

*"It's really scary when he goes in the chapel  
and finds Dracula looking younger,  
with bloody teeth."* Shannon, 11



# DRACULA

BRAM STOKER

When Jonathan Harker travels to Transylvania to meet a client, he little expects the horrors that await him.

As the guest and prisoner of the sinister Count Dracula, Jonathan is plunged into a terrifying world of ancient evil and unbearable fear.



Back in England, Jonathan's wife Mina is concerned about her friend Lucy, who is mysteriously ill and growing weaker by the day. Can Lucy's friends save her from the worst horror of all, or are they doomed to a similar fate?

Can love, courage and goodness defeat the evil thirst of a vampire? In this fight to the bitter end, who will live, who will die, and who will be doomed to a living death?

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WORD COUNT: 5,556

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# THE CHARACTERS



*Count Dracula*

A mysterious aristocrat in a distant castle. But who – or what – is he really?

*Jonathan Harker*

A young solicitor, trapped in a terrifying adventure. Will his courage see him through?



*Mina Harker*

Jonathan's new wife. Will a simple holiday with her friend Lucy doom them both?



*Professor Van Helsing*

He may be the wisest man in Europe, but can his wisdom save his friends?

*Lucy Westenra*

Two good men are in love with her, but will she be seduced by something darker?



*Doctor Seward*

Lucy's rejected suitor. Does he love her enough to fight for her life?



*Dracula's brides*

Can Jonathan resist the dangerous attraction of these beautiful but evil women? Will they obey Count Dracula?





## DRACULA

FROM JONATHAN HARKER'S  
JOURNAL

### 6th May: Castle Dracula

The count's carriage met me, by arrangement, at the Borgo Pass. I had come this far on the public coach, after long weary days by boat and train through lands that were ever less familiar. My companions on the coach seemed almost like medieval peasants, as though I had travelled in time as well as in space. They were superstitious brutes; when I mentioned my destination they crossed themselves, and one hung a crucifix round my neck.

It was already dark when we came to the pass. There was no immediate sign of another carriage. I thought we were early, but our driver cried, 'He is not here! He will not come tonight!'

Before he could whip his horses on, they began to kick and plunge wildly, so that he had to rein them in again. There were hoofbeats on the road, startled screams from the peasants. A carriage drawn by four magnificent coal-black horses drew up beside us. The driver was a tall man with a large hat hiding his face. I could see only his eyes, which glowed red in the lamplight.

He took my luggage, and helped me into the carriage with a steely grip. A moment later we swept away, into the darkness of the pass.

Howling followed us, like a chorus on the wind. Then it was all around us. Our horses shivered and reared in the traces; the driver needed all his strength to control them.

We took a bend – and there sat a wolf, stock-still in the road. Nothing could have forced those horses past him. They stood and trembled; one screamed with fright. As if that were a summons, a ring of wolves suddenly



steam engine to electricity. It must have been an exciting time to live in, and Bram Stoker goes out of his way to portray some of that excitement.

The Victorians thought of themselves as great modernists, and *Dracula* is in many senses a modern novel. The original text is full of the innovations of the period, from the comparative ease of long-distance travel – just one generation earlier a solicitor would never have thought of travelling to Transylvania simply to complete a property sale – to electrical devices like the telegraph and the phonograph. It is very much a book about Jonathan and Mina's modern world meeting Count Dracula's ancient world, and only just winning through. In the end, even Van Helsing has to fall back on old-fashioned remedies – garlic, a crucifix and a sharp stake through the heart.

Bram Stoker derived his idea of a vampire from Eastern European folk tales and the popular romances of his own day. Like the science, though, much of what he used is genuine, and he actually invented very little. The Borgo Pass

in Romania actually exists; close by is Bran Castle, where the real Vladislav Dracula was held prisoner for a time. He was a cruel man, also known as 'Vlad the Impaler'. His surname came from his father's title, *Dracul* or 'dragon'. Transylvania (the name means 'the land beyond the forests') was very little known at the time, and easy to romanticise. The Victorians were all too ready to believe that it was a country of medieval peasants and aristocratic overlords, haunted by superstition, very much in contrast to their own industry and rational understanding of the world.

*Dracula* was not the first bestseller about vampires. The first portrayal of a vampire as an aristocrat was John Polidori's *The Vampyre*, which used Lord Byron as its model. Sheridan LeFanu's *Carmilla* was another inspiration, and by the time *Dracula* was published in 1897 a number of other novels had been published in which the civilised world was threatened by fantastic creatures from primitive lands. The Victorians loved these stories, confident as they were that no such force could seriously threaten their empire.