

# DRACULA + RENFIELD

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DRACULA

*indistinguishable age and sex, dressed in flowing black and white. A jagged sash of red worn at the throat collar. A face hidden in darkness.)*

*(A hand is placed on RENFIELD's arm, who physically starts, nearly slipping from his chair. He turns slowly to look up at DRACULA, pen dropping to the floor and rolling along the flagstone.)*

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DRACULA: ...I am Dracula, and I bid you welcome.

RENFIELD: Coun...Count Dracula?

DRACULA: For myself, I disdain the use of titles. So very old-fashioned... *(Smiles)* And you are Mr Renfield?

RENFIELD: ...Yes.

DRACULA: Welcome to my home. Come freely, go safely and leave something of the happiness you bring!

RENFIELD: Thank you, I...

DRACULA: Come, the night air is chill, and you must eat and rest.

*(DRACULA moves quickly to the table, pulling the linen dust sheet off with a flourish. Beneath it is an elaborate banquet.)*

DRACULA: Please forgive that no one was available to greet you upon your arrival. Let me see to your comfort myself. *(He remains standing and pours*

*RENFIELD a glass of dark red wine.)* I pray you, be seated; now sup as you please. You will, I trust, excuse me that I do not join you, for I have dined already.

RENFIELD: Of course, thank you... *(He begins to reach for the nearest dish, but remembers first to hand over a letter to DRACULA.)* From my employer, Mr Peter Hawkins. He sends his apologies for not being able to make the journey.

*(As RENFIELD begins to eat, DRACULA reads the letter.)*

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ACT ONE

DRACULA: "I am happy to say I can send a sufficient substitute, of whom shall take your instructions in all matters." Marvelous...

*(The sudden howling of wolves pierces the darkness.)*

*(DRACULA rises and moves toward a towering window.)*

DRACULA: Ahhh, listen to them...the children of the night. What music they make!

*(RENFIELD seems unmoved by this, returning to his meal. DRACULA watches him, almost saddened by this reaction.)*

RENFIELD: Bloody wolves, howled at us nearly all the way from Vienna...

DRACULA: Ah, sir, you dwellers of the city cannot enter into the feelings of the hunter. Into the spirit of our nightly hunt...

RENFIELD: Well, I know enough to stay out of the woods at night while they're about. Good sense tells me that...

DRACULA: But without the night we are not whole. We are only half ourselves.

*(DRACULA motions RENFIELD to come to the window.)*

DRACULA: Come, look into the dark. What is it you see?

RENFIELD: Nothing. Well, I mean... blackness, that's all. A void. Frightening. *(Beat)* And you, Dracula, what do you see?

DRACULA: ...the Garden of Eden.

*(RENFIELD studies DRACULA for a moment, pulling away slightly. RENFIELD returns to his place at the table, trying to make conversation as he does.)*

RENFIELD: Yes, well...to each his own, I suppose. *(Beat)* I, ahh, took the liberty of looking about when I arrived. Since I couldn't find you, you see, I wandered around a bit. It's quite a place...

DRACULA: Yes, glorious in its day.

RENFIELD: Your library is enormous...

*(DRACULA sits suddenly in a chair near RENFIELD, watching the young Englishman as he eats. DRACULA leans in more closely to RENFIELD, making him move back almost involuntarily.)*

DRACULA: Come, tell me of the house you have procured for me...

*(RENFIELD nods, wiping his mouth and reaching into his bag. He moves several dishes and produces a sheath of paper that he proceeds to spread out. Using his knife, he points to several key locations of a faded ground plan while he speaks.)*

RENFIELD: Well...the estate is called Carfax and it contains some twenty acres, surrounded by a solid wall. The...the house itself is large and dates back to medieval times...it's quite secluded, with only a large private lunatic asylum close at hand. I do hope this doesn't dissuade you—it is not visible from Carfax itself.

DRACULA: I am glad that it is old and big. I myself am of an old family, and to live in a new dwelling would kill me... *(Beat)* I love the shade and the shadow, and would wish to be alone with my thoughts when I may.

*(DRACULA places a friendly hand on RENFIELD's own. RENFIELD pulls away politely, starting to speak again.)*

RENFIELD: Yes, well...this would be ideal, then. Now, on the western border of the property...OWWW!

*(RENFIELD has caught himself with the knife point, drawing blood. DRACULA's eyes lock on RENFIELD's finger as the young man holds it up and examines it.)*

DRACULA: Take care...

*(DRACULA reaches for RENFIELD's hand, slowly pulling it to his open mouth. He places RENFIELD's finger in his mouth and slowly sucks on it.)*

RENFIELD: ...take care how you cut yourself. In my country, it is more dangerous than you think.

*(RENFIELD slowly pulls his finger from DRACULA's mouth and wraps a handkerchief around his hand.)*

RENFIELD: Quite alright, only a scratch...now, shall we?

DRACULA: No, no...after a journey such as yours, you must rest. *(Beat)* Some rooms have been prepared...you may go anywhere you wish, except where the doors are locked, where of course you will not want to go...

RENFIELD: And why do you...?

DRACULA: There is a reason why all things are the way they are...we are in Transylvania, and Transylvania is not England.

RENFIELD: I quite agree, my dear Count, but—

DRACULA: Our ways are not your ways, and there shall be to you many strange things...I trust you will forgive me, but I have much work to do in private this evening.

*(RENFIELD hurries and stands with bags in hand, meaning to follow. DRACULA raises a finger, stopping him in his tracks with an ominous warning.)*

DRACULA: Let me advise you, dear friend...nay, let me warn you with all due seriousness, that you should not leave your room tonight. Be warned!

*(Flash of lightning, crash of thunder. RENFIELD wheels about, wide-eyed. When he looks back, DRACULA has vanished. Gone. RENFIELD is left alone in the dark room.)*

RENFIELD: ...Hello? Count Dracula...? *(Beat)* Oh my...

*(The sound of wolves again fills the night.)*