

DRACULA'S WIDOW

*A Sequel
to Bram Stoker's Classic Vampire Tale*

by Billy St. John

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STORY OF THE PLAY

In this high-voltage sequel to Bram Stoker's classic vampire tale, Baroness Katarina Stephanowski of Rumania - who is actually the widow of Count Dracula - moves to England in search of fresh blood. She gains entrance to the country home of Dr. Vincent Grant and his daughter, Diana.

Attracted to Diana's fiance, Jeremy Randolph, the baroness attempts to make him her mate. When the Grants discover Jeremy bitten on the neck and nearly drained of blood, Dr. Grant sends for Lucy Seward. She has survived Dracula's bite herself and realizes what a dangerous adversary they face in his widow.

The tension climaxes when the two women, one human, one a monstrous fiend, match wits in a battle over Jeremy's very soul. Interior set.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(4 m, 4 w)

DIANA GRANT: An attractive young woman in her early 20's, speaks with a proper British accent.

MARGARET: The maid, late teens, good-hearted, can be silly; speaks with a working-class British accent.

DR. VINCENT GRANT: Diana's father, a middle-aged country doctor, distinguished, with gray hair and sideburns, speaks with a proper British accent.

JEREMY RANDOLPH: Diana's fiancé, mid-20s, handsome, good-natured.

GRAYSON: The Grants' servant, 60s, tends the stables, a simple man who speaks with a country accent.

STANISLOV: The Baroness' servant, Rumanian, brutish, in his 30's, has a deep, harsh voice with a strong Rumanian accent.

BARONESS KATARINA STEPHANOWSKI: A vampire, Rumanian, strikingly beautiful, apparently in her early 30s. Her skin is deathly pale.

LUCY SEWARD: A vampire killer, mid-20s, self-assured, speaks with a proper British accent.

SYNOPSIS

ACT I

Scene 1: Midnight, Thursday.

Scene 2: The next morning, Friday.

Scene 3: That night.

ACT II

Scene 1: Saturday, early evening.

Scene 2: Saturday night and Sunday morning.

TIME: Turn of the century.

PLACE: Dr. Grant's parlor in his country estate outside of London.

SOUND EFFECTS

Carriage wheels, horses' hooves, wolf howls, breaking glass, church bells.

SETTING

It is the turn of the century and the furnishings reflect this era. A door DR opens into a hallway. There is a raised platform which spans UC accessible by a wide step. Centered in the UC wall is a set of French doors which open out onto the patio. Panels of sheer curtains cover each door, and a set of heavy velvet drapes flank the doors. Beyond the doors is a patio with a 3' high wall across its UPS edge. On it sets concrete urns of flowers. A drop depicting a country view spans the UPS area.

DL is an alcove in which is a built-in bookcase and a window seat set inside a bay window. It, too, is covered by sheers and has a set of velvet drapes which match the others. Both sets of drapes must be able to close. The shelves of the bookcase begin at waist height and continue to the ceiling. The section of wall beneath the bookcase is decorated with scroll-like molding; this helps disguise the fact that the SR section of this wall is actually a secret door panel which opens UPS.

There is a rug DRC on which sets a sofa facing the audience. A matching chair is to its R with a small table between them. A low ottoman is SL of the sofa. A small table sets UPS of the DR door; over it hangs a picture, framed and covered with a pane of glass. Potted plants set on both sides of the French doors. There is a wide table LC on which are bottles of liquor and glasses.

The walls are papered with a heavy Victorian print. Suitable pictures, fans, and similar decorations adorn the walls. Gaslights are also placed about the walls; they have dark globes to hide flame-type flicker bulbs inside which are on individual circuits coming on as the actors "light" them.

See back of playbook for additional production notes.

ACT I
Scene 1

(AT RISE: The stage is dark. It is a Thursday at midnight. There is the soft flicker of distant LIGHTNING at the French doors UC and at the window seat, DL, which is answered by the muted rumble of far-off THUNDER. The door DR opens and DIANA GRANT enters. She wears a filmy nightgown of the era. Her long hair falls loose down her back. She carries a candle in an old-fashioned holder with a glass globe. As she moves slowly into the room, we become aware that she is apparently sleepwalking. When she is SRC there is another flicker of LIGHTNING at the windows. She stops. Now outside the French doors stands A FIGURE in silhouette. Back-lit by the LIGHTNING and blocked from the candle light by the sheers that cover the windows, this figure is discernible only as a person who wears a floor-length black cape with a hood that covers its head. Diana stands still as if listening. Two red spots of LIGHT begin to glow where the figure's eyes should be. [See Production Note #1] Diana nods, then crosses slowly to the sofa table where she sets the candle. She turns US and walks as if in a dream to the French doors. She slowly brings up her hand to the door knob when MARGARET, the maid, enters DR, carrying an oil lamp. She is also in a nightgown, an inexpensive cotton garment of the period. Her hair hangs in a braid down her back.)

MARGARET: Miss Diana!

(The red eyes fade out without MARGARET seeing them. DIANA jumps, startled awake, and turns toward Margaret. Diana wavers. Margaret sets her lamp on the table SR, hurries up to Diana, and takes her arm to steady her.)

MARGARET: Miss Diana, you've been sleepwalking.

DIANA: Have I? Then I must have dreamed there was someone...

(LIGHTNING flashes again. THE FIGURE outside the doors is gone. THUNDER rumbles.)

MARGARET: Outside? Oh, surely not, mum. *(SHE pulls back a section of sheers and looks out.)* 'Oo'd ("Who'd.") be walkin' about the estate at midnight? And just after that 'orrible storm? *(LIGHTNING. SHE pulls the sheers further for DIANA to see.)* See, miss? The ground beyond the patio is soppin' wet and there ain't a mark on it. Now, ain't no human bein' I know can walk on a muddy lawn and not leave a sign of a footprint. *(THUNDER rumbles.)*

DIANA: I suppose you're right.

MARGARET: 'Course I am. Well, will you look'ee there!

DIANA: What?

MARGARET: There's a light in the old castle up on the 'ill ... where that Lord What-cha-ma-call-'im what died last year lived in.

DIANA: *(Turning from the window and crossing to above the sofa.)* Yes, Sir Bainbridge's estate has recently been purchased, I understand.

MARGARET: *(Following HER.)* Really, mum? By who, do you know?

DIANA: Father said the village clerk told him it was bought by a Rumanian woman - a baroness, I believe.

MARGARET: Oooo, a foreigner! Me mam told me to never trust a foreigner! They's strange, she said - that's why they're called "strangers." "Stick to your own kind," she told me.

DIANA: That's nonsense, Margaret. I've always been fascinated by people who come from different lands, different cultures. Once she's had time to settle in, Father and I will have to invite our new neighbor to dine.

MARGARET: Whatever you say, Miss Diana. I can tell Cook to start learnin' 'ow to prepare goulash. Do you suppose that's what the baroness eats? Goulash?

DIANA: I have no idea what she prefers to sup. Perhaps she would enjoy a nice English meal.

MARGARET: Oooo, yes. Cook makes a 'eavenly beef roast, and she always fixes a lovely blood pudding to go with it.

DIANA: We can discuss this another time, Margaret.

MARGARET: Silly me! Me mam always said, "You're a stupid girl, Maggie," and she was right. You'll catch your death standin' 'ere in your nightclothes.

DIANA: You might as well.

MARGARET: Me? Nah ... I'm as 'ealthy as a 'orse!

(There is the SOUND of a horse-drawn carriage approaching - the clapping of hooves and of wheels turning on the gravel.)

MARGARET: Speakin' of 'orses, it's your pa's carriage returnin'.

DIANA: Father has been out?

MARGARET: Oh, yes, mum. After you retired, the baker's son from the village come to fetch 'im. Said there'd been an accident of some kind and that the doctor was needed real quick-like. Dr. Grant went back with the boy at once.

DIANA: I hope no one was seriously hurt. Margaret, you go wake Grayson and tell him to tend to Father's horse, then have Cook prepare Father some hot tea. He must be chilled to the bone. I'll wait here and speak with him. Take my candle.

MARGARET: As you say, miss.

(MARGARET bobs a curtsey, takes the candle, and exits SR. DIANA takes matches from the table SR and lights the gaslights on the walls. The room takes on a warm, yellow glow. She blows out the oil lamp. VINCENT GRANT enters SR.)

DIANA: *(Crossing to HIM.)* Father.

(THEY embrace, then walk to the sofa where they sit.)

DR. GRANT: What are you doing up so late, Diana?

End of Freeview

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