

# DRACULA + HELSING

(DRACULA has appeared behind VAN HELSING out of thin air.)

DRACULA: Doctor Van Helsing, we meet again...

(VAN HELSING spins about, audibly gasping.)

VAN HELSING: Dracula.

DRACULA: Yes.

VAN HELSING: I didn't hear you...

DRACULA: ...slip in? No. Your carpets here are so thick, and my step a quiet one. Forgive me if I frighten you...

VAN HELSING: No, I'm just...you see...

(VAN HELSING tries to hide the papers behind her, but she moves away as DRACULA approaches. He picks up a sheet from the pile, studying it.)

DRACULA: Why can no one ever spell my name correctly? (Beat) There is no "K" in "Dracula." Ahh, well, no matter.

(In a flash, the paper goes up in a burst of flame and smoke.)

DRACULA: Oh no, a most unfortunate accident! I hope you did not need this... How can I repay you?

VAN HELSING: No need...I have all the information from it that I require.

DRACULA: Indeed?

(VAN HELSING, trying to remain calm, begins to question DRACULA.)

VAN HELSING: Tell me, Count, I am curious...are you of the Voivode Dracula line?

DRACULA: Why, yes. You know of my heritage? (Picking up a book from the desk) Ah, you have been reading up on me. I am flattered...

VAN HELSING: Only what I can recall from history books, bits of information picked up in the wilds of

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Europe...I seem to remember a "Vlad the Impaler" who dispatched his enemies by skewering them on a sharpened stake...

DRACULA: Yes, a great uncle, I believe...and honored in my country as a valiant war hero.

VAN HELSING: "Dracula...Dracula..."

DRACULA: Yes. With no "K"...

VAN HELSING: Knowing a bit of your native tongue, this translates to...?

DRACULA: "The Dragon."

VAN HELSING: I see. (Beat) My translation comes from an older source...

DRACULA: Really?

VAN HELSING: ...meaning "The Devil".

DRACULA: Hmm. Interesting.

VAN HELSING: ...Yet no references listed in any of my sources. Not in the last few years. (Beat) Say, three hundred years...

DRACULA: And yet here I stand before you, my dear Doctor. Now, how can this be explained?

VAN HELSING: ...I don't know.

DRACULA: I'm afraid it cannot be...what is, my dear, simply IS. (Beat) And how is our fair patient, Miss Mina?

VAN HELSING: She progresses slowly...

DRACULA: Ahh. This is most distressing news.

VAN HELSING: Although just tonight I had discovered a prescription which may save her... (Beat) Would you care to see, Count?

DRACULA: Please. Anything you prescribe for Miss Mina has the greatest interest for me.

(DRACULA follows VAN HELSING to the desk. As she rummages through a drawer, he begins to loom over her. She awaits for the last moment, then wheels about, a large crucifix in one hand. He staggers back as the doctor confidently moves toward him. He folds into himself as she keeps up the pressure; at the last moment he looks up at her, pathetic and withered. Then, without warning, he smiles and his head snaps to attention.)

(Boo!)

(DRACULA stands instantly and without difficulty, pointing to VAN HELSING's crucifix for effect.)

DRACULA: My dear Doctor... Haven't you people hidden behind the symbols of your God for enough centuries...?

(VAN HELSING bravely tries to hang on, with DRACULA coming to her side and taking a look at the cross. He grabs her hand and turns it slowly until she must drop the crucifix. He then brings her hand to his mouth and turns it slightly; he gives it an affectionate kiss as he caresses it. Finally, she pulls herself free and backs away.)

VAN HELSING: So...

DRACULA: Yes...

VAN HELSING: It is you... You are the Prince of Darkness.

(A storm can be heard rumbling in the distance. Flash of lightning, crash of thunder)

DRACULA: You are so wise, my dear Doctor... for one who has yet to live even one lifetime.

VAN HELSING: You shall not have Miss Mina, this I promise you.

DRACULA: Do not make promises you may not live to keep...

(DRACULA backs VAN HELSING into a corner, towering over her.)

DRACULA: I could kill you right now...all of you. Except my Queen, my Mina.

VAN HELSING: If she is to die, I will put a stake through her myself...and in the daylight, so that her soul may rest in peace!

DRACULA: So much knowledge...so sure that good will triumph over evil. (Beat) But you must know, Doctor, in your heart, that evil will remain the mistress of this world long after you and yes, even I, have become nothing but dust...

VAN HELSING: No...it mustn't.

DRACULA: If you were truly wise, Doctor, you would return to your native country, now that you have learned what you have learned...

VAN HELSING: Not until you, and those like you, have been destroyed...to this I am pledged.

(DRACULA smiles and moves toward VAN HELSING.)

DRACULA: Perhaps it is time for you to die...

(VAN HELSING tries to look away but DRACULA raises a hand, pulling her toward him. She crosses the space between them slowly, fighting his power at every turn.)

DRACULA: Your will is strong. (Beat) Come to me...

VAN HELSING: Yes.

(As VAN HELSING reaches DRACULA he begins to pull her close to him. She pulls wolfsbane from a jacket pocket and presses it to his face. He reacts violently, turning away and tearing at his face.)

(Flash of lightning, crash of thunder.)

DRACULA: AAAHHH!!