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DRACULA. It is, and when I hear the dogs howling far and near I think myself back in my castle Dracula with its broken battlements.

HARKER. Ah, the dogs howl there when there are wolves around, don't they?

DRACULA. They do, my friend. And they howl here as well, although there are no wolves. But you wish to consult the anxious father and the great specialist. (*Bows to VAN HELSING. SEWARD crosses around R. end of divan, glances at HARKER; to meet DRACULA at R. of door. DRACULA to door C.*) May I read a book in the study? I am so anxious to hear what the Professor says—and to learn if I can be of any help.

SEWARD. By all means, Count. (*DRACULA bows; exits C. DOGS howl off stage. SEWARD watches DRACULA exit, then crosses below and L. of sofa. VAN HELSING crosses to window.*) Very kind of Dracula, with his damned untimely friendliness, but now what about my daughter?

HARKER. Yes, Professor, what do you think is the matter with Lucy?

START → VAN HELSING. (*Crosses to window, looks out, then crosses down L.C. Long pause before he speaks.*) Your patient, that interesting Renfield, does not like the smell of wolf's-bane.

SEWARD. Good Heavens. What has that got to do with Lucy?

VAN HELSING. Perhaps nothing.

HARKER. In God's name, Professor, is there anything unnatural or occult about this business?

~~SEWARD. (*Holds position just in front of the L. end of divan.*) Occult? Van Helsing! Oh—~~

VAN HELSING. Ah, Seward, let me remind you that the superstitions of today are the scientific facts of tomorrow. Science can now transmute the elec-

tron, the basis of all matter, into energy, and what is that but the dematerialization of matter? Yet dematerialization has been known and practised in India for centuries. In Java I myself have seen things.

SEWARD. My dear old friend, you can't have filled up your fine old brain with Eastern moonshine.

VAN HELSING. Moonshine?

SEWARD. But anyway, come now, what about my daughter?

VAN HELSING. Ah! Seward, if you won't listen to what will be harder to believe than any Eastern moonshine, if you won't forget your textbooks—keep an open mind, then, Seward. Your daughter's life may pay for your pig-headedness.

~~HARKER. Go on, go on, Professor!~~

SEWARD. I am listening.

VAN HELSING. Then I must ask you to listen calmly to what I am going to say. Sit down. (VAN HELSING crosses to window; closes curtains. SEWARD and HARKER exchange glances, then BOTH look at VAN HELSING as they sit. SEWARD sits L. end of divan. HARKER in chair R. VAN HELSING in chair he gets from desk and places L. of divan.) You have both heard the legends of Central Europe, about the Werewolf, the Vampires?

SEWARD. You mean ghosts, who suck the blood of the living?

VAN HELSING. If you wish to call them ghosts. I call them the undead.

~~HARKER. (Quickly) For God's sake, man, are you suggesting that Mina, and now Lucy—~~

SEWARD. (Interrupting) Of course, I have read these horrible folk tales of the Middle Ages, Van Helsing, but I know you better than to suppose—

VAN HELSING. (Interrupting) That I believe them? I do believe them.

SEWARD. (Incredulously) You mean to tell us

that vampires actually exist and—and that Mina and Lucy have been attacked by one?

VAN HELSING. Your English doctors would all laugh at such a theory. Your police, your public would laugh. (*Impressively*) *The strength of the vampire is that people will not believe in him.*

SEWARD. (*Shaking head, looks away from VAN HELSING*) Is this the help you bring us?

VAN HELSING. (*Much moved*) Do not despise it.

HARKER. (*To SEWARD*) Doctor, this case has stumped all your specialists. (*To VAN HELSING*) Go on, Professor. (*SEWARD looks at VAN HELSING.*)

VAN HELSING. Vampires are rare. Nature abhors them, the forces of good combine to destroy them, but a few of these creatures have lived on for centuries.

HARKER. (*Excited*) What is a vampire?

VAN HELSING. A vampire, my friend, is a man or a woman who is dead and yet not dead. A thing that lives after its death by drinking the blood of the living. It must have blood or it dies. Its power lasts only from sunset to sunrise. During the hours of the day it must rest in the earth in which it was buried. But, during the night, it has the power to prey upon the living. (*To SEWARD. Incredulous move from SEWARD*) My friend, you are thinking you will have to put me amongst your patients?

* END

~~SEWARD. Van Helsing, I don't know what to think but I confess I simply can't follow you.~~

~~HARKER. What makes you think that Lucy has been attacked by such a creature?~~

~~VAN HELSING. (*From now on dominating them. SEWARD looks at him*) Doctor Seward's written account of these ladies' symptoms at once aroused my suspicion. Anæmia? The blood of three men was forced into the veins of Miss Mina. Yet she died from loss of blood. Where did it go? Had your~~