

RACULA A Mystery Story by Bram Stoker How these papers have been placed in sequence will be made manifest in the reading of them. All needless matters have been eliminated, so that a history almost at variance with the possibilities of latter-day belief may stand forth as plain fact. There is throughout no statement of past things wherein memory may err, for all the records chosen are exactly contemporary, given from the standpoints and within the range of knowledge of those who made them. CHAPTER I Jonathan Harker's Journal (Kept in shorthand) d) 3 May. Bistritz.--Left Munich at 8:35 P.M., on 1st May, arriving at Vienna early next morning; should have arrived at 6:46, but train was an hour late. Buda-Pesth seems a wonderful place, from the glimpse which I got of it from the train and the little I could walk through the streets. I feared to go very far from the station, as we had arrived late and would start as near the correct time as possible. The impression I had was that we were leaving the West and entering the East; the most western of splendid bridges over the Danube, which is here of noble width and depth, took us among the traditions of Turkish rule. We left in pretty good time, and came after nightfall to Klausenburgh. Here I stopped for the night at the Hotel Royale. I had for dinner, or rather supper, a chicken done up some way with red pepper, which was very good but thirst-y. (Mem. get recipe for Mina.) I asked the waiter, and he said it was called "paprika hendi," and that, as it was a national dish, I should be able to get it anywhere along the Carpathians. I found my smattering of German very useful here, indeed, I don't know how I should be able to get on without it. Having had some time at my disposal when in London, I had visited the British Museum, and made search among the books and maps in the library regarding Transylvania; it had struck me that some foreknowledge of the country could hardly fail to have some import-ance in dealing with a nobleman of that country. I find that the district he named is in the extreme east of the country, just on the borders of three states, Transylvania, Moldavia, and Bukovina, in the midst of the Carpathian mountains; one of the wildest and least known portions of Europe. I was not able to light on any map or work giving the exact locality of the Castle Dracula, as there are no maps of this country as yet to compare with our own Ordnance Survey Maps; but I found that Bistritz, the post town named by Count Dracula, is a fairly well-known place. I shall enter here some of my notes, as they may refresh my memory when I talk over my travels with Mina. In the population of Transylvania there are four distinct nationalities: Saxons in the South, and mixed with them the Wallachs, who are the descendants of the Dacians; Magyars in the West, and Szekelys in the East and North. I am going among the latter, who claim to be descended from Attila and the Huns. This may be so, for when the Magyars conquered the country in the eleventh century they found the Huns settled in it. I read that every known sor-perstition in the world is gathered into the horseshoe of the Carpathians, as if it were the centre of some sort of imaginative whirlpool; if so my stay may be very interesting. (Mem., I must ask the Count all about them.) I did not sleep well, though my bed was comfortable enough, for I had all sorts of queer dreams. There was a dog howling all night under my window, which may have had something to do with it; or it may have been the paprika, for I had to drink up all the water in my carafe, and was still thirsty. Towards morning I slept and was wakened by the continuous knocking at my door, so I guess I must have been sleeping soundly then. I had for breakfast more paprika, and a sort of porridge of maize flour which they said was "mamaliga", and egg-plant stuffed with forcemeat, a very excellent dish, which they call "wlekata". (Mem. get recipe for this also.) I had to hurry breakfast, for the train started a little before eight, or rather it ought to have done so, for after rushing to the station at 7:30 I had to sit in the carriage for more than an hour before we began to move. It seems to me that the further east you go the more unpunctual are the trains. What ought they to be in China? All day long we seemed to dawdle through a country which was full of beauty of every kind. Sometimes we saw little towns or castles on the top of steep hills such as we see in old missals; sometimes we ran by rivers and streams which seemed from the wide stony margin on each side of them to be subject to great floods. It takes a lot of water, and running strong, to sweep the outside edge of a river clear. At every station there were groups of people, sometimes crowds, and in all sorts of attitudes. Some of them were just like the peasants at home or those I saw coming through France and Germany, with short jackets, and round hats, and home-made trousers; but others were very picturesque. The women looked pretty, except when you got near them, but they were very clumsy about the waist. They had all full white sleeves of some kind or other, and most of them had big belts with a lot of strips of something fluttering from them like the dresses in a ballet, but of course there were petticoats under them. The strangest figures we saw were the Slovaks, whose black hair and heavy black moustaches. They are very picturesque, but do not look prepossessing. On the stage they would be set down at once as some old Oriental band of brigands. They are, however, I am told, very harmless and rather wanting in natural self-assertion. It was dark on the dark side of twilight when we got to Bistritz, which is a very interesting old place. Being practically on the frontier--for the Borgo Pass leads from it into Bukovina--it has had a very stormy existence, and it certainly shows marks of it. Fifty years ago a series of great fires took place, which made terrible havoc on five separate occasions. At the very beginning of the seventeenth century it underwent a siege of three weeks and lost 13,000 people, the casualties of war proper being assisted by famine and disease. Count Dracula had directed me to go to the Golden Krone Hotel, which I found, to my great delight, to be thoroughly old-fashioned, for of course I wanted to see all I could of the ways of the country. I was evidently expected, for when I got near the door I faced a cheery-looking elderly woman in the usual peasant dress--white undergarment with a long double apron, front, and back, of coloured stuff fitting almost too tight for modesty. When I came close she bowed and said, "The Herr Englishman?" "Yes," I said, "Jonathan Harker." She smiled, and gave some message to an elderly man in white shirt-sleeves, who had followed her to the door. He went, but immediately returned with a letter: "My friend!--Welcome to the Carpathians! I am anxiously expecting you. Sleep well tonight. At three tomorrow the diligence will start for Bukovina; a place on it is kept for you. At the Borgo Pass take the best place on the coach for me; but on making inquiries as to details he seemed somewhat reticent, and pretended that he could not understand my German. This could not be true, because up to then he had understood it perfectly; at least, he answered my questions exactly as he bid. He and his wife, the old lady who had received me, looked at each other in a frightened sort of way. He murmured out that the money had been sent in a letter, and that was all he knew. When I asked him if he knew Count Dracula, and could tell me anything of his castle, as he and his wife crossed themselves, and, saying that they knew nothing at all, simply refused to speak further. It was so near the time of starting that I had no time to ask anyone else, for it was all very mysterious and not by any means comforting. Just before I was leaving, the old lady came up to my room and said in a hysterical way: "Must you go? Oh! Young Herr, must you go?" She was in such an excited state that she seemed to have lost her grip of what German she knew, and mixed it all up with some other language which I did not know at all. I was unable to follow her by asking many questions. When I told her that I must go at once, and that I was engaged on important business, she asked again: "Do you know what day it is?" I answered that it was the fourth of May. She shook her head as she said again: "Oh, yes! I know! That I know that, but do you know what day it is?" On my saying that I did not understand, she went on: "It is the eve of St. George's Day. Do you not know that tonight, when the clock strikes midnight, all the evil things in the world will have full sway? Do you know where you are going, and what you are going to?" She was in such evident distress that I tried to comfort her, but without effect. Finally, she went down on her knees and implored me not to go; at least to wait a day or two before starting. It was all very ridiculous but I did not feel comfortable. However, there was business to be done, and I could allow nothing to interfere with it. I tried to raise her up, and said, as gravely as I could, that I thanked her, but my duty was imperative, and that I must go. She then rose and dried her eyes, and taking a crucifix from her neck offered it to me. I did not know what to do, for, as an English Churchman, I have been taught to regard such things as in some measure idolatrous, and yet it seemed so ungracious to refuse an old lady meaning so well and in such a state of mind. She saw, I suppose, the doubt in my face, for she pressed the rosary round my neck and said, "For your mother's sake," and went out of the room. I am writing up this part of the diary whilst I am waiting for the coach, which is, of course, late; and the crucifix is still round my neck. Whether it is the old lady's fear, or the many ghostly traditions of this place, or the crucifix itself, I do not know, but I am not feeling nearly as easy in my mind as usual. If this book should ever reach Mina before I do, let it bring my goodbye. Here comes the coach! 5 May. The Castle.--The gray of the morning has passed, and the sun is high over the distant horizon, which seems jagged, whether with trees or hills I know not, for it is so far off that big things and little are mixed. I am not sleepy, and, as I am not to be called till I awake, naturally I write till sleep comes. There are many odd things to put down, and, lest anyone reads them may fancy that I dined too well before I left Bistritz, let me put down my dinner exactly. I dined on what they called "robber steak"--bits of bacon, onion, and beef, seasoned with red pepper, and strung on sticks, and roasted over the fire, in the simple style of the London cat's meat! The wine was Golden Mediasch, which produces a queer tingling on the tongue, which is, however, not disagreeable. I had only a couple of glasses of this, and nothing else. When I got on the coach, the driver had not taken his seat, and I saw him talking to the landlady. There were many nationalities in the crowd, so I quietly got my polyglot dictionary from my bag and looked them out. I must say they were not cheering to me, for amongst them were "Ordog"--Satan, "Poko!"--hell, "strogoica"--witch, "vrolok" and "vikoslak"--both mean the same thing, one being Slovak and the other Serbian for something that is either werewolf or vampire. (Mem., I must ask the Count about these superstitions.) When we started, the crowd round the inn door, which had by this time swelled to a considerable size, all made the sign of the cross and pointed two fingers towards me. With some difficulty, I got away from the evil eye. This was not very pleasant for me, just starting for an unknown place touched. I shall never forget the last glimpse which I had of the inn yard and its cracked flagstones, and orange trees in green tubs clustered in the centre of the yard. The driver cracked his big whip over his four small horses, which ran abreast, and we sped off like the wind. As we drove along, although I had known the language, or rather thought I did, I found myself losing it more and more. Before us lay a green sloping land full of farms or with farmhouses, the blank gable end to the road. There was a very large house on the right, and as we drove by I could see the green grass under the trees sowing itself. The "Mittel Land" ran the road, losing itself in ends of pine woods, which here and there ran down the hill to the sea. I wished to get down and walk up to the dogs, but they were too fierce. And then he added to catch the approving smile of the rest--"And you only stop he would make a moment's pause t excitement amongst the passengers, and they kept further speed. He lashed the horses unmercifully urged them on to further exertions. Then through t of us, as though there were a cleft in the hills. The coach rocked on its great leather springs, and swayed the road grew more level, and we appeared to fly al on each side and to frown down upon us. We were e ssengers offered me gifts, which they pressed upon me ere were certainly of an odd and varied kind, but each wa ing, and that same strange mixture of fear-meaning mov ing of the cross and the guard against the evil eye. Then h side the passengers, craning over the edge of the coach ething very exciting was either happening or expected, but t ightest explanation. This state of excitement kept on for som eastern side. There were dark, rolling clouds overhead, and in th range had separated two atmospheres, and that now we had got gas to take me to the Count. Each moment I expected to see the glar ring rays of our own lamps, in which the steam from our hard-driven ate before us, but there was on it no sign of a vehicle. The passengers appointment. I was already thinking what I had best do, when the drive ly hear, it was spoken so quietly and in so low a tone, I thought it w orse than my own. "There is no carriage here. The Herr is not expected day, better the next day." Whilst he was speaking the horses began to Then, amongst a chorus of screams from the peasants and a universal c took us, and drew up beside the coach. I could see from the flash of ou ch seemed red in the lamplight, as he turned to us. He said to the driver, I suppose, you wished him to go on to Bukovina. You cannot deceive m ery red lips and sharp-looking teeth, as white as ivory. One of my companio e strange driver evidently heard the words, for he looked up with a gleamin d crossing himself. "Give me the Herr's luggage," said the driver, and with e side of the coach, as the caleche was close alongside, the driver helping igious. Without a word he shook his reins, the horses turned, and we swept i coach by the light of the lamps, and projected against it the figures of my late horses, and off they swept on their way to Bukovina. As they sank into the dar k over my shoulders, and a rug across my knees, and the driver said in excellen care of you. There is a flask of slivovitz (the plum brandy of the country) undernea it was there all the same. I felt a little strangely, and not a little frightened. I think h own night journey. The carriage went at a hard pace straight along, then we made a mply going over and over the same ground again, and so I took note of some salient p all meant, but I really feared to do so, for I thought that, placed as I was, any protest wo as I was curious to know how time was passing, I struck a match, and by its flame looke suppose the general superstition about midnight was increased by my recent experiences. se far down the road, a long, agonized wailing, as if from fear. The sound was taken up by an gh the Pass, a wild howling began, which seemed to come from all over the country, as far as t o strain and rear, but the driver spoke to them soothingly, and they quieted down, but shivered an gains on each side of us began a louder and a sharper howling, that of wolves, which affected both n eared again and plunged madly, so that the driver had to use all his great strength to keep them from b me quiet that the driver was able to descend and to stand before them. He petted and soothed them, and der his caresses they became quite manageable again, though they still trembled. The driver again took his ively turned down a narrow roadway which ran sharply to the right. Soon we were hemmed in with trees, which i s boldly on either side. Though we were in shelter, we could hear the rising wind, for it moaned and whistled thro uderly snow began to fall, so that soon we and all around us were covered with a white blanket. The keen wind still car nearer, as though they were closing round on us from every side. I grew dreadfully afraid, and the horses shared my fear. The darkness. Suddenly, away on our left I saw a faint flickering blue flame. The driver saw it at the same moment. He at once checked th closer. But while I wondered, the driver suddenly appeared again, and without a word took his seat, and we resumed our journey. I went rapidly to where the blue flame arose, it must have been very faint, for it did not seem to illumine the place around it at all, and gathering a few sto es, formed them into some device. Once there appeared a strange optical effect. When he stood between me and the flame he did not obstruct it, for I could see its ghostly flicker all the same. This startled me, but as the effect was only momentary, I took it that my eyes deceived m e y gone, and during his absence, the horses began to trem