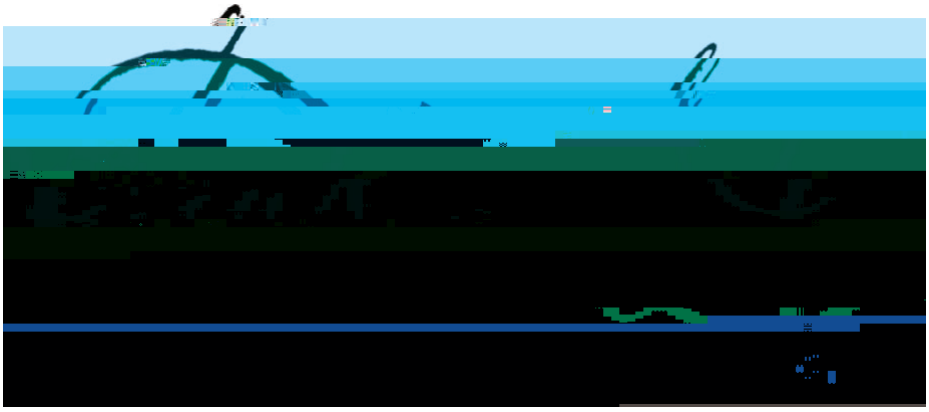

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PRE-TITLES

1 INT. WINE CELLAR - DAY. 1

A magnificent wine cellar, glittering with ancient bottles. It is a strange, curving room - perhaps more like the architecture of a fun-house than a wine cellar. Gas light on the dusty glass.

The overall effect is wonderfully antique. Almost comforting. This is a wine cellar where you'd want to spend some time.

... the room curls round two leather chairs pulled up before a morocco table. On the table is a chess board, mid-game.

Closer on the board: among the pieces, a fly is wandering...

DRACULA (O.S.)
Can't bear a bad book, can you?

The camera finds DRACULA at the top of a set of spiral steps. He holds a very old volume. For a moment, it's not clear who he's talking to - is he talking to the camera?

DRACULA (CONT'D)
It's a commitment. A contract between an author and a reader. I have to be engaged at once. Arrested. Or -

He flings aside the book in his hand - turns to look down at someone we don't yet see.

DRACULA (CONT'D)
(smiles)
After all, one only has so much time.

SISTER AGATHA, is leaning in the doorway - in her Nun's clothes, minus the wimple. Her hair tumbles around her shoulders and she looks supremely relaxed. It's all very Lauren Bacall. Almost post-coital.

AGATHA
That's something you have in abundance, surely.

DRACULA
(cheery)
Well! More than most, perhaps! But it's the quality of the time spent, isn't it?

AGATHA
Why are we talking about stories?

DRACULA
Because I want to tell you one.

He gestures towards the chairs at the chess table.

DRACULA (CONT'D)
Please, sit down. As you can see, there is a game in progress.

She steps towards the chess board, assesses it.

He glides down the steps with easy confidence.

Agatha gazes at the chess set and frowns.

AGATHA
A knight is menacing a queen.

DRACULA
Whose knight, whose queen?

AGATHA
Who’s black, who’s white?

DRACULA
You choose.

Agatha considers - sits at the white side of the board.

DRACULA (CONT'D)
(As he sits opposite)
Ah! The losing side.

AGATHA
We shall see.

She reaches a hand for a piece - and freezes. The room seems to rock for a moment, the bottles clink.

AGATHA (CONT'D)
So. After you left the convent, what then?

DRACULA
I had already booked passage to England. On board the Demeter.

He reaches over, pulls a bottle from the rack - but as he sets it lengthwise on the table, we see that it isn’t wine: it’s a ship in a bottle.

Where’s it coming from?

The deeply shadowed corner of the cabin.

Now, something slowly emerging from the darkness -

- fingers, a hand, a wrist -

- is someone crawling out of the shadows?

- and then -

- *nothing below the wrist.*

It’s just a severed hand - pale and black-nailed, like it was cut off a long time ago (ie no gore) - but with a life of its own. A beast with five fingers!

Sokolov draws back in horror. No!! *No!!*

Now a low, guttural voice from the darkness. (The language is Russian, subtitled.)

OLGAREN
(Subtitled)
Have you seen my hand, Captain?

Sokolov looks round. There is now massive looming figure detaching itself from the shadow. OLGAREN - huge, bearded.

His face is zombie white. He lurches, fitful and jerky.

Sokolov shrinking back, horrified.

OLGAREN (CONT'D)
(Subtitled)
Have you seen my hand, Captain?

He now raises his hands, imploringly - except one of them is missing, just a stump! (Again, no gore.)

OLGAREN (CONT'D)
(Subtitled)
Have you see my hand?

A sudden movement, makes Sokolov look down.

The hand is now lying in the centre of his chest, fingers starting to dig and tear into his flesh -

Sokolov screams -

CUT TO:

3 INT. SOKOLOV'S CABIN - DAY 3

- and wakes. This time sunshine is streaming through the porthole, and he really has woken up. He flops back, recovering.

CUT TO:

4 INT. DR. SHARMA’S LAB - NIGHT 4

A hot, sweaty night in Calcutta. A horror lab, dense with scientific equipment - a place for postmortems and dreadful experiments. A bloodstained table, like a butcher’s slab. The shutters stand open letting in the sultry air and chirrup of crickets. Everywhere Indian writing and detail.

Pacing the lab at this late hour: DR SHARMA. A clever, precise man of science. He’s waiting for someone, and is clearly slightly agitated.

A knock at the door. He steps quickly over and admits two disreputable character carrying a mouldering coffin between them - the Indian Burke and Hare. This is GUPTA and KHAN.

SHARMA
On the table, please, thank you.

Gupta and Khan comply, hefting the coffin on the table.

SHARMA (CONT'D)
Are you sure this is the right one?

GUPTA
It’s the grave you pointed out.

SHARMA
The one the children ... complained about?

GUPTA
The one with the weeping.

SHARMA
Good, good. Well, open it.

Gupta and Khan exchange a look. Hard cut to:

The lid is levered off and leaned against the wall

- and then notice that Sharma has gone straight to the lid, and is examining it. What?

Sharma is pointing to the underside of the lid.

SHARMA (CONT'D)
Look at these. Seventy years ago this unfortunate was buried alive. Observe the scratches.

We see that the lid is scored with desperate incisions and dark with old blood.

SHARMA (CONT'D)
And it is as I feared. Do you see?

GUPTA
See what?

SHARMA
This coffin is seventy years old - and yet some of scratches are quite fresh.

We hold on the scratches -

- and then there is a movement from behind the three men, there is a terrible rattling exhalation.

They slowly turn -

- and we hold on their faces, as the shadow of something rising from the coffin grows over them ...

CUT TO:

5 INT. HOSPITAL WARD/CORRIDOR OUTSIDE - DAY 5

A bead of blood on a dead boy’s lips. We pan up to see a hand close the staring eyes.

Wider: a doctor has closed the boy’s eyes. Standing at the bed, the boy’s MOTHER is being comforted by a nurse.

A priest is there too - FATHER STEPASHIN. (The language is Russian, subtitled.)

MOTHER
(Subtitled)
My Piotr. Oh, my Piotr. My beautiful boy. *Piotr!*

STEPASHIN
(Subtitled)
I am so sorry, my child.

MOTHER
(Subtitled)
He had such plans. He had been offered a place on a sailing ship, he was going to see the world. But he never even left this miserable town.

STEPASHIN
(Subtitled)
Piotr would have made a fine sailor.

On a YOUNG LAD - who we will come to know as PIOTR - is mopping the floor in the corridor outside. He’s standing just by the opened door to hear these words, which seem to sting him.

He glances towards a window in the corridor outside the sickroom.

His POV: through the window we can see down the harbour where the Demeter is moored.

On his face, staring at it. Thoughtful.

Back to the death bed in the other room. The Mother is lamenting, as Stepashin steps to the door.

MOTHER
(Subtitled)
Look at him. So perfect, so young. Everything in front of him - and now he has no future.

Stepashin closes the door - effectively in the boy’s face.

The boy, now cut off from the room, walks to the window. Looks down at the Demeter - a whole world of adventure, waiting for him. A spark in his eyes.

Back to the sick room (and what the boy DOESN’T see.)

Stepashin addresses Piotr’s mother - grave and sad.

STEPASHIN
(Subtitled)
Piotr does have a future. But a dark one.
(Heavily)
If you love him, my child, you know what you must do.

Reverently he hands her a stake and hammer.

MOTHER
(Subtitled)
Is there no other way?

STEPASHIN
(Subtitled)
He consorted with darkness. Only you can bring him back to the light.

She nods, wracked with sobs. Places the stake over her son’s heart, the priest holding her shaking hand.

- we cut to a shot from behind the mother as she raises up the hammer and slams it down!

The boy on the bed arches, convulses - his face is a rictus mask of rage.

STEPASHIN (CONT'D)
(Subtitled)
Again!

Shadows flap grotesquely across the walls, as the Mother raises the hammer, slams it down -

STEPASHIN (CONT'D)
(Subtitled)
Again!

The shadows flap and *slam!*

- we pan from the bed, to the door.

Now we cut outside, to the corridor.

The window, the Demeter still visible through it. The mop stands abandoned next to it. We push in on the window, to a shot of the Demeter ...

DISSOLVE TO:

6 EXT. DOCK - DUSK. 6

... the same shot, as the sky darkens. The sun is now setting.

The Demeter is a ramshackle sailing ship of decent size.

Closer on the ship, panning along it to the name: *Demeter*.

Now on a wooden, coffin like box - it is being winched on to the deck of the Demeter.

Wider:

Panning round. We see a pile of the coffin-like boxes waiting

PORTMANN
(German accent)
Stop your dreaming, s...son, she’s not for the likes of you. Here. Drink. Move on.

Embarrassed, Abramoff takes his drink, goes. Can’t help sneaking another look at Dorabella.

Young PIOTR - the young lad we saw in the hospital moppinjg the floor - has reached the head of the queue. He’s taking in all these new sights.

PORTMANN (CONT'D)
Piotr?

Piotr doesn’t respond (it’s not his name, after all.)

PORTMANN (CONT'D)
Piotr, yes?

PIOTR
(Realising)
Yes, Piotr. That’s me.

PORTMANN
Here. Drink. Move.

Piotr drinks. Grimaces.

PORTMANN (CONT'D)
Move on, s...s...son!

Piotr moves on - he’s wide-eyed clearly unnerved by everything he sees and new to it all.

Watching him, a raddled old sea dog: OLD VALENTIN.

OLD VALENTIN
Oh, look at this one. Are you as green as your face?

Piotr looks to him - can’t conceal the truth of this. Old

OLD VALENTIN
(Nods thoughtfully)
I agree.

Old Valentin moves on, nodding grimly to himself. Piotr, a little aghast, looks to the dock.

Piotr’s POV: by the quayside, an OLD WOMAN is looking at the pile of boxes waiting to be transferred. She seems fascinated, horrified.

She crosses herself. Then looks to the ship as another box starts to be winched on board.

She sees Piotr. Stares at him for a moment. And slowly, haunted, shakes her head.

Piotr, now chilled to the bone.

We find Sokolov and Olgaren are walking up the gangway, then towards the quarter deck

OLGAREN
How many passengers?

SOKOLOV
Seven.

OLGAREN
Seven? What, we’re full?

He looks round. More passengers boarding -

DR SHARMA and his 12 year old daughter YAMINI. Sharma now has a livid scar down one cheek (or wherever it looks best.) He didn’t escape from his deadly encounter.

Olgaren frowns, watching them.

OLGAREN (CONT'D)
But this ship is never full.

SOKOLOV
We can cope.

OLGAREN
Cargo?

SOKOLOV
Saltpetre. Children’s dolls, sulphur, soil, charcoal.

OLGAREN
Soil?

Sokolov looks to the big pile of boxes on the dock.

SOKOLOV
(shrugs)
Or mould. Boxes and boxes of it.

A fly buzzes past him. He swats it absently.

OLGAREN
Why would anyone send boxes of mould?

SOKOLOV
Who knows, who cares. I’m sure it’ll taste better than your food.

OLGAREN
Me too.

They smile. Old friends who are glad to be back together.

Now another passenger coming on board: an elderly lady, the GRAND DUCHESS VALERYIA.

Watching her arrive, OLD VALENTIN shakes his head as he joins Sokolov and Olgaren.

OLD VALENTIN
Bad luck. Having women on board. “Like a gold ring in a pig's snout is a beautiful woman without discretion.” Proverbs. 11:22.

SOKOLOV
(Sighs at Valentin)
All aboard?

PORTMANN
All but one, s...sir.

He looks down at the ledger.

PORTMANN (CONT'D)
A Count...

DRACULA
Count Dracula.

They look up.

DRACULA is suddenly standing in front of them, as if summoned.

He’s dressed in travelling cloak and hat. He looks dashing, at ease. We haven’t quite seen this version before - this is the man-about-town Dracula.

DRACULA (CONT'D)
(V.O.)
You look surprised.

CUT TO:

7 INT. WINE CELLAR - DAY 7

Top shot of AGATHA and DRACULA at the chess board, in the strange curving architecture of the room.

AGATHA
You were travelling openly with the passengers?

DRACULA
It’s four weeks to England. What did you think I was going to do - lie around in a box? I enjoy company. I like people

AGATHA

PIOTR
Why the Captain.

PORTMANN
He is known to have a strong s...stomach. Off about your business.

PIOTR
Yes sir.

He hurries off.

Portmann lingers a moment, looking at the closed door of Cabin Nine. He presses his ear to it.

There’s something, so faint. What is that - laboured, stertorous breathing?

DRACULA
Do you make a habit of listening at doors?

Portmann, startles. From nowhere, Dracula is standing directly behind him.

PORTMANN
S...sorry, sir.

DRACULA
Oh, I’m not making judgments. Your accent ... Bavarian, is it?

PORTMANN
Yes, s...sir.

DRACULA
(As if nostalgic for a fine wine.)
Bavaria. It’s been a while.
(Recovers)
Forgive me. I blame the sea air - it makes one ... ravenous.

He sweeps off. Portmann glances back to cabin door.

The numeral 9 - a fly is crawling over it.

CUT TO:

9 EXT. SEA - NIGHT. 9

At the prow, like a carved figure head - DRACULA, a look of triumph in his eyes. He’s on his way to the new world - *at last.* He sucks in a lungful of the delicious sea air -

- but when puffs it out it becomes a smoky mist ...

CUT TO:

10 EXT. SEA - NIGHT 10

The Demeter at sea, a little time later. The ship is now wreathed in fog.

Old Valentin prowling along the desk. He peers at the fog, which clings to the masts, like a shroud. Frowns. Clearly thinks this is unnatural.

Something bumps against his foot. A dead seagull. He picks it up tosses it overboard -

- and then notices three more dead seagulls lying ahead of him, as if they have dropped, stone dead, from the air.

11 INT. ‘THE DEMETER’. GALLEY - NIGHT. 11

OLGAREN is drinking from a bottle of vodka with his one good hand. With his spiked hand, he’s stirring a massive, blackened pot.

OLGAREN
Ah. Romanian. Like the second mate.

Spits on the floor.

PIOTR
What’s wrong with the second mate?

OLGAREN
Romanian.

Piotr, momentarily thrown. Decides to press on with his attempt to bond.

PIOTR
I always wanted to go to sea -

OLGAREN
Boring.

PIOTR
I thought I’d never get out of that

OLGAREN
A story.

Piotr practically chokes on it.

OLGAREN (CONT'D)
Did you like it?

PIOTR
Needs paprika.

Olgaren looks at him, taken aback - bursts out laughing. Kid’s got attitude. Likes him.

Pulling back from the two of them, now laughing together, bonding -

- to see Dracula, idly watching from the corridor. He smiles, and for a moment it’s as if he’d enjoyed their conversation -

OLGAREN
Ring the bell, boy! Dinner time.

On Dracula - he quite agrees. Smacks his lips.

CUT TO:

12 INT. ‘THE DEMETER’. PASSENGER LOUNG/DINING ROOM - NIGHT. 12

The dining room which doubles as the passenger lounge (tables are put out at mealtimes.) Its shabby glamour resembles that of the GRAND DUCHESS VALERYIA who sits at a table - alone.

LORD RUTHVEN, without Dorabella, is dressed in funereal black. He catches sight of his own reflection in the cutlery. He likes what he sees. Preens.

ADISA is standing by his table, sniffing an open bottle of wine with obvious disdain.

He grabs a passing sailor - ABRAMOFF - who’s as close as the Demeter gets to a waiter.

ADISA
You. What is this muck?

ABRAMOFF
Sir?

ADISA
Take it back. It will not do.

ABRAMOFF
(to Lord Ruthven)
I’m sure we can find a better vintage for your Master -

ADISA
Not for *him!* For me. I want only the finest.

SHARMA
Then you’re on the wrong ship.

Adisa turns. DR SHARMA glances up from his soup. His daughter YAMINI sits by his side.

SHARMA (CONT'D)
(smirks)
Motley collection, aren’t we?
(Off Adisa’s affronted look)
Including me.
(Smiles, laughs)
Especially me.

Adisa also laughs. Sharma holds out his hand.

SHARMA (CONT'D)
I am Dr Sharma.

ADISA
Good for you.

SHARMA
(of Lord Ruthven)
Forgive me, are you in this gentleman’s employ?

LORD RUTHVEN
He is my man.

SHARMA
Hm.

ADISA
He pays my wages. Not the same thing.

SHARMA
Then you have settled a dispute!

He ‘signs’ to his daughter. Adisa frowns.

SHARMA (CONT'D)
Deaf and dumb.

ADISA
Poor child.

SHARMA
(shrugs)
She has eyes, though. Oh yes.

Yamini looks at Adisa and signs something. Sharma laughs.

SHARMA (CONT'D)
She likes you. She has an eye for a handsome fellow.

Adisa still has his hands on Abramoff.

ADISA
Very well. Bring your *finest* vintage.

Embarrassed, Ruthven takes Adisa’s arm.

LORD RUTHVEN
Adisa!

He pulls Adisa aside.

LORD RUTHVEN (CONT'D)
(sotto)
Please don’t cause a scene. This marriage is a necessary evil, you know that.

ADISA
Just don’t call me your man. It hurts.

Anguished stares.

On The Grand Duchess - she is studying a grubby menu through a pair of lorgnette spectacles. She sighs.

DRACULA (O.S.)
I think it’s probably safe to have the fish.

The Grand Duchess looks up.

DRACULA is standing by her table, smiling kindly and looking devastating in evening wear - white bow tie, tail coat. The full Lugosi.

DUCHESS
I beg your pardon?

DRACULA

DRACULA
Oh...A little of one and I hope a lot of the other. I have recently purchased a house in England. I hope to make it my home.

DUCHESS
There’s more to a home than bricks and mortar.

DRACULA
Oh indeed. But I wish to use England as a base from which to further explore. I want to see the wide world. Taste it.

DUCHESS
I envy you. My exploring days are long gone.

DRACULA
Yet you’re travelling now...?

DUCHESS
I have been invited.

DRACULA
Oh?

DUCHESS
I am connected by birth to the ruling house of Bavaria. But, alas, I am not in favour. A gentleman in England wishes to write up the story of my life.

DRACULA
I see.

DUCHESS
And Mr Blore ...*pays.*

DRACULA
(Slightly nettled)
Is it perhaps Mr Balaur?

DUCHESS
Yes, Balaur, that’s it, the writer. Have you heard of him?

DRACULA
In passing.

DUCHESS
I know it's vulgar. But I have seen my way of life and my fortune wither like a frost-ravaged vine. And so...
(in German)
Heute Nacht werde ich mich mit einem Mann vereinigen.

On Dracula: a rare embarrassment. He doesn't understand her words.

DRACULA
Forgive me. My German is a little rusty -
(Breaks off, remembers)
Would you excuse me for a moment?

He gets up from the table, bows and glides out.

CUT TO:

13 EXT. 'THE DEMETER'. DECK - NIGHT. 13

PORTMANN is at the ship's wheel, keeping her on course, in the foggy night. The moon is dully visible through the miasma.

Portmann leans back his head, adjusts his red neckerchief and gazes up at the milky light from the full moon.

After a moment, he becomes aware that he is not alone.

He looks round. There's DRACULA a few feet away from him, emerging through the wreaths of vapour.

PORTMANN
Good evening, s...sir.

DRACULA
Keep looking at the moon. I have no wish to disturb you.

A little nervously - aware that somehow he has been ordered - Portmann looks up the moon. Dracula's shadow grows over him, as he approaches -

DRACULA(CONT'D)
It spoils the flavour.

CUT TO:

14 INT. ‘THE DEMETER’. DINING ROOM - NIGHT. 14

- ADISA, draining a glass of wine. He sighs, contentedly. A good vintage. He dabs his mouth with a napkin -

- just as DRACULA walks past him, also dabbing his mouth with a napkin.

The DUCHESS looks up as DRACULA rejoins her.

DRACULA
(in German: subtitled)
I’m sorry. That took a little longer than I expected. It’s a fine night. A beautiful moon.

The Duchess is startled.

DUCHESS
(in German)
But your German...your German is excellent.

DRACULA
(in English)
You’re too kind. I s...s...s...

He stammers briefly then masters himself.

DRACULA(CONT'D)
I seem to have remembered more than I thought. It is good to...refresh oneself.

CUT TO:

15 INT. WINE CELLAR - DAY 15

Sister Agatha looks reprovingly at Dracula.

AGATHA
You killed a crew member just so you could show off in German? Isn’t that a little wasteful.

DRACULA
His charming Bavarian accent was the only interesting thing about him.

AGATHA
But you left no one at the wheel. Do you have no self control?

On Dracula's face: she's scored a point. With a smile, she takes a chess piece.

DUCHESS (V.O.)
You're very wicked.

CUT TO:

16 INT. 'THE DEMETER'. PASSENGER LOUNGE/DINING ROOM - NIGHT. 16

DRACULA
It has been said.
(Pours wine)
You were telling me of your estate. Of the old days...

DUCHESS
Yes, indeed. My father was cousin to the Kaiser. And we would often visit Court. Ah, they were days like no other. The summers so, so hot. The winters...oh, such parties. In my mind I cannot distinguish between the shimmer of diamonds and the glitter of the icicles that hung off our sleds. So much light! For my eighteenth birthday I was given a great treat. You will never guess what it was. Go on. Guess.

DRACULA
I don't know.

DUCHESS
Guess!

DRACULA
A jewelled tiara.

DUCHESS
(shakes her head)
Mother led me down the great staircase. I could feel my heart thumping in my breast. It was Christmas too, you see. My birthday falls very close to Christmas. Guess again.

DRACULA
A white pony. To pull that sleigh of yours.

DUCHESS
(giggles)
No, no. I was led into the ballroom. Mama took my hands and I reached out. My present was wrapped in tissue paper. Pink tissue paper. Tightly wrapped. And I tore and tore at it in my excitement. And then I could stand the suspense no more and I pulled off my blindfold and saw what it was.

Beat.

DRACULA
A pineapple.

The smile is wiped off the Duchess' face.

DRACULA(CONT'D)
A pineapple in the depths of that freezing winter. It must have seemed like magic. Transported from the Kaiser's own hothouse like a precious jewel.

DUCHESS
(Stares and stares at him)
I knew it. It's impossible but I knew it. It's you.

DRACULA
Of course it's me. Oh, Valeryia, how we danced.

DUCHESS
Yes.

Beat.

DUCHESS(CONT'D)
It was the night my mother disappeared...

DRACULA
Yes.

DUCHESS
Who are you?

DRACULA
(Rises to his feet)
Shall we dance again?

He puts out his hand.

DUCHESS
Who are you?

DRACULA
Who would you like me to be?

17 INT. DREAM DANCE - NIGHT 17

Taking his hand, she rises - but now she is an eighteen year old girl again.

Candles, spinning round us as music plays.

On Dracula, his face pressed into her hair.

On the young Duchess as she presses her face into his shoulder.

The two of them are spinning on the spot in a surreal whirl of light and music.

CUT TO:

18 INT. 'THE DEMETER'. SOKOLOV'S CABIN - DAWN. 18

SOKOLOV's cabin is neat and ordered. The Captain is asleep in his bunk. The ship lurches violently to one side...

CUT TO:

19 INT. DREAM DANCE - NIGHT 19

Close on the young DUCHESS's fingers as she grips more tightly on to DRACULA's hand.

On Dracula, as his mouth moves closer to her neck...

CUT TO:

20 INT. 'THE DEMETER'. SOKOLOV'S CABIN - DAWN. 20

The ship lurches again, waking SOKOLOV. For a moment he's dazed. Another lurch - and Sokolov curses as he clambers into his boots.

CUT TO:

21 INT. DREAM DANCE - NIGHT 21

DRACULA's face is buried in the DUCHESS's neck as she hangs limply in his arms.

CUT TO:

22 EXT. 'THE DEMETER'. DECK - DAWN. 22

SOKOLOV comes on deck. The sea is much rougher now and the ship is lurching recklessly around. Fog still obscures the horizon.

And then he sees it.

The ship is drifting because there's no-one at the wheel!

It spins and spins...

CUT TO:

23 INT. DREAM DANCE - NIGHT. 23

On the young DUCHESS's eyes, slitted in ecstasy -

HARD CUT TO:

24 INT. 'THE DEMETER'. DUCHESS'S CABIN - NIGHT. 24

- the savage truth as DRACULA's mouth widens too far and he plunges his razor sharp teeth into the elderly DUCHESS's neck.

Blood fountains down her black bombazine dress...

CUT TO:

25 EXT. 'THE DEMETER'. DECK - DAWN. 25

OLD VALENTIN is now at the wheel. A few other crew are there including OLGAREN and PIOTR.

SOKOLOV
(Ignoring him)
You've searched everywhere?

OLGAREN
Yes. Portmann's gone.

OLD VALENTIN
Why can't we get clear of this fog? It's like it's following us.

PIOTR
Sorry, sir but we didn't look everywhere.

SOKOLOV
What do you mean?

PIOTR
Well, we didn't look in cabin number nine, sir. Your orders.

SOKOLOV
... Yes, of course. You did right not to disturb our invalid. But no-one's likely to be hiding in there, are they?

ABRAMOFF appears from below, flustered.

ABRAMOFF
Sir, one of the passengers! The Grand Duchess.

SOKOLOV
What about her?

ABRAMOFF
We can't find her either..

On Piotr, troubled by this. He shivers, glances round the deck -

- and notices, hanging from the rigging, a dead seagull.

CUT TO:

26 INT. 'THE DEMETER' - CORRIDOR OF CABINS. DAY. 26

The locked door of cabin number nine. Moving closer on the door.

The ship creaks, sways - but under this we hear the ragged, painful breathing.

CUT TO:

Sharma just eyes him again.

SHARMA
Hm.

DRACULA
(Still eyeing Ruthven)
I'm a night owl myself.
(To the others)
And where is your wife, my Lord?
She's not joining us?

LORD RUTHVEN
Dorabella is a little - how shall I put it?
(A smirking boast)
She's quite exhausted, poor thing.

DRACULA
Dorabella. What an enchanting name. Dorabella... It lingers on the tongue! Why would you spend your time up here with us, when Dorabella lies below?

Dracula holds his gaze, cocks his head. It's not a rhetorical question - he knows something is not right here, and he is probing Ruthven's discomfort.

LORD RUTHVEN
One can have too much of a good thing.

DRACULA
On the contrary. I have always found that too much is exactly enough.
(Aware he's got an audience now and playing them.)
Desire, for me, is like diving into a pool of dark, dark water. Black as pitch. Frightening. But the water is warm. Welcoming. And so you dive deeper and deeper.
(Now fixing on Lord Ruthven)
And soon you know that you've reached the limit of your breath. You must turn back now or it'll be too late. But you dive on.
(MORE)

DRACULA (CONT'D)
You open your mouth, slowly at first, and then wide, letting the warm black water flood into you, thick as molasses. Consuming you utterly. Utterly.

Lord Ruthven, transfixed.

Adisa, quietly horrified.

LORD RUTHVEN
Yes. Yes, I know exactly what you mean.

A beat of silence.

SHARMA
Hm.

His timing and the evident scepticism makes everybody laugh. Dracula joins in.

DRACULA
(Laughs - to Sharma)
Oh thank God, I thought you were all taking me seriously.

On a suddenly humiliated Ruthven - he joins in the laughter a little too late and a little too loudly -

- and then startles, glances down.

Under the table, Dracula's hand on his knee -

- and Dracula is holding his look with fierce intensity, as if he meant ever word of what he said - a moment of blatant seduction. Then the smile switches back on.

DRACULA(CONT'D)
Anyway. A great pity about the Duchess!

A general murmuring of agreement. Dracula sighs with a genuine sense of fondness.

DRACULA(CONT'D)
Too young. Far too young.

They all stare at him. What??

CUT TO:

28 EXT. SEA - NIGHT. 28

The Demeter sails on through the fog ...

CUT TO:

29 INT. 'THE DEMETER' - CREW QUARTERS - NIGHT 29

OLGAREN is lighting a disreputable old pipe, then hands it to PIOTR.

OLGAREN
Go on, go on.

Piotr tries to smoke it but just ends up coughing.

PIOTR
It's vile!

OLGAREN
'Course it is!

PIOTR
Needs paprika.

Olgaren roars with laughter, slaps him on the back.

OLGAREN
You are good company, Piotr.

Piotr has only a moment to glow.

OLGAREN (CONT'D)
Now run along, galley's filthy.

PIOTR
Yes sir.

OLGAREN
My friends call me Viktor.

PIOTR
Alright.
(smiles)
Viktor.

OLGAREN
I said my friends call me that!

PIOTR
Sorry.

(MORE)

A rotting creature rising from the coffin. With shocking speed, it spins its terrible head to look at us.

Now, agile as a monkey, it's leaping at us -

- it slashes Sharma's face with its black nails -

- Gupta lies dead on the floor, Khan is struggling in the creature's grasp -

- Sharma, bleeding-faced, racing for the door - looking back briefly at the snaring, slobbering monstrosity -

At his desk, Sharma breaks out of his reverie. He looks bleakly at the desk before him.

Standing there, side by side, like alternatives -

- a glass of whiskey and blue ridged bottle.

His eyes flick between them. He reaches for the blue bottle with shaking hand -

- but then looks to his sleeping daughter.

No!

He takes the blue bottle, shoves it to the bottom of his medical bag. Downs the whiskey in one.

He goes and sits on the end of Yamini's bed.

SHARMA
There are monsters in this world, Yamini. Creatures that will leave a shadow on your soul, if once you let them in. I will never let them take you - I swear it.

Behind him, a shadow flickers past the window.

CUT TO:

33 EXT. 'THE DEMETER'. DECK - NIGHT 33

ABRAMOFF still steers. Less jumpy now, more relaxed.

We cut to another shot of him, handheld, from the POV of someone approaching him from behind ...

... right up to his shoulder.

He senses something, turns.

It’s Dorabella.

DORABELLA
Good evening.

Abramoff: oh! He drinks in the sight of her in her negligee. All his dreams at once.

ABRAMOFF
You...you shouldn’t be here, Ma’am. Captain’s orders.

DORABELLA
It’s so warm down there. Where are we?

ABRAMOFF
Just off the coast of Greece.

DORABELLA
May I take a turn round the deck.

ABRAMOFF
Please, just be careful, ma’am.

DORABELLA
(smiles)
I’ll be careful.

She walks on - towards the prow of the ship. Abramoff - standing on the raised wheelhouse platform near the stern - watches her as she passes in and out of the moonlight and mist. So beautiful. He sighs to himself...

ABRAMOFF
Don’t dream, don’t dream ...

On Dorabella. Straining to see through the mist to the stars above..

DRACULA (O.S.)
Warm night, isn’t it?

Dorabella almost jumps out of her skin. Standing right next to her is DRACULA.

DORABELLA
(startled)
My God!

DRACULA
Hmm. No. I can make no such claims.

Dorabella laughs. Dracula smiles. Discreetly he glances over

DORABELLA
Certainly he is!

They both laugh. Dracula steals another look at Abramoff - still paying them no heed.

DORABELLA(CONT'D)
But I'm lucky too. He's so handsome. And there'll be children! We'll have lots of children!
(Laughs embarrassed)
It must sound terribly ordinary to a man like you - talk of children.

DRACULA
To a man like me, it sounds like a miracle. Everyone needs a legacy. Otherwise - you're just existing.

He looks out to sea - and for a moment there is genuine sadness in his face. He catches himself in this - almost embarrassed.

DRACULA(CONT'D)
Dear me. Something about you positively demands ...
(His eyes flick to her neck)
... intimacy. I was right about the sea air.

Unconsciously, he starts tapping a finger on the rail.

DORABELLA
I know what you mean. I wonder if newly married ladies should really be conversing on intimate matters with handsome strangers?

DRACULA
I see no harm in it. Unless it happens to be a dangerous handsome stranger.

DORABELLA
Are you dangerous?

DRACULA
Oh yes. Terribly dangerous.

DORABELLA
Like one of those exotic noblemen one reads about in the novels?
(MORE)

DORABELLA (CONT'D)
Filled with all the mystery and wickedness of the East?

DRACULA
Yes.

He just stares at her, not releasing her gaze. She struggles to resume the conversation, ends up blurting out -

DORABELLA
We're going to America!

DRACULA
Oh, indeed?

DORABELLA
A new world. A new life.

DRACULA
That's a pity.

DORABELLA
Why?

DRACULA
I'm a vampire.

DORABELLA
... sorry, what? What did you say?

DRACULA
Look in the mirror.

DORABELLA
What mirror?

DRACULA
Oh, one can always find a mirror, if one tries.

He takes her arm, and leads her a couple of steps round one of the deck structures, towards a water barrel. It's only a few feet away, but this has the effect of moving them out Abramoff's eye-line.

He lifts the lid off the barrel they're now standing next to.

DRACULA(CONT'D)
There.

Dorabella glances down into the pellucid reflection. In the moonlight, her shimmering image looks back at her. (Throughout this, Dracula specifically avoids seeing his reflection.)

A hideous stain of crimson is blossoming over the ceiling.

CUT TO:

35 EXT. ‘THE DEMETER’. DECK - NIGHT 35

On Abramoff, at the wheel. He glances along the ship. Frowns. Can’t see Dorabella. Cranes to look. Not there.

Disquieted now. Should he go and look? Yes - this ship is not safe right now. He quickly ties off the wheel, heads down to where he last saw Dorabella ...

As he approaches the structure (the one we know is concealing Dracula and Dorabella) he comes to halt -

- from the shadows, a rhythmic, ragged breathing. And little orgasmic gasps, clearly female.

Abramoff comes to a halt. Pain on his face. So disappointed

DRACULA
Like a connoisseur in a wine cellar.
(Gesturing round)
One chooses one’s vintages with care - the reds, the whites. I enjoy both. The duchess and the deckhand.

AGATHA
But you’re careful with your diet.

DRACULA
I have to be. Or I would reach England with the social skills of a Russian sailor.

AGATHA
And yet you were gorging yourself. Fox, hen coop.

DRACULA
Pig, truffles.

AGATHA
At this rate, you’d have no one left to sail the ship.

DRACULA
I knew I could get by with a skeleton crew. I’ve worked with those before.

CUT TO:

37 EXT. ‘THE DEMETER’. DECK - DAWN. 37

Again the ship rolls in the heavy swell as the fog swirls around it.

CLOSE on the decking. The grooves worked into the wood.

And, running along the grooves like oil in an engine - thick, glutinous blood.

SOKOLOV‘s face is close to the deck. He gazes in horror at the blood. Around him: ABRAMOFF, SHARMA, ADISA and LORD RUTHVEN.

Abramoff is particularly stricken, but fighting to hide it.

ABRAMOFF
She said she was too warm. I told her to be careful.

SOKOLOV
And you saw nothing?

ABRAMOFF
I ... heard something.

SOKOLOV
Heard what?

Abramoff glances briefly at Lord Ruthven, and then comes out with it. Red faced, hating this.

ABRAMOFF
... I think ... she was with a man.

LORD RUTHVEN
No!

ADISA
Are you sure?

ABRAMOFF
I’m sure!

Adisa flashes a concerned look at Ruthven - not sure what to say.

LORD RUTHVEN
How could she be with a man?? I was in my cabin.

An awkward silence.

SHARMA
Hm.

LORD RUTHVEN
No, this is preposterous! Where is she?? What has happened to my wife??

DRACULA
(From off)
Surely it’s obvious, gentlemen.

They look round. DRACULA has been observing from the shadows (NB keeping him out of sun) now wearing a stylish pair of blue spectacles. He has never looked more dashing and byronic - Sherlock Holmes on the case.

SHARMA
She can’t hear you. She only understands sign language.

DRACULA
Ah! That is a language I must acquire some time.

His dark eyes, ravenous on her.

Yamini doesn’t understand his words - but she gets the message.

OLD VALENTIN
You’re all fooling yourselves! *“For fools speak folly. Their hearts are bent on evil!”* Isiah, 32:6. This is more than murder - there is evil at work here. Look out there! Look at it. What sort of fog *follows* a ship?

DRACULA
I agree there’s evil at work. But surely it’s a very human evil.

OLD VALENTIN
Three people are dead!

DRACULA
Three people are missing.

OLD VALENTIN
And where did they go? Did they sprout wings and fly away?

DRACULA
(smiles)
What a ridiculous idea.

OLD VALENTIN
Dark forces!

LORD RUTHVEN
Those dark forces took my Dorabella.

He sobs into his handkerchief. Dracula steps over to him, places a hand on his. It is clearly intended to be comforting -

- but when their eyes meet, the seduction is clearly continuing.

On Adisa, clocking this - barely suppressed rage.

Then just as abruptly, Dracula gets back to business.

DRACULA
I find it hard to credit that any supernatural entity would leave such a quantity of blood behind - unless, of course, it had drunk its fill. So! There is a killer on board, in plain sight or hiding.

On Sokolov - he needs to take the initiative from Dracula.

SOKOLOV
We'll search everywhere. No one can stay hidden long on a ship this size. From now on, you will consider yourself under my command.

DRACULA
Quite right, Captain. I stand ready to serve, as do we all.

SOKOLOV
Abramoff - you will take -

DRACULA
Perhaps we should start with cabin number nine?

A beat on Sokolov - damn him!

SOKOLOV
There is nothing of consequence in there.

DRACULA
Nevertheless, I'm sure it would set all our minds at rest if we were just to take a little look? Since we are all obliged to suspect everyone - including you, Captain Sokolov - I see no need to exclude the passenger in Number 9.

Sokolov seethes. Who is in charge here?

SOKOLOV
Very well. Cabin nine will be searched.
(Beat)
By me.

On Dracula - trace of a cynical smile.

DRACULA
Then I suppose we shall have to trust you.

He glances significantly round all the others. The paranoia is ratcheting up.

CUT TO:

39 EXT. ‘THE DEMETER’. DECK - DAY. 39

The sun, like a dull gold coin in the foggy sky.

The ship is alive with search teams, emptying barrels, hauling back heavy canvasses, unspooling rope.

Thump!

A crewman looks round. Another gull has dropped dead to the deck.

CUT TO:

40 INT. ‘THE DEMETER’ - CORRIDOR OF CABINS. DAY. 40

Starting on the numeral 9, pulling out to:

SOKOLOV is outside Cabin number nine.

ABRAMOFF and OLGAREN are with him, like a delegation.

Sokolov takes out a big bunch of keys and, after a moment, opens the door.

Olgaren gags.

OLGAREN
The stench!

SOKOLOV
The sick room is not a place for weak stomachs. Stay where you are!

He goes inside, leaving the others in the corridor.

CUT TO:

ADISA
(Rolls his eyes)
My people!

CUT TO:

42 INT. 'THE DEMETER'. CORRIDOR OF CABINS - DAY. 42

ABRAMOFF and OLGAREN, waiting outside number 9. Olgaren has his ear pressed to the door.

ABRAMOFF
What can you hear?

OLGAREN
Breathing.

ABRAMOFF
The Captain's?

OLGAREN
No.

CUT TO:

43 EXT. 'THE DEMETER'. DECK - DAY. 43

PIOTR is searching. He's reached the rum barrel. A thought! Is it big enough to hide someone? He reaches to open it.

DRACULA
(From off)
Have you ever heard of Nelson, Piotr?

Piotr startles. And there's Dracula, leaning against the wall, keeping to the shadow, again wearing his blue spectacles (he always wears this when outside in day time.)

PIOTR
Nelson, sir?

DRACULA
Britisher. Saw off Napoleon.

Piotr looks blank.

DRACULA(CONT'D)
One eye, one arm? No?
(shakes his head)
Young people. How soon they forget.

He starts to tap the barrel with the flat of his hand.

DRACULA(CONT'D)
Well, Admiral Nelson was killed at the Battle of Trafalgar, you see. Died of his wounds - - they say. And they wanted to get his corpse back to England with all speed. National hero. The British are very keen on that kind of thing. But Spain’s quite a way. And it was hot. So...what do you think they did?

Piotr shrugs.

DRACULA(CONT'D)
They put the old Admiral into a barrel of rum to preserve him!

PIOTR
No!

DRACULA
True. Trouble is...v.6r sDpD1lwnAnd it wasw 4.6198-6 -1m.6rite)

DRACULA
Piotr. I met a Piotr - once. Your accent. Bistritz, is it?

PIOTR
Yes.

DRACULA
Ah! A taste of home.
(Licks his fingers)
This, on the other hand - flavourless!

CUT TO:

44 INT. 'THE DEMETER'. CORRIDOR OF CABINS - DAY. 44

SOKOLOV emerges from cabin number nine.

ABRAMOFF
Well, sir?

SOKOLOV
(shrugs)
All as before. The passenger remains very sick. And there's no-one else in the cabin. I searched it thoroughly. Does that satisfy you?

OLGAREN
The Captain's word is good enough for me.

At last, Abramoff nods.

ABRAMOFF
And me.
(Eyes Sokolov)
For now.

Sokolov: injured, but the point is fair.

SOKOLOV
(V.O.)
Trust once lost -

CUT TO:

45 EXT. 'THE DEMETER'. DECK - NIGHT. 45

SOKOLOV addresses the crew and passengers.

SOKOLOV
- cannot easily be restored. I know that. But we've all searched this ship from prow to stern. There's no sign of our missing friends. We're all agreed?

The assembled murmur their assent.

DRACULA
Which means only one thing.

Beat.

SOKOLOV
I'm afraid so. It's one of us.

He looks around at the others. SHARMA, ADISA, LORD RUTHVEN.

SHARMA
It is clear what we must do. We must go on to England. Then we'll hand this matter over to the authorities. If we stick together and we're all careful - if no one is alone with anyone then we'll be -

Whummphh!

Sharma jump backs as something smashes onto the deck before him.

It's ABRAMOFF. He's writhing in agony, one leg horribly broken.

Sokolov looks up.

SOKOLOV
Must've fallen from the moonrakers! Jesus. Get him below!
(yelling)
Fetch Valentin!

Blood pools from Abramoff's leg. Pan from Abramoff's leg to another dead seagull, recently fallen on the deck.

Sokolov looks back up. What the hell's going on up there?

Dracula, looking at the blood - shudders involuntarily. An ecstatic shiver.

DRACULA
Quickly...he's...bleeding.

Sokolov is already at Abramoff's side, tending to him. Shoots Dracula a sour look.

SOKOLOV
Step away, man - if you can't stand the sight of blood.

Dracula turns, and strides away - he can't let his agitation betray him. His weakness shames him.

CUT TO:

46 INT. WINE CELLAR - DAY 46

DRACULA and AGATHA at the chess board.

Agatha is looking shrewdly at Dracula.

AGATHA
And you can't stand it, can you? You can't control yourself in the presence of blood. It's not just sustenance, it's an addiction.

Dracula smiles.

AGATHA(CONT'D)
You're smiling.

DRACULA
After four hundred years, it's nice to be understood.

AGATHA
Oh, I haven't understood you yet. Not completely. Seven very different passengers on the Demeter. How convenient given your dietary requirements.

Dracula smiles. She's getting there.

CUT TO:

47 INT. 'THE DEMETER'. CREW QUARTERS - NIGHT. 47

- Olgaren sweeping away metal dishes and spoons as they hoist Abramoff onto the big, stained mess table -

OLD VALENTIN
How could you fall? You of all people??

ABRAMOFF
It's the fog - it's like breathing poison.
(Winces in pain)
Fix it! Just FIX IT!

OLD VALENTIN
I can try and reset it. But it doesn't change anything - the devil is on the ship. The Devil!

ABRAMOFF
Do...do it!

Old Valentin has a piece of timber in one hand. He lays it by the side of Abramoff's broken leg and starts to wrap clean strips of fabric around it. Then prepares to tighten them.

OLD VALENTIN
Hold on to him.

Rams the peg in between Abramoff's jaws.

Then he gets to work.

Abramoff SCREEEEEAAAAMS!

CUT TO:

48 INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE CREW QUARTERS - NIGHT. 48

On the opposite side of the door, the scream continues. We pull slowly back -

- to reveal, Dracula spread against the door, inhaling the scent of blood, lost to his craving. He is practically sobbing with frustration - like a rejected lover ...

CUT TO:

49 INT. 'THE DEMETER'. DINING ROOM - NIGHT. 49

ADISA and LORD RUTHVEN are in the dining room, waiting to be served. SHARMA is settling into his place.

SHARMA
It is difficult to eat in these circumstances, but one must keep body and soul together.

ADISA
(sotto)
“Dark forces took my Dorabella”. Your concern was almost convincing.

LORD RUTHVEN
(sotto)
She was a sweet child. The sweet rarely survive long.

ADISA
(sotto)
But she served your purpose, didn’t she? Bailing out your empty coffers.

LORD RUTHVEN
(sotto)
And yours, Adisa. Remember that. If any of us get out of this.

The door opens and DRACULA sweeps in. He moves urgently, lacks his normal poise and elegance.

Instantly, Ruthven turns his attention to Dracula - and Adisa seethes.

LORD RUTHVEN (CONT'D)
Good evening, Count Dracula.
(No reply)
Are you all right? I suppose we’re all a little jumpy.
(No reply)
Not hungry?

Dracula shoots a look at him - Oh God he is!!

- and in his eyes there is that cat’s eye glitter.

CUT TO:

50 INT. ‘THE DEMETER’. CREW QUARTERS - NIGHT. 50

ABRAMOFF is sleeping fitfully.

We pan down to his bloodily bandaged leg.

CUT TO:

51 INT. 'THE DEMETER' - PASSENGER LOUNGE - NIGHT 51

A leg of mutton, rare, in the middle of the table top. It is being vigorously carved.

On Dracula: his eyes fixed darkly on the leg of mutton.

DISSOLVE TO:

52 EXT. SEA - NIGHT. 52

The Demeter sails on through the night and the fog.

CUT TO:

53 EXT. 'THE DEMETER'. DECK - NIGHT. 53

On VALENTIN: his is examining one of the lifeboats. He turns to see one of the crew observing him, suspicious.

OLD VALENTIN
(Defiant)
What are you looking at?

Krasnaya looks to the lifeboat.

OLD VALENTIN (CONT'D)
This ship is cursed. It is doomed! Krasnaya Rubashka, find everyone who thinks the same and bring them here. There is only one way out.

CUT TO:

54 INT. 'THE DEMETER'. DINING ROOM - NIGHT. 54

OLGAREN is pouring the wine.

Around the table, as before, DR SHARMA, LORD RUTHVEN, ADISA, and DRACULA. The atmosphere is tense, but the silence is unbearable. Finally, Adisa breaks it - an attempt at conversation.

ADISA
How...how is your daughter, Dr Sharma?

SHARMA
(Eyes him warily)
Much the same. Shock. To be expected.

On Dracula - silent, almost glowering. On finger tapping like a metronome on the table top. Tap. Tap. Tap.

LORD RUTHVEN
(Wincing at the wine)
What is this??

ADISA
You're worried about the wine ?

LORD RUTHVEN
I'll worry about what I choose.

ADISA
Oh, are we are not drinking and dining in the style to which we hope to become accustomed?

Lord Ruthven looks sharply at him.

LORD RUTHVEN
We?

On Adisa: stung by that! What? He glances to Dracula. He's definitely being replaced in Ruthven's affections.

Dracula registers the look. His dark eyes drift to -

- Adisa's soft throat, the gentle pulse of his jugular. The metronome taps a little faster.

SHARMA
Olgaren, might I ask - do you normally have this many passengers?

OLGAREN
No. It is very strange. This is the most we've ever had. And the most wealthy.

SHARMA
Lord Ruthven ... as, I assume, the wealthiest, why did you choose this ship?

LORD RUTHVEN
It was a ... recommendation. From my business partner. I have a silent partner ...

OLGAREN
Who recommends the Demeter?

Dracula, in a daze of bloodlust - now his eyes flick to Adisa's jugular.

SHARMA
Count Dracula, do you have any connection with -

Slam! They startle. Dracula has suddenly shot to his feet, overturning his chair.

They all stare at him.

Dracula fights for control of himself - the beast is showing.

DRACULA
My apologies, gentlemen, I - ... If you'll excuse me.

He starts striding towards the exit.

OLGAREN
Don't you want to eat?

Dracula comes to a dead halt for a moment - his shoulders seem to flex - and he strides out of the room.

CUT TO:

55 INT. WINE CELLAR - DAY 55

SISTER AGATHA and DRACULA.

AGATHA
Ah! The beast revealed. Wallowing in blood and stinking of grave dirt. The sophisticated gentleman nothing more than a veneer.

DRACULA
The sophistication of a gentleman is always a veneer.

AGATHA
Even a gentleman like Mr. Balaur?

DRACULA
Mister who?

AGATHA
(Sighs irritated)
(Sigh) Dracula: a corruption of the Latin

(MORE)

DORABELLA
Everybody's dead in the end.

ABRAMOFF
I'm dreaming. This isn't real.

DORABELLA
Reality is overrated.

HARD CUT TO:

Overhead shot.

ABRAMOFF lies prone on the bed, blanket thrown back.

Covering him like a great black sail is DRACULA!

The vampire's mouth is clamped to Abramoff's throat: feasting.

CUT TO:

58 INT. ‘THE DEMETER’. PASSENGER LOUNGE/DINING ROOM - NIGHT. 58

LORD RUTHVEN, ADISA, DR SHARMA still at dinner. PIOTR serving.

CLANG! CLANG! CLANG!

The ship’s bell.

They all look up, startled.

CUT TO:

59 INT. ‘THE DEMETER’ - CREW QUARTERS - NIGHT. 59

SOKOLOV, OLGAREN in the room, looking around in horror. ADISA and SHARMA appear in the doorway.

Abramoff is gone - and the room is like a butcher’s shop.

OLGAREN
(appalled)
What normal man could have done this?

SOKOLOV
We need to search the ship again. I want the entire crew, in pairs -

PIOTR
(Arriving in the doorway)
I don’t think that’s going to be possible, sir.

SOKOLOV
It’s possible if I give the order!

On Piotr. Now he’s a frightened boy - with very bad news.

PIOTR
One of the lifeboats is missing. And I think most of the crew.

A beat on Sokolov - stunned.

SOKOLOV
But where could they go?

OLGAREN
Anywhere but here.

Sokolov, lost for words.

OLGAREN (CONT'D)
Sir - Yuri - it's time.

SOKOLOV
What are you talking about?

OLGAREN
We're running out of choices - we're running out of crew. Captain ... who is in cabin number nine?

CUT TO:

60 INT. WINE CELLAR - DAY 60

DRACULA and AGATHA at the chess board.

DRACULA
Have you worked it out yet? Please stop disappointing me.

Agatha glances down at the chess board.

AGATHA
(frowns)
When did I lose so many pieces? I was winning.

DRACULA
No. You've been losing from the beginning.

His wine glass slides of its own accord a little across the table. He pushes it back.

AGATHA
You don't drink.

DRACULA
Wine.

The room seems to sway a moment. Agatha puts her hand to her head, giddy for a moment. She looks at the chess game, as if desperate for something to focus on.

AGATHA
My pawn is well placed at least. If I can get it to the other side, it becomes another Queen.

DRACULA
Forget the chess, concentrate on the game. Who's in cabin number nine?

Agatha stares at him - hating not knowing. She looks around. A new thought chilling her.

AGATHA
How did I get here?

DRACULA
Don't you remember?

AGATHA
... we were in the convent. You let Mina go ...

DRACULA
But I didn't let you go, did I?

AGATHA
Where am I? What is this place?

DRACULA
Surely you know.

AGATHA
This is not real. None of this is real. Is this .. am I ...

DRACULA
Agatha, you haven't been properly awake since we left the convent.

She looks at his wine glass.

AGATHA
The people you feed from, you make them dream ...

DRACULA
The kiss of the vampire is an opiate.

AGATHA
Are you...drinking my blood?

DRACULA
You are exquisite, Agatha. So much, insight, wit, learning, wickedness even. One does not hurry such a vintage. I've been making you last.

AGATHA
... where am I?

A fly buzzes past her.

DRACULA
Oh, Agatha. You know where you are.

Agatha looking around. The strange curved walls of the wine cellar. Now pulling up and up from her -

- the whole wine cellar is in a shape of the numeral 9.

AGATHA
It's me. I'm in cabin number nine!

Dracula sets down the glass and in same movement -

CUT TO:

61 INT. 'THE DEMETER'. CABIN NO.9 - NIGHT 61

- DRACULA rears into close-up, his gory mouth filling the frame.

Wider: Dracula is spread over Agatha, having feasted on her. The whole bed is drenched in blood. She is weak, pale and enfeebled.

The sound of keys jangling outside the door - someone is preparing to enter ...

Dracula looks to the door, registering this.

Calmly, he turns Agatha's face to the side, exposing the bleeding bite on her neck. He draws his finger across the wound, healing it into the same bruise we saw on Jonathan Harker's flesh.

He draws a curtain around the bed, concealing it, and moves unhurriedly to the door, dabbing the blood from his mouth with a handkerchief.

CUT TO:

62 INT. 'THE DEMETER'. CORRDIOR - NIGHT. 62

SOKOLOV is sorting through his ring of keys - when the door simply opens to reveal DRACULA.

DRACULA
Gentlemen, I'm afraid I took matters into my own hands - I have some experience with locks. Do come in.

Bewildered, they start to follow him.

CUT TO:

63 INT. 'THE DEMETER'. CABIN NO.9 - NIGHT. 63

DRACULA ushers them into the room (the curtain still conceals the bed.)

DRACULA
Let me save you some time.

He gestures to objects on the dresser.

DRACULA(CONT'D)
Do any of you recognise these?

OLGAREN
That's Portmann's 'kerchief. I'd know it anywhere. And this?

He holds up a huge diamond ring.

LORD RUTHVEN
The Grand Duchess's. I saw it when she boarded.

ADISA
Trophies.

DRACULA
Trophies, exactly. As if all this was nothing more than a sick game. I submit this is all the evidence we need. Allow me to introduce you to -

He turns to the bed, throws back the curtain and gestures to its bloody occupant.

DRACULA(CONT'D)
- the murderer!

On AGATHA's face - what the fuck??

CUT TO:

64 EXT. ‘THE DEMETER’. DECK - NIGHT. 64

Close on AGATHA - still in a sate of shock -

- a noose is pulled tight around her neck!

Wider: she stands on a barrel, hands tied behind her back. OLGAREN, who has noosed her, jumps down from the barrel.

OLGAREN
Anything to say?

AGATHA
Yes! Don’t hang me!

On SOKOLOV: raging. He’s being held in place by PIOTR and OLGAREN, and remains so for most of the scene.

Around them: RUTHVEN, ADISA, SHARMA and DRACULA. Everyone caught in the mob-horror of the moment - there is a whiff of Salem about the scene - except Dracula, who maintains an air of fastidious regret.

SOKOLOV
You can’t do this, you can’t hang that woman -

OLGAREN
Captain, with respect - stay out of it - you kept a murderer safe on this ship ...

SHARMA
But look at her! How could she have the strength to kill those men?

DRACULA
Looks can be deceiving, Dr. Sharma.

SOKOLOV
I saw a sick woman, barely able to rise from her bed - and I still do! It can’t be her. Could she have taken Abramoff? Portmann?? Look at her!

OLGAREN
It doesn’t matter how she looks - she did it.

SHARMA
We don’t know that!

Dracula steps forward - the voice of reason.

DRACULA
Gentlemen, please. Let us not allow this situation to turn ugly.

AGATHA
It's a lynching. How much uglier can it get??

DRACULA
Perhaps, Captain Sokolov you could explain your part in all this. Calmly and in your own time.

Such is his authority, everyone quiets. Agatha rolls her eyes.

SOKOLOV
I...I got a commission. With certain stipulations.

SHARMA
A commission?

DRACULA
From a man named Balaur perhaps?

A flashes a mischievous look at Agatha, who just glowers at him.

SOKOLOV
(frowns)
Yes. He said his new wife was very sick and needed to travel to England for treatment. He paid handsomely for the Demeter to take her.
(to Agatha)
To take you.

AGATHA
I am not Mr. Balaur's bride.

OLGAREN
Enough talking! Just hang her.

AGATHA
No, wait, please, listen -

SOKOLOV
Olgaren, we are not savages!

Olgaren places his boot against the barrel.

AGATHA
You can’t hang me!

OLGAREN
Give me one reason why not?

Sharma, anguished at the violence of this turns to fellow scientist, Dracula.

SHARMA
Count Dracula, is this right?

DRACULA
I regret, these circumstances call for rough justice. For the safety of all of us, she must hang.

AGATHA
No, no, listen, you can’t hang me!

OLGAREN
Why not?

AGATHA
Because ...

She flails - what can she say? What has she got?? How does she talk her way of this one. Her gaze settles on Dracula - who is smiling, contentedly - then Divine - or Satanic - inspiration hits.

AGATHA(CONT'D)
- I’m a vampire.

A stunned silence.

Then a laugh from Olgaren. Spreading to the others.

Except Sharma. He looks aghast.

AGATHA(CONT'D)
Oh, funny do you think? Listen to your Captain. I’m a frail and helpless woman? How did I manage to slaughter five people and dispose of their twitching corpses? Because I’m a vampire!

She looks to Dracula.

He’s smiling, gives a courteous nod of approval. Nice move.

Agatha, give a smug little shrug - yeah, still got it. This is a game of almost-flirtation played over the heads of everyone else on deck.

AGATHA(CONT'D)
(Keeping her eyes on Dracula)
You know what a vampire is, don't you? A foul, slouching monstrosity. We disguise ourselves fairly well as ordinary people -

On Dracula - ooh, rude!

AGATHA(CONT'D)
- but are roused to a bestial frenzy by the mere sight and smell of human blood.

A slight, playful shrug from Dracula - what can you do?

OLGAREN
Enough!

SHARMA
(grabs Olgaren's arm)
Wait. Wait, I have experience in these matters -

OLGAREN
There's one way to be sure you're a vampire -

SHARMA
Listen to me! I know what I'm talking about!

OLGAREN
- we can hang you and see if you die!

He places a foot on the barrel, ready to kick it away.

SHARMA
If she's a vampire, she won't die!

AGATHA
(Deadly sincerity)
He's right. I won't die. And you will be the first one I feed off.

Olgaren hesitates. Unnerved, but not yet convinced. His smile has faltered though.

AGATHA(CONT'D)
And then I will take the rest of you. One by one. And I will make you last.

Agatha fixes on Sharma.

AGATHA(CONT'D)
Look in your heart. You know it's true.

Everyone: not convinced, but hesitant.

AGATHA(CONT'D)
You think I can't? Think of the five people I have devoured already - are you in a hurry to join them?

The question hangs for a moment - is her gambit going to work?

She seizes on their hesitation.

AGATHA(CONT'D)
Come on then! Which of you has the courage to kick away this barrel?

A silence. It's worked. And then an almost apologetic voice.

DRACULA
Me.

Dracula steps calmly forward.

DRACULA(CONT'D)
For Christ's sake, she's just a killer. There's no such thing as a vampire!
(Stepping towards the barrel)
Shall we end this?

He looks up at Agatha, as he places his boot on the barrel. She's silent now - seething perhaps, her mouth working.

DRACULA(CONT'D)
Cat got your tongue?

He starts to push, looking to his boot -

- and splash! A drop of bright red blood lands on the toe cap.

What??

Agatha looks down at him, gleaming-eyed - blood is trickling from the corner of her mouth -

- and she spits, savagely, in his face, spattering him with her blood.

AGATHA
Biting my lip.

An instant effect. Dracula staggers back, almost wounded by the proximity of the blood. Seething, frenzied.

AGATHA(CONT'D)
Look at him, look at him!

There he is in a paroxysm of desire, breathing hard, deranged with blood lust.

AGATHA(CONT'D)
Count Dracula was telling you the truth. I'm not a vampire.
(beat)
He is.

Dracula can't stop himself snarling at her - his eyes are crazed, there is a flash of the fangs.

On Sharma: appalled. Scared. He knows it's true.

SHARMA
Count Dracula?

AGATHA
Look at him. Look at him!!

Dracula: an heroic effort of self control. He is mopping his face with a handkerchief held in a shaking hand.

DRACULA
Forgive me if I am repulsed by the blood of a murderess when it is spat in my face. Do what you will with her - I will be in my cabin!

Desperate to get away, he turns to sweep out -

- and standing in the doorway to below decks is YAMINI, staring at him. The last straw!

DRACULA(CONT'D)
Get out of my way, child!!

He raises a hand to strike her - and freezes. Because he heard the gasp: he just lost the room.

SHARMA
Don’t you touch her! Don’t you dare touch her!!

All around the group, the pennies are dropping. Agatha was telling the truth!

Dracula looks down at the little girl -

- who raises her shaking hands. What is this? Is she signing at him? She extends one forefinger up, and crosses it with the other - making the sign of the cross!

Count Dracula - steps back, as if momentarily winded.

AGATHA
Oh, clever girl! Sign language!

A beat: the truth is out there. And now all the others are doing the same, improvising crosses in front of themselves, using anything they have to hand.

AGATHA(CONT'D)

Close on Agatha, as they support her weight, and wrestle the noose from her neck.

SHARMA
Sit up, breathe, take big breaths.

She is whooping air into her lungs.

ADISA
Dracula! Where did he go??

On Lord Ruthven, staring raptly -

Ruthven's POV: the hem of Dracula's cape disappearing in the shadows.

Ruthven: wide-eyed, he says nothing. On his face: Barely concealed excitement.

SHARMA
(to Agatha)
Relax now, breathe deeply, breathe -

Impatiently, Agatha pushes him out of the way, struggles to her feet.

AGATHA
Where is he, where's Dracula, where did he go? Was no one watching??

SHARMA
We were helping you!

AGATHA
Well in future get your priorities right! There is a vampire on board this ship. I am Sister Agatha Van Helsing of the St Mary's Convent, Budapest. Captain Sokolov?

SOKOLOV
Yes?

AGATHA
You are relieved of command.

CUT TO:

65 INT. 'THE DEMETER'. DRACULA'S CABIN - DAY 65

A room we have not yet seen - Dracula's cabin. As AGATHA and SOKOLOV enter it seems perfectly ordinary - and looks like it's never been used.

SOKOLOV
This is it. Dracula's cabin. It doesn't look like it's been used.

AGATHA
Although the curtain has been drawn...

As she reaches for the curtain, one of her fingernails starts to peel off. She flicks it away, negligently.

SOKOLOV
(Seeing this)
Are you all right?

AGATHA
No, no, I'm dying, but don't get distracted. Dracula needs to sleep in a coffin or box containing his own native soil. No idea why, it doesn't make a lot of sense -

SOKOLOV
Did you say soil?

AGATHA
Soil, yes. Somewhere hidden away on this ship there must a box of Transylvanian soil. Have you seen any such thing?

SOKOLOV
... We have fifty boxes of soil in the hold.

AGATHA
(Stares at him: then impatient)
Then what are we doing here??

CUT TO:

66 INT. 'THE DEMETER'. SHARMA'S CABIN - DAY. 66

SHARMA is frantically collecting together his scientific equipment. LORD RUTHVEN is there too.

LORD RUTHVEN
What did you mean, you have experience of these matters?

SHARMA
My...my researches have sometimes taken me down a dark path. The continuation of life beyond the grave. The undead. The nosferatu. There are such things.

LORD RUTHVEN
Dracula put us all on this ship together for a purpose. Clearly he chose you for your knowledge -

As they start to move, Agatha has an inspiration - places a hand on his arm, stopping him.

AGATHA
No, wait. Better. We leave him one box. Only one resting place. Right now, he's hiding in the shadows. But daylight weakens him - he will need to rest eventually. If there is only one box ...

SOKOLOV
... we can trap him.

AGATHA
Perhaps. We can reduce his options, at least. Now we must increase ours. Captain, I assume somewhere on this ship there is a bible? I find myself temporarily embarrassed.

SOKOLOV
In my cabin.

AGATHA
Fetch it now, please.
(As Sokolov moves to go)
Wait, where is everyone? I told everyone to stay in the sunlight while we have it.

SOKOLOV
I thought we were safe during the day.

AGATHA
We are safe in the sunlight. Everyone should be on deck!

CUT TO:

68 INT. 'THE DEMETER'. SHARMA'S CABIN - DAY. 68

On YAMINI. Sitting on her bed. Weak sunlight streams through the window, and she sits in the golden shaft.

SHARMA finishing his packing. RUTHVEN lounges against the door.

RUTHVEN
But how could he fool all of us?

SHARMA

SHARMA(CONT'D)
He talked to me a like a scientist - I felt respected for the first time in a long time.

RUTHVEN
He’s a very persuasive man, the Count.
(Reflects, a little ruefully)
One might almost say ... seductive.

SHARMA
Shouldn’t you be on deck, helping?

LORD RUTHVEN
I’m not quite sure where I should be at the moment. Perhaps it’s time I decided where I stand.

He glances over to the door -

- and sees a shadow move underneath it. Someone is immediately outside.

Yamini frantically signs to her father(subtitled): Don’t trust him!

LORD RUTHVEN(CONT'D)
If Count Dracula is Mr. Balaur, then he is my silent partner.
(A smile - a dawning possibility)
Perhaps that’s what the Count sees in me - a partner.

He strolls over to the window, starts closing the curtain.

LORD RUTHVEN(CONT'D)
And if my intuition is correct ... he is about to join us.

The door creaks open. And DRACULA steps into the cabin.

DRACULA
Curtains drawn on a sunny day. My kind of room.
(To Ruthven)
Thank you.

LORD RUTHVEN
Not at all. We have a business arrangement. We are ... partners. I should like to continue that.

DRACULA
For how long?

LORD RUTHVEN
It is my understanding that a vampire is blessed with eternal life.

DRACULA
Mine too, but it does take rather a long time to be sure.

SHARMA
(appalled)
You are placing yourself in league with this creature?

LORD RUTHVEN
(Shrugs)
It's ... business.

Sharma steps forward, confronting Dracula and suddenly thrusts something towards him.

He produces a cross improvised from tongue depressors. Little Yamini has done the same.

Dracula can't help but recoil.

SHARMA
We're not stupid, you know. I'm a man of science!

DRACULA
Oh, you are one of the great minds of your age. But a prophet without honour in your own country. I, however, recognise your brilliance and look forward to consuming it.

SHARMA
(Thrusting the cross at him)
Never!

But Lord Ruthven has pulled a revolver on Sharma.

LORD RUTHVEN
Drop them. Now!

Sharma doesn't move.

LORD RUTHVEN(CONT'D)
Do you hear me??

SHARMA
(To Dracula)
I would see my daughter die -
before letting her become like you!

Lord Ruthven steps toward Yamini, thrusting the gun at her - right in her face.

LORD RUTHVEN
I wonder if you mean that. Drop the cross - or I'll shoot her right in front of you.

SHARMA
You couldn't.

LORD RUTHVEN
Surrender yourself to us - or I swear I will pull this trigger!

DRACULA
What's it to be, man of reason?

Sharma: in agony.

FLASH: Sharma inspecting the scratches in the underside of the coffin lid.

But he looks to Yamini - a gun in her face, her terrified eyes.

DRACULA(CONT'D)
Dead or undead?

Trembling, on the verge of sobbing, Sharma starts to lower his cross.

Yamini - her big dark eyes, taking this in, understanding it. No, papa, no!

SHARMA
God forgive me.

- and Yamini can't take it. Her eyes flash to the little blue bottle on the shelf.

And she grabs it, raises it to her mouth -

SHARMA(CONT'D)
No!!!

- and drinks it! She dashes it away from her!

On Sharma, watching in horror, as we hear Yamini gasp her last.

He turns slowly to Ruthven.

SHARMA(CONT'D)
(quiet)
This thing - this Dracula - is only a monster. You were supposed to be a man!

LORD RUTHVEN
... I shall be more than a man!

SHARMA
(This time as a low growl)
Hm!

And he launches himself at Ruthven, tearing at his throat. Instinctively, Ruthven fires. Blam! Blam!

Sharma clings to him with inhuman strength for a moment - then shudders his last, slides to the floor.

An exhausted pause. Lord Ruthven is appalled by what he's been part of.

DRACULA
Well - look what you've done.

LORD RUTHVEN
I did it for you.

DRACULA
Why?

LORD RUTHVEN
I thought you'd ... chosen me.

DRACULA
I chose you for Dorabella. Now you've inherited her money, I will inherit it from you ... partner.

He's moving towards him.

DRACULA(CONT'D)
Thanks for everything.

But Lord Ruthven, terrified now.

LORD RUTHVEN
No! No, please!

DRACULA
Try and stay calm. You're doing very well.

As Dracula looms over him, the camera drifts away -

- to a big close-up of the poison bottle on the floor. The stopper is still in it!

Knock! Knock!

PIOTR
(V.O.)
Lord Ruthven?

CUT TO:

69 INT. 'THE DEMETER'. CORRDIOR OF CABINS - DUSK. 69

PIOTR knocks at the door of a cabin. No response

He tries again.

PIOTR
Sir?

He opens the door - to reveal an empty cabin. (He's knocking at a different door.)

He moves on, glances through the next door -

- Dracula's cabin, standing empty.

He moves on to the next one. Sharma's. Knocks.

PIOTR (CONT'D)
Dr Sharma?

Nothing. He opens the door -

- and oh my God!

YAMINI and SHARMA lie dead. And DRACULA is feasting horribly on a twitching RUTHVEN.

Dracula looks up, fixes Piotr with that terrible black stare.

Piotr, frozen in the door way.

CUT TO:

70 EXT. ‘THE DEMETER’ - DECK - DUSK 70

On a stake being whittled.

Wider: OLGAREN is doing the work.

SISTER AGATHA is tearing pages from the Bible, and using the scraps to make a circle of paper. As she lays each one down SOKOLOV hammers it into the deck, securing it in place with a tack.

ADISA watches, skeptical.

ADISA
I still don’t see the point.

AGATHA
The holy word of our Lord. This worked back in the convent with sacramental bread, so I suppose we must have faith.

ADISA
Is this all we have left? Superstition? Fairy tales.

OLGAREN
You saw the effect the cross had on him!

ADISA
It’s no less of a superstition because a madman believes it too. We have a killer on board. A human man, however delusional.

SOKOLOV
(On his own tack)
Convent?

AGATHA
I mentioned I was a nun.

ADISA
Oh, perfect, she’s a nun! We need a general, we need strategy - not nuns!

OLGAREN
Tears for your master? I thought you despised him.

Adisa angrily wipes the tear away.

ADISA
He wasn't my master.

A silence, as Olgaren absorbs this, thoughtfully.

Now, on Agatha, her eyes still shut.

AGATHA
Captain Sokolov, please stop frowning.

SOKOLOV
Your eyes are shut.

AGATHA
It's audible.

SOKOLOV
This circle that's supposed to protect us ...

AGATHA
I believe it will.

SOKOLOV
You said it worked at the convent.

AGATHA
Yes.

SOKOLOV
And yet you're here. So what happened?

AGATHA
Dracula gained entry by disguising himself in the skin of another -

She breaks off - her eyes snap open.

SOKOLOV
Sister Agatha?

Agatha: new thoughts. The cogs are whirring in her brain, and her eyes are widening in alarm.

Slowly she turns to look at Piotr.

On Piotr: silhouetted against the candle-light, quiet.

Casually, no fuss - she places her hand on the sharpened stake at her side.

On Pi.ctigdandlence.t the doesn’t0 1spo-1 in any way. His fene is side

An uneasy silence.

OLGAREN
Go on, Piotr. You just have to explain.

PIOTR
I told you. He was ... drinking Lord Ruthven's blood. He was ... busy.

AGATHA
Busy. Yes.

PIOTR
I ran. I don't think he cared about me, he just let me go.
(Looks to Olgaren)
Olgaren? What's going on?
(No response)
Viktor?

Olgaren does his best to smile, but is unnerved.

OLGAREN
Just ... just try and explain boy.

Despite his sickly smile, Olgaren's hand has moved to his stake. Not aggressively - just checking where it is. Like a marshal laying his hand on his six shooter.

PIOTR
(Desperate edge)
I have explained! That's all there is!

SOKOLOV
Piotr, we just need to be sure you have not been ...
(Looks to Agatha)
... contaminated?

AGATHA
Occupied.

SOKOLOV
How do we do that?

Agatha looks at the circle of holy papers surrounding them.

AGATHA
Piotr ... you entered the circle before it was complete, yes?

PIOTR
I think so. I didn't really notice
...

AGATHA
Now the circle is closed, a vampire would be unable to cross the line of it under any circumstances.
(A beat: she fixes him in the eye.)
Piotr step outside the circle.

PIOTR
But ... but you said it wasn't safe
...

OLGAREN
You can't do this to the boy!

AGATHA
It will only be for a moment.

SOKOLOV
(Gentle but firm)
Piotr ... step outside the circle.

Piotr looks at him, pleading, moist-eyed.

SOKOLOV(CONT'D)
That's an order.

AGATHA
Just cross the line. One moment, in and out.

Piotr, trembling, stands.

SOKOLOV
Do it. Now.

Piotr looks across the shadowed deck. Wills himself -

- and places one foot outside the circle.

OLGAREN
Well done, boy. Now - back inside.

AGATHA
No. Both feet.

Piotr looks at her in terror. Is he about to reveal himself? Or is he about to die?

Agatha: implacable.

Shaking, he puts his other foot outside the circle!

On his foot, as it descends -

- the moment it makes contact with the deck -

- a terrible cobra hiss -

We slam into a massive close-up of Dracula, mouth stretched wide, fangs extended -

- Agatha is already pulling Piotr to safety!

Wider: Dracula is suddenly standing there, just outside the circle -

- and the cobra hiss is becoming a rather more human snigger.

DRACULA
Oh, that was hilarious!
(To Agatha)
Fun playing detective, isn’t it?
One tip - it’s easier if you’re
also the murderer.

OLGAREN
God protect us, God protect us!

He crosses himself feverishly.

Dracula steps forward but stops outside the circle of wafer.

DRACULA
Ah. This again.
(Prods it with his foot)
Tedious book.

ADISA
What...what do you want?

DRACULA
What I always want.
(shrugs)
Something to eat. A bit of company.

AGATHA
Your boxes are destroyed. You have
no refuge. No place of solace.

DRACULA
I notice one of my boxes is still
in the hold.

AGATHA
You’re welcome to go and sleep there, any time you like.
(Raises the stake!!)
We won’t wake you.

DRACULA
Oh, I see. You left it as a lure, as a trap.
(smiles)
I am going to miss you.

AGATHA
I will spare you that heartache.

DRACULA
Too kind.
(To business - he starts strolling round the circle)
Well then - I wonder which of you it’s going to be.

AGATHA
Which of us what?

DRACULA
Oh, one of you is going to break. The night is young.

SOKOLOV
You expect us to...give ourselves up to you?

DRACULA
(pleasantly)
Yes.

SOKOLOV
But why?

DRACULA
What’s the alternative? It’s only a matter of time.
(Passionate now - he means this)
Oh, come on. Let’s not be dull. Don’t you at least want a *good* death? Take your chances! Die fighting, die in battle - as every living thing is supposed to. Better, surely, than this dreary stalemate.

DRACULA
Only that?

ADISA
Less than that. A murderer.

DRACULA
If you’re so confident ... if you’re so angry ... step outside of the circle.

He looks at the crumbled white ring of holy paper on the decking.

DRACULA (CONT'D)
I mean, what *is* this stuff? Ancient words on ancient paper. Print and platitudes.
(laughs)
Leave this...this circle of the banal.

AGATHA
Even if you don’t believe what is self-evident, Adisa, you know he’s dangerous.

Adisa doesn’t move.

DRACULA
What’s the matter? Less sure now? Is that it? What a shame. I prefer your certainty, it will taste so much better. Step out of the circle and dance with me.

Adisa moves a step.

AGATHA
Adisa, don’t throw away your life to prove a point!

Adisa takes a pistol from his coat.

AGATHA (CONT'D)
That won’t do you any good!

ADISA
They call it a life-preserver. Well, I have faith in it. I have faith in steel and powder.

SOKOLOV
Don’t be a bloody fool!

PIOTR
Shoot him! Just shoot him now!

AGATHA
Fine! Try shooting him if you must, but do it from *inside* the circle.

OLGAREN
Yes. Shoot the bastard! Do it!

AGATHA
We must remain strong and united and *inside the circle*.

DRACULA
Yes. Stay inside! Do as you're told, do as they all tell you, that's what you're good at. You're a servant. However stupid your masters, however beautiful, you are destined to remain in the shadows, a guilty secret.

On Adisa: a lifetime of resentment in those eyes. His jaw clenches, and -

- he steps boldly from the circle.

Dracula's eyes light up.

DRACULA (CONT'D)
I knew you could do it. Your own man, at the end.

AGATHA
Get back inside! Get back here.

Dracula gazes at Adisa and his eyes blaze crimson.

Adisa aims the pistol at Dracula.

ADISA
This is an execution. This is for Tom.

He fires.

One.

Two.

Three.

The bullets blast through Dracula, leaving holes he barely seems to notice. He smiles.

Four.

Five.

Six.

Dracula smiles pleasantly.

DRACULA
Ow.

Adisa knows he was wrong. Dead wrong. He turns to race back into the circle.

But it’s too late.

Like a pouncing panther, Dracula lunges for Adisa’s neck and takes a massive chunk out of it.

Adisa screams - and dies.

Suddenly, Piotr launches himself at Dracula with the stake.

He thrusts it towards Dracula’s chest but the vampire grabs him and hurls him back.

Piotr smashes against the rum barrel. It splits, and rum starts to gush over the deck.

Sokolov tries next - grabbing the knife and swinging it at Dracula. He slices through Dracula’s cloak. But Dracula merely smacks him aside with one almighty blow of his hand -

- but in the same moment Olgaren slams into Dracula toppling the two of them to the deck -

- now the rum is soaking into Dracula’s cloak -

On Agatha, seeing the spilling rum - an idea!

AGATHA
Keep him down, keep him on the deck. *Olgaren!*

With one massive thrust, Olgaren slams his iron spiked hand through Dracula’s cloak, fastening him to the deck.

OLGAREN
The knife! The knife!

Sokolov is dazed from the impact, doesn’t respond.

OLGAREN (CONT'D)
Quickly!

Piotr understands at once, races over, grabs the knife from Sokolov and slams it into the other side of Dracula’s cloak - pinning him to the deck like a monstrous preserved butterfly.

The rum sloshes all over him.

Dracula struggles to rise, momentarily trapped - hissing in frustration and rage.

Olgaren wrenches free of his prosthetic spike, staggers back.

On Dracula, screaming his rage, fighting to get free

- the cloak is starting to tear -

- but when he looks up, he freezes.

Agatha stands over him - she is holding a lantern in front of her ...

What??

Then he gets it - he looks down at the rum soaking into his clothes -

Oh shit!

AGATHA
Go to hell.

She drops the lantern on to him -

It shatters and **WHUMPF!!**

In seconds, Dracula is immolated - pinioned to the deck by the dagger and the iron spike - he is unable to escape.

He shrieks in agony. It is a dreadful, unforgettable sound.

His burning body lights up the night.

He pulls and tears at his garments and at last succeeds in freeing himself from his cloak.

A seething ball of flame, he hurls himself over the rails and into the sea.

In seconds, he has vanished into the rushing waves.

Agatha, Olgaren, Sokolov and Piotr race to the side.

A thrashing in the water then...silence.

OLGAREN
It is finished.

On Agatha: expressionless.

FADE TO BLACK:

73 EXT. ‘THE DEMETER’ - DECK - DAY 73

The Demeter, sailing on. The sun is glorious, the sky is blue, the seagulls are wheeling - and the fog is gone. Surely nothing bad could happen on a day like this?

Closer on: SOKOLOV is at the wheel, wind in his hair.

PIOTR is scanning the horizon.

SOKOLOV
Where’s Olgaren?

PIOTR
Cooking.

SOKOLOV
Ah. Just when you think you’re out of danger. And the Sister?

PIOTR
The usual.

Sokolov sighs.

SOKOLOV
Take the wheel.

Sokolov heads off. As Piotr takes the wheel, he notices something lying on deck.

Another dead seagull - but this one is headless. Like it’s head was bitten off ...

A beat of discomfiture - but, no. Everything’s all right now. Isn’t it?

CUT TO:

74 INT. ‘THE DEMETER’. HOLD - DAY 74

The last of the soil boxes. AGATHA is reaching down inside it, feeling the soil, as if checking that it’s warm.

SOKOLOV
(From off)
How long are you going to keep checking?

She looks up. SOKOLOV has arrived - fond but reproving.

AGATHA
Till I’m sure.

SOKOLOV
It’s been weeks.

AGATHA
If he survived it would take time for him to heal those wounds.

SOKOLOV
But according to you, he could only do so lying in a bed of his own earth. That is the only one on board.
(Smiles)
Have faith.

AGATHA
I struggle with faith.

SOKOLOV
We’re a few hours from docking at Whitby. Do you want to join us on deck?

AGATHA
You still have one lifeboat left, yes?

SOKOLOV
Yes, why?

AGATHA
Because this ship must never reach England.

SOKOLOV
What are you talking about?

AGATHA
Your cargo. I’ve been going through it.

She wanders round pointing at various boxes - they all have their lids removed.

AGATHA (CONT'D)
We have everything here we need.

Sokolov looks into the nearest box. It is full of porcelain dolls.

SOKOLOV
For a dolls tea party?

AGATHA
No. Saltpeter, sulphur, charcoal.

SOKOLOV
For *gunpowder*?

AGATHA
There’s at least enough to blow a decent-sized hole in the hull, don’t you think? I thought over here might be a good spot.

She’s led the way over to a section of the hull.

SOKOLOV
(Examining the hull)
That would take her down all right. But why?

Out of his sight, Agatha is inspecting the last of her fingernails - as it peels off and falls to the deck,

AGATHA
No trace of the vampire’s foul contagion can be allowed to reach the new world. Trust me on this. We must sink the Demeter!

Sokolov sighs to the depth of his lungs.

SOKOLOV
When will you accept that you’ve won?

AGATHA
When I’m dead.

She says it playfully - but the full import hits him.

AGATHA (CONT'D)
The curse of the vampire lives inside me. Under no circumstances can I come with you to England.