is easily scared; male.
- BUDDY:** The Myers' dog; nonspeaking; male.
- AVERY:** Bailey's scientific-minded friend; flexible.
- JAMIE:** Bailey's friend; anxious and allergic to many things including cats; flexible.
- LYNN:** Bailey's friend; plays a lot of videogames; flexible.
- RIVER:** Bailey's friend; loves to play soccer; flexible.
- VLAD GRAVES:** Vampire dad; neighbor who lives in a creepy house near the cemetery; male.
- VIENESSA GRAVES:** Vampire mom; female.
- DEADSMOND GRAVES:** Vlad and Vienessa's vampire son, a real jokester; male.
- BITENEY GRAVES:** Vlad and Vienessa's vampire daughter; always speaks in unison with her twin Batatrice; female.
- BATRICE GRAVES:** Vlad and Vienessa's vampire daughter; always speaks in unison with her twin Biteney; female.
- COUNT CATULA:** The Graves' vampire cat; nonspeaking; flexible.
- BELLADONNA:** Bewitching witch who has moved into the Graves' house with her two sisters and is looking for their lost "dog"; female.

COUNT CATULA
5

DRUSILLA: Charming witch; female.

GRIZELDA: Enchanting witch; female.

MIDNIGHT: Black cat; nonspeaking; flexible.

OPTIONS FOR DOUBLING OR TRIPLING

GRIZELDA/VIENESSA/JAMIE (female)

BELLADONNA/BATATRICE (female)

DRUSILLA/BITENEY/RIVER (female)

COUNT CATULA/MIDNIGHT (flexible)

DEADSMOND/LYNN (male)

SETTING

Myers' living room.

SET

Myers' living room. There is a couch and an end table.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

- Scene 1:** Living room, present.
- Scene 2:** Living room, flashback.
- Scene 3:** Living room, flashback.
- Scene 4:** Living room, present.
- Scene 5:** Living room, a week later, Thursday night.

PROPS

2 Strings of garlic
Assorted board games
Copy of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*
Cell phone, for Veronica
Backpack
Teddy bear, for Wilbert
Flashlights
Batteries
Toy phone
Juice boxes
Cookies
Cards
"Deady" bear, for Deadsmund
Cat collar, for Count Catula
Copy of Bram Stoker's *Dracula*

SPECIAL EFFECTS

Knock on the door

Lightning

Thunder

Cat hissing, opt.

Wolf howling

COUNT CATULA
9

"WHO NAMES THEIR CAT
COUNT CATULĀ?"

-BAILEY

SCENE 1

(AT RISE: The Myers' living room, present. Bailey and Buddy are hiding behind the couch. Lynn knocks on the door. No one answers. Lynn opens the door. Lynn, Jamie, Avery, and River peer inside.)

LYNN: *(Calls.)* Bailey! We're here!

JAMIE: Should we just go inside? I mean, that's rude, right?

LYNN: *(Calls.)* Bailey, come out!

EVERY: *(To Jamie.)* Well, Bailey did invite us over...

(Lynn, Jamie, Avery, and River enter the living room.)

LYNN: *(Calls.)* Bailey!

RIVER: The text message I got from Bailey just said that it was an emergency of "epic proportions," and I needed to come over right now.

LYNN: *(Calls.)* Bailey! It's me, Lynn! Jamie, Avery, and River are here, too!

EVERY: My text message said it was a matter of life and death and I needed to "develop superpowers to get over here as superhumanly fast as possible."

LYNN: *(Calls.)* We're here, Bailey! *(To Avery, annoyed.)* Yeah, this better be an actual emergency. I finally made it to what I thought was the final level of Fairy Fantasy II, but when I defeated the evil wizard, it just unlocked six new levels.

RIVER: *(Realizes.)* Where's Buddy? He always greets us at the door.

LYNN: *(Calls.)* Bailey...for real...seriously, this is so not cool! *(To others, annoyed.)* I could be home playing Fairy Fantasy II and ridding the Fairy's kingdom of the totalitarian rule of the evil wizard right now. *(Shouts.)* Bailey!

(Bailey and Buddy emerge from behind the couch. They are each wearing strings of garlic around their necks.)

BAILEY: *(To others.)* Shhhh! Keep your voices down or he'll hear you!

LYNN: Whoa, whoa! Hold it right there. Not a step closer.
(Sniffs.) What is that smell!?

AVERY: *(Inhales deeply.)* It smells like *allium sativum*, a species in the onion genus.

LYNN: Huh?

AVERY: Garlic.

JAMIE: Garlic upsets my stomach.

LYNN: Whatever it is, you smell disgusting, Bailey.

BAILEY: Buddy and I...we have to ward him away!

RIVER: Who?

LYNN: *(To Bailey.)* Who aren't you warding away smelling like that! If we hadn't been friends since kindergarten, I would be out that door.

AVERY: What is going on, Bailey? You are acting super weird.

BAILEY: Well, everything started this past Thursday evening on a dark and stormy night...

(Lightning, thunder. Blackout.)

SCENE 2

(AT RISE: Living room, last Thursday, flashback. Veronica enters, playing on her phone. Bailey is sitting on the couch reading a copy of Mary Shelley's "Frankenstein." Nancy enters, holding assorted board games.)

NANCY: Veronica, Bailey...you ready for family game night? I have [checkers, chess, backgammon]. *(No response.)* Or maybe some card games...Old Maid? *[Or insert other board games.]*

VERONICA: *(Unexcited.)* I'll Go Fish on family game night.

NANCY: Maybe if I took away your phone, you might develop more enthusiasm for playing games.

VERONICA: I am so into playing games. Look, I am playing Candy Craze right now with Camilla online.

NANCY: Enjoy playing with Camilla. After dinner, the phone goes away, and it's time for an exciting game of [Memory] with your siblings, got it? What games do you want to play, Bailey?

BAILEY: We always do family game night. Couldn't we do something else...like go to the Arctic and search for the creature?

NANCY: The creature? What have you been reading?

VERONICA: *(Scoffs.)* Some horror novel, as usual.

BAILEY: *(To Nancy.)* "Frankenstein" by Mary Shelley.

NANCY: Well, don't give yourself bad dreams.

(Wilbert enters, holding a backpack full of supplies. Lightning, thunder.)

BAILEY: Will you listen to that thunder and look at that lightning?! Electricity! Dr. Frankenstein used the electric current from lightning to bring his creature to life. The creature was made of various body parts stitched together from corpses!

(Lightning, thunder. Scared, Wilbert jumps, runs over, and grabs Nancy.)

NANCY: Bailey, please! Stop trying to scare your little brother!

BAILEY: What? I was just filling Wilbert in on what is happening in "Frankenstein." Although Dr. Frankenstein is the scientist and his creation is just called the "creature," a lot of people think that Frankenstein is the monster.

NANCY: Don't worry, Wilbert, honey. The storm is nothing to worry about.

WILBERT: Well, just in case, I am prepared for anything. I made a storm kit.

NANCY: What did you pack, Wilbert?

WILBERT: Well, I packed flashlights, batteries, a phone...
(Unpacks items from backpack.) ...as well as juice boxes, some cookies, and Mr. Teddy.

(Wilbert holds up his teddy bear. Bert enters.)

BERT: *(Announcing.)* Dinner's almost ready.

BAILEY: Let me guess —

BERT/BAILEY: Spaghetti and meatballs with garlic bread.

BAILEY: *(Disappointed.)* The same dinner we always have every Thursday and the same board games. Nothing exciting ever happens around here!

(Lightning, thunder. Ominous knock at the door.)

BERT: I wonder who that could be...?

(Vlad, Vanessa, Deadsmond, Biteney, and Batatrice laugh sinisterly behind the door.)

BAILEY: *(To others, spooked.)* That laughter sounds kind of sinister to me.

NANCY: Stop trying to scare your little brother, Bailey.

BAILEY: I'm not!

NANCY: *(To others.)* Well, we can't leave them out in the rain.
(Opens the door.)

VLAD: Greetings! We are the Graves, your new *necks-door* neighbors.

BITENEY/BATATRICE: *(To Nancy.)* Fang-tastic, to meet you!

VEINESSA: *(To Nancy and Bert.)* May we come in?

BERT: Of course! Come on in! Welcome!

(Vlad, Vanessa, Deadsmond, Biteney, and Batatrice enter. Deadsmond is holding his "deady bear.")

VEINESSA: *(To Myers family.)* Pardon our laughter. Our boy, Deadsmond, here, was telling us a joke.

DEADSMOND: *(To all.)* What does a cloud wear under his raincoat? *Thunder-wear!*

(Vlad, Vanessa, Deadsmond, Biteney, and Batatrice laugh sinisterly.)

NANCY: *(To Graves family.)* I'm so glad we finally ran into each other. *(Introducing.)* I'm Nancy. This is Bert. And my oldest, Veronica...Bailey...and my youngest, Wilbert.

VEINESSA: *(Introducing.)* This is Vlad.

VLAD: Let me *stake* your hand!

(Vlad laughs sinisterly and shakes hands with Nancy and Bert.)

VEINESSA: *(To Myers family, introducing.)* I'm Veinessa, and this is Deadsmond, our little jokester.

DEADSMOND: *(To all.)* Why was the lightning bolt in the news? Are you sure you want to know? It's *shocking!*

(Vlad, Veinessa, Deadsmond, Biteney, and Batatrice laugh sinisterly.)

VEINESSA: *(To Myers family, introducing.)* And these are the twins, Batatrice and Biteney.

BATARICE/BITENEY: *(To Myers family.)* We are *stokered* to meet you. *(Laughs sinisterly.)*

WILBERT: *(To Graves family.)* This is Mr. Teddy. *(Holds up his teddy bear.)*

DEADSMOND: *(To Myers family.)* This is my *deady* bear. *(Holds up "deady bear" and laughs sinisterly.)* His name is Bloodwin.

BAILEY: That's one creepy stuffed animal.

NANCY: *(Embarrassed.)* Bailey, please! *(To Graves family.)* I'm so sorry!

VLAD: No apology needed. I'm sure Bailey didn't mean to behave *batly*. *(Laughs sinisterly.)*

BERT: So, you must have moved into the house on the top of the hill. I always thought that place was a little spooky myself...being next to the cemetery and all.

VEINESSA: We thought the house was just *drop-dead* charming. *(Laughs sinisterly.)*

BATARICE/BITENEY: *(To Bert.)* It was love at first *bite*. *(Laughs sinisterly.)*

NANCY: Well, it's certainly a fixer-upper...

VLAD: The lighting there is wonderful!

BERT: *(Surprised.)* Aren't the windows still boarded up?

VEINESSA: Yes, well, we are so glad to be your *necks-door* neighbors. *(Laughs sinisterly.)*

VLAD: *(Coughs.)* Pardon my *coffin*. *(Laughs sinisterly.)* I've had this cold that won't *die*. It just needs to run its *corpse*. Although, these *coffin* drops I've been taking have been helping. *(Laughs sinisterly.)*

VEINESSA: *(To Bert and Nancy.)* Right off the *bat*, we have a favor to ask.

BERT: A favor?

VLAD: We wouldn't want to take *ad-vein-tage* of you. *(Laughs sinisterly.)*

NANCY: What are neighbors for? What's the problem?

VEINESSA: We are going on vacation next week to visit some family in Transylvania with a stopover in Iceland.
BERT: (*Surprised.*) Isn't Iceland pretty dark this time of year? There're only a few hours of light each day.
BATATRICE/BITENEY: (*Excited.*) Exactly!
VLAD: (*To Nancy and Bert.*) Would you mind watching our beloved pet, Count Catula?
DEADSMOND: (*To Nancy and Bert.*) He shouldn't be a pain in the neck. (*Laughs sinisterly.*)
VEINESSA: (*To Nancy and Bert.*) He certainly doesn't bite the hand that feeds him. (*Laughs sinisterly.*)
NANCY: Of course, we can watch your cat for you.
BAILEY: We can?!
BATATRICE/BITENEY: *Fang* you so much!
VEINESSA: (*To Nancy and Bert.*) We are so *grave*-ful to you! We have been going absolutely *batty* wondering what we were going to do with our precious Count Catula while we were gone. It was *neck-a-sery* to find him a good place to stay during our travels.
DEADSMOND: (*To Nancy and Bert.*) Sometimes Count Catula gets in a bad *mewed*, but he'll always hiss and make up.
VLAD: (*To Nancy and Bert.*) Count Catula prefers to spend his days in the basement.
BERT: Maybe he can help us with our mouse problem!
VLAD: Oh, I'm sure he will. (*Calls off.*) Count Catula, come on in!

(*Lightning, thunder. Count Catula enters and hisses.*)

NANCY: (*Gulps. To Graves family.*) Well, we'll have to get together when you get back...
BATATRICE/BITENEY: We love to play *bat*-minton!
VEINESSA: (*To Bert and Nancy.*) We should have you over to see our new *bat*-tub. We just remodeled the *bat*-room.
VLAD: And we can have a *bite* to eat afterward!

NANCY: Can I offer you something to drink...some tea or coffee, maybe?

VLAD: Is it de-coffin-ated?

VEINESSA: No, dear. We should get this coven home and have breakfast before it clots. We have a long flight ahead of us tonight. *(To Nancy and Bert.)* Fang you so much for watching our darling Count Catula.

[END OF FREEVIEW.]