

#9 (Van Helsing - Renfield - Seward - Lucy.)

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DRACULA

ACT II

*to window. HARKER steps up and faces window and then comes down R.)*

SEWARD. Renfield! (Takes RENFIELD by arm and throws him into room R.C. RENFIELD laughs cunningly.)

VAN HELSING. He's been here all the time we've been talking.

SEWARD. Did you hear what we were saying, man?

RENFIELD. Yes, I heard—something—enough—by what he says. (Points to VAN HELSING. To SEWARD) It is your only hope— (To HARKER) It is her only hope. (Crosses to VAN HELSING.) It is my only hope. (Falls on knees before VAN HELSING) Save my soul! Save my soul! I am weak. You are strong. I am crazy. You are sane. You are good and he is evil.

VAN HELSING. (Impressively) I will save you, Renfield, but you must tell me what you know. Everything.

RENFIELD. (Rises) Know? What should I know? I don't know anything. (Taps head) You say I'm mad and Doctor Seward will tell you about that. You mustn't pay any attention to anything I say.

SEWARD. (Stepping down) We can't waste time with this fellow. I'll have him taken away. (Crosses R. to bell ring; returns two steps up L.)

RENFIELD. (Gets up—to SEWARD) Fool, fool, and I thought you were wise. The whole world is mad just now, and if you want help you must come to a madman to get it. (Little laugh cunningly) But I'll not give it to you, I'm afraid. (Turns to window) A wise madman will obey him who is strong and not the weak.

VAN HELSING. (Steps to him fiercely) Him? Whom do you mean?

RENFIELD. Need we mention names among

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friends? Come, Professor, be reasonable. What have I got to gain by being on your side? The Doctor keeps me shut up all day, and if I'm good he gives me a little sugar to spread out for my flies, but on the other hand, if I serve him— (Points to window up R.)

VAN HELSING. (Sharply, taking him by coat) The blood is the life, eh, Renfield? (Dragging him again) What have you to do with Count Dracula?

RENFIELD. (Convulsed with terror) Dracula. (Drawing himself up defiantly) I never even heard the name before.

VAN HELSING. You are lying. RENFIELD. Madmen, Professor, lack the power to discriminate between truth and falsehood—(Breaks away)—so I take no offence at what most men would consider an affront. (Crosses to SEWARD; kneels L. of SEWARD) Send me away. I asked you to before and you wouldn't. If you only knew what has happened since then. I dare not tell you more. I dare not. I should die in torment if I betrayed—

VAN HELSING. (Crosses a step R.) Doctor Seward will send you away if you speak.

SEWARD. Yes, Renfield. (RENFIELD moans.) I offer you your soul in exchange for what you know.

RENFIELD. (Rises) God will not damn a poor human's soul. God knows the devil is too strong for us who have weak minds. But send me away—I want you to promise, Doctor Seward.

SEWARD. If you will speak.

VAN HELSING. Come, Renfield. RENFIELD. (Pause. Sets himself; looks at SEWARD, VAN HELSING, HARKER and SEWARD again, then speaks as a sane man) Then I will tell you. Count Dracula is— (BAT comes in window; flies out again. RENFIELD rushes to window with arms outstretched, screaming) Master. Master, I didn't

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say anything. I told them nothing. I'm loyal to you. I am your slave. *(The OTHERS rush to window. SEWARD and HARKER first. VAN HELSING goes but a few steps up.)*

SEWARD. *(Looking out window)* There's a big bat flying in a circle. It's gone.

HARKER. What's that, just passing that small shrub? It looks like a big grey dog.

VAN HELSING. Are you sure it was a dog?

HARKER. *(Steps down)* Well, it might easily be a wolf. Oh, but that's nonsense. Our nerves are making us see things.

VAN HELSING. Come, Renfield. What were you about to say?

RENFIELD. Nothing, nothing. *(Moves down. Lucy enters R. with newspaper, crosses R.C. to VAN HELSING.)*

LUCY. Professor—have you seen what's in this—

RENFIELD. Miss Lucy, give it to—

SEWARD? *(Crosses down to her)* Are you Miss Lucy. I am. *(SEWARD moves to above her; indicates HARKER to ring bell.)*

RENFIELD. *(Crosses down to her as she turns)* Then in the name of the merciful and compassionate God, leave this place at once. *(She turns to him. VAN HELSING motions silence to OTHERS.)*

LUCY. But this is my home. Nothing would induce me to leave.

RENFIELD. *(Sane)* Oh, that's true. You wouldn't go if they tried to drag you away, would you? It's too late. What a fool I am. I shall be punished for this and it can't do any good. It's too late. *(In tone of pity)* You are so young, so beautiful, so pure. Even I have decent feelings sometimes, and I must tell you, and if you don't go your soul will pay for it. You're in the power of— *(Bar flies in window and out. RENFIELD to window and screams.)*

SEWARD swings L. toward couch. HARKER crosses to LUCY to protect her. The Master is at hand. *(Crosses L. on knees. ATTENDANT appears door L.)*

SEWARD. Butterworth! *(SEWARD helps RENFIELD up, then ATTENDANT grasps him and takes him to L. door.)*

RENFIELD. *(At door)* Goodbye, Miss Seward. Since you will not heed my warning, I pray God that I may never see your face again. *(Exits L. with ATTENDANT.)*

LUCY. What did he mean, Professor? What did he mean? Why did he say that? *(Exiting R. in hysterics. HARKER follows her.)*

SEWARD. That crazy thing in league with the devil; horrible, and Lucy already upset by something in the paper.

VAN HELSING. Go in and get that paper from her. Reading that article again and again.

SEWARD. *(Step R.)* Whatever it is, she keeps on reading that article again and again.

VAN HELSING. Take it away from her, man, and come back to me. *(Places hand on forehead as if faint.)*

SEWARD. *(Turns at door R.)* Don't overdo it, Van Helzing. God knows where we should be if you went under. After a transfusion operation, at your age you really ought to be in bed—the loss of so much blood is serious.

VAN HELSING. I never felt more fit in my life. SEWARD. I only ask you not to overestimate your strength now, when we lean on you— *(As he exits R. he points to mirror.)* Feeling fit, are you? Just look at yourself in the glass.

VAN HELSING, alone, registers as tired and exhausted, and walks slowly across room, looking at his drawn face in mirror L. DRACULA, with stealthy tread, in evening dress and cloak as

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