

Dracula

Ilona/ Mina Murray:
Jonathan Harker:
Lucy Westenra:
Dr. John Seward:
Renfield:
Count Dracula:
3 Vixens/ Sisters:
Arthur Holmwood:
Quincy Morris:
Abraham Van Helsing:
Mrs. Westenra:
Evangeline, the Maid:
2 Attendants:
Singer:

SETTING

1897, New Orleans and Transylvania. There should be elements of Transylvania in stonework and Gothic shapes that have mixed with the stately interior of a bedroom of a New Orleans estate. There are French doors that cut across the stage. These two spaces should be able to be altered to also create a cell in the asylum.

ACT I

(From the darkness, we hear two female voices singing the first verse of a hymn. A figure approaches into a spot. This is JOHN SEWARD. HE is a very well kempt Southern gentleman, stern and serious. While HE is somber in HIS dress, He wears HIS fiancé, LUCY WESTENRA's, favorite flower in HIS lapel.)

SEWARD: We cannot know what madness lies in a man's mind...or his heart. You have, no doubt, all heard stories of Count Dracula. He was a soldier...he was a king... and he was the first of his kind, the very first vampire. His real name was Vlad Tepes III, or Vlad the Impaler and...oh, forgive me... I did not introduce myself. My name is Dr. John Seward, proprietor of the Children of St. Vincent Asylum, just off the French Quarter here in New Orleans. In our modern world of 1897, I am quite familiar with the stories that are told of bayou witches and monsters that lurk in the darkness...of mystical fiends that haunt our dreams and drive us past our wits. But until I met this man, this vampire, I thought...no, I believed these fantasies to be simply the malfunction of the mind. I shall endeavor to recount the most horrifying case of my career, Case number 666.

It began in Romania in 1466 when Vlad took up arms to fight the Turks to regain his throne. He was in love with the daughter of King Matthias...Ilona.

(Lights shift to 1466 in Castle Dracula. SEWARD will watch the scene unfold from HIS spotlight. There is the sound of an ethereal harp underscoring this scene. ILONA enters being chased by DRACULA. SHE is the same actress that will play MINA. SHE is sweet and light, with a fashionable hairstyle of curled ringlets and a dress that denotes a high class and a very strong sense of personal style. DRACULA is a vibrant and handsome figure, with long hair pulled back into a ponytail. HE is brighter and happier here than we

will ever see HIM. At first, it appears that SHE is scared of HIM, but as HE enters chasing HER, the attack takes on a more playfully sexual bent. THEY roll around on the ground, laughing.)

DRACULA: You will be mine forever! *(HE pulls HER close to HIM and pulls back HER neck as if to bite HER. SHE pulls away, half laughing and half serious.)*

ILONA: Vlad, you are perverse. We are not yet married, and you are far too familiar.

DRACULA: *(HE rises and crosses)* Ilona, my love, we shall be together forever. And when our two kingdoms have joined hands, so shall we!

ILONA: You are too serious, my love.

DRACULA: Ilona, please, I must leave tomorrow, do you understand that?

ILONA: Do not speak of your duty, my love.

DRACULA: When I am King, Ilona, it will be my sacred mission is to bring order to Romania. If someone lies or commits any injustice, he is not likely to stay alive, whether nobleman, priest, or common man. There must be security for all in my land. If they say I am a vindictive man, they fear me. And that is well. When a prince is powerful at home, he will be able to do as he wills. If I am feared by the right people, Romania will be strong.

ILONA: You will be a great king.

DRACULA: Feel my heart, Ilona. *(HE takes HER hand and places it on HIS chest.)*

ILONA: It beats so fast...

DRACULA: It beats for you. When we are married, my love, our hearts will be bound together forever. But, Ilona, my soul is already yours.

ILONA: And mine is yours, my love.

DRACULA: Then you must know that when I engage in glorious combat tomorrow...

ILONA: Please don't say that... please do not glorify death as if it is anything nobler than a senseless act of vicious barbarism.

DRACULA: Please, Ilona. Know that when I go to fight, it is for you. When I do anything...it is for you!

ILONA: I am so scared, Vlad! I do not know what I would do if you did not come back. I shall be lost.

DRACULA: Shhh...I will always be with you. If you are lost, I will find you. We will be together forever!

(THEY kiss and then exit. The harp music continues through the next monologue.)

SEWARD: They were indeed married, and Vlad joined the Order of the Dragon, like his father. The men called him Dracula, "the son of the dragon." The Dragon was a fearful ruler, and he was cruel, yet he was a just and fair man to his people. He said to me once that all men, like galaxies, must come to dust...and so would he. So, how did he become the creature we have grown to fear come sundown? It is said that while out to war, a letter was sent to his love telling of his death. So distraught, she committed suicide. *(The harp music begins to become threatening and tense. ILONA enters with blood covering HER stomach, HER hands covered in blood as SHE holds a dagger. DRACULA runs on and goes to HER as SHE dies in HIS arms.)*

DRACULA: My love! Please...No...NOOOO!!!!

ILONA: Oh no...my love! I'm so sorry.

DRACULA: Please, my love! Do not leave me!

ILONA: Vlad...

DRACULA: No...don't speak. Save your strength.

ILONA: Shhh...I will always be with you. If you are lost, I will find you. We will be together forever!

SEWARD: It said that in that moment that Vlad Dracula renounced God and all of his works, the moment that he lost the soul of his love.

DRACULA: *(looking up)* You have taken from me all that had meaning...all that is love...and so, From this moment, you are my enemy! *(HE carries ILONA out.)*

SEWARD: *(crossing center as lights come down to a spot on SEWARD)* And so began the curse of the vampire. It's said that vampires have two hearts, or two souls; since one heart, or one soul, never dies, the vampire remains undead. The curse of Dracula, to have no home in Heaven or in Hell...constantly searching for the soul of his love.... *(The harp music has faded.)* But that is simply superstition...and one should not listen to such foolishness. The thought that a man walks the night slaked with a thirst for blood...that he could be warded off by garlic...killed by a stake through the heart...or my personal favorite...that a man of faith can keep the beast at bay by simply raising a crucifix in front of him. Superstition is religion pushed to excess, and it is born out of fear. I believe in reason...cold, hard facts. I do not scare so easily! *(HE opens a file folder.)* I now turn your attention to the case at hand...the story of Jonathan Harker, a solicitor, *(HARKER enters. HE is a vibrant, young man...similar to DRACULA though more reserved, as if HE is attempting to look "professional." HE enters downstage in a spot.)* who is currently traveling in the Carpathians to meet with destiny *(HARKER exits.)* and Mina Murray, his beautiful fiancé *(MINA enters upstage into LUCY's well-appointed bedroom. SHE is very different from ILONA. HER hair is shorter and more conservative. HER dress is simpler. There is a repressed sexuality about HER.)* It is but two weeks from Mardi Gras, that celebration of excess before religious fasting. Though like most girls of her age, Mina is quite busy discussing other matters with her childhood friend...Lucy Westenra, a creature of unparalleled beauty and grace. *(LUCY enters. SHE is a striking beauty with long hair and a much more overt flirtatiousness and sense of personal flamboyance than MINA.)* And so it begins. *(SEWARD exits as lights come up on LUCY's bedroom. There is a bed and a large window, looking out into the sunset. We hear MINA's name whispered by DRACULA. SHE believes SHE is hearing HARKER.)*

DRACULA: Mina...

MINA: Oh, Jonathan...

LUCY: *(mockingly dramatic)* Oh JONATHAN!!! Mina really... you speak as though you were a lovesick child.

MINA: Lucy, don't be so mean...

LUCY: mmhmm...

MINA: You simply do not understand true love...

LUCY: mmhmmm...

MINA: You see, right now Jonathan and I are just engaged, but as soon as he has returned, we are to be married. Then...