

Dracula's Boarding House

By Matthew Carlin

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DRACULA'S BOARDING HOUSE

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(Four men, four women, one offstage male voice)

COUNT DRACULA

Fanged and bloodthirsty.

RENFIELD

Eats insects and brags about it. The Count's assistant.

LOU LAWSON

Only living heir to Uncle George.

CASEY STIGLER

Lou's friend, vampire bait.

LYDIA

Dracula's wife, age 472 plus.

ELENA

Dracula's second wife, 95 years younger than LYDIA.

SHY

Another wife.

GIRL

The Count's victim.

VOICE OF UNCLE GEORGE

PLACE

An old, decrepit country house.

TIME

The present.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

- Scene 1:** Out in the forest, night time.
Scene 2: Out in the forest, day time.
Scene 3: Drab, spooky living room of an old country house.
Scene 4: The same, later that evening.

SCENE 1

Setting:

This scene is played in front of the curtain. There is an old log and cut outs of a few trees and shrubs to indicate the country. Wolf cries are heard in the distance.

At Rise:

The lights are very dim. The dark-caped figure of COUNT DRACULA strides in from stage left. HE carries himself with an arrogance befitting the Prince of Darkness. He is followed by a very clumsy confidant, RENFIELD, who carries a lantern. The howls increase in volume as THEY enter.

DRACULA: Ah yes. Sing to me my children of the night, your Master has arrived. *(HE laughs insanely.)* Rejoice, for the night is ours! Do you hear them Renfield? What music they make!

RENFIELD: Yes, Master.

DRACULA: Renfield! This house. You are quite positive it is deserted?!

RENFIELD: Oh yes, Master. The owner passed away recently and had no children. All of the townspeople said so. There will be no one there, Master. I promise.

DRACULA: And everything has been properly prepared? The coffins have been delivered and my wives await me?

RENFIELD: *(Arrogantly.)* Piece of cake.

DRACULA: I hope you are right Renfield or you will become dinner for my children in the forest. *(Pause.)* I grow weary of moving from place to place. Do you understand me Renfield?

RENFIELD: Y-y-yes, Master. *(DRACULA casts RENFIELD aside and strides forward. RENFIELD meanwhile has spotted something behind the log. In the following moments, ignoring DRACULA, he stalks his prey.)*

DRACULA: Soon the hated sun will fill the sky. We must go quickly! For tomorrow . . . *(HE lets the sentence trail off, smiling hideously.)* Yes, tomorrow! Come Renfield! *(HE starts off right. RENFIELD, however, is still trying to capture his prey. DRACULA turns around and calls viciously.)* Renfield!

RENFIELD: Yes Master!

DRACULA: Come!

RENFIELD: But Master, there's a mouse, a nice fat, juicy one and I'm hungry, Master. You promised me that I could have all the rodents I wanted if I was a good boy! *(HE stomps his feet, jumping up and down.)* I'm hungry!

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DRACULA: *(Baring his fangs, snarling.)* So am I, Renfield!

RENFIELD: *(Stops jumping immediately.)* Oh! Oh no! I'm right behind you Master. I'll just grab my trusty lantern here and I'm right behind you.

DRACULA: At once!

DRACULA exits stage right.

RENFIELD: Yes, Master. At once. *(RENFIELD grabs the lantern but suddenly spots the mouse again. HE pounces and pretends to come up holding a wiggling mouse by the tail. HE giggles to himself.)* I got him! I got him!

RENFIELD squeals with delight and literally waltzes off stage right still holding the mouse singing, "Some Enchanted Evening."

Blackout.

SCENE 2

Setting:

Lights are up full. It is daylight on the same set as SCENE 1.

At Rise:

LOU and CASEY enter left. LOU is a klutz. HE carries suitcases which he swings from side to side as he looks around at the strange surroundings. Suddenly, CASEY stops to wipe his forehead with a handkerchief and LOU collides with him.

CASEY: Will you watch where you're going? What are you trying to do?

LOU: Sorry Casey.

CASEY: Well you should be. Dragging me out here on a day like this. It's hot!

LOU: I'm sorry. *(HE crosses to the log.)* Here, why don't you sit down and rest a while.

CASEY: I think I will. *(HE sits.)* I'm only doing this for you, you know. *(LOU sits on one of the suitcases. HE starts to answer, but CASEY continues talking.)* I put my neck on the line for you. I quit my job just to come all the way out here with you. Now, why do you think I'd do a thing like that? Tell me, why do you think I'd do a thing like that? *(LOU tries to answer again, but CASEY continues.)* Because I'm your best friend, that's why. You remember that! *(HE rises and crosses to LOU.)* After all, what are best friends for if they won't quit their job when you need them to. Am I right? Of course I'm right. *(LOU tries to answer each question, but can't get a word in edgewise.)* Who was there for you when they came with the news about your Uncle George's death? Who was there for you? Who was there when they told you that you inherited a big, old mansion on a big country estate? Who did all of these things for you? *(HE pauses for an answer.)* Well, aren't you going to answer me? *(LOU starts to answer.)* Don't I deserve an answer?

LOU: *(Finally.)* If you'd just shut up long -

CASEY: - shut up?! Shut up?! Oh that's just great!

LOU: You know what I meant.

CASEY: No, no, Lou. It's all right. I'll be fine. You try to be a friend these days and look where it gets you . . . in the middle of a forest with a suitcase. Just dandy.

LOU: I know, I know. I appreciate everything you've done for me, especially the job thing.

CASEY: Well, I should think so! You should be ashamed of yourself. Where's the gratitude?

LOU: I'm so ashamed. *(LOU pulls out a handkerchief and blows his nose loudly.)*

BOTH pause.

LOU: Hey Casey?

CASEY: Yeah?

LOU: Are you sure this idea of yours is gonna work? I mean, I never even knew I had an Uncle George. I don't even know what the house looks like.

CASEY: Don't worry! The lawyer said it was a huge house with lots of rooms, didn't he?

LOU: Yeah. But, I've never managed a hotel before. It's going to be an awful lot of work.

CASEY: Look, Lou. Like I told you. It's not going to be a hotel. It's going to be a boarding house.

LOU: Right. A boarding house.

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CASEY: That's right. A boarding house.

LOU: What if the house is made of bricks?

CASEY: What's that have to do with anything?

LOU: Well, you said it was going to be a boarding house . . . but if it's a brick house . . . no boards -

CASEY: I'm telling you not to worry. I lived in a boarding house for five years. I know exactly what to do.

LOU: You know how it works?

CASEY: Absolutely.

LOU: Okay. Well . . . well . . .

CASEY: Sit down, will you. I'll explain it again. Now. If you were a customer at our boarding house I would explain to you that you'll clean your own room. Take care of your own things. Just like it was your own home. Are you with me on this?

LOU: No. I've never had my own home.

CASEY: Improvise.

LOU: My mother has a lovely home though.

CASEY: Close enough. We charge them a hundred bucks a week to stay in our house. We'll make a fortune.

LOU: A hundred bucks a week? That's a lot of money.

CASEY: You better believe it. And for another fifty bucks, they can get board.

LOU: Bored?

CASEY: That's right.

LOU: We're gonna charge them fifty bucks to get bored?

CASEY: Yes indeed.

LOU: How are we gonna do that?

CASEY: Do what?

LOU: Make them bored?

CASEY: We don't make them bored. We give them board. They eat their board.

LOU: I'd eat if I was bored, too.

CASEY: You're not making any sense. I'm telling you, I know what I'm talking about. I lived in a boarding house for almost five years and everyday I had my board.

LOU: You were bored everyday?

CASEY: Of course, I had to live, didn't I?

LOU: I wouldn't call that living.

CASEY: The board was actually quite good. Come on, let's get going, all this talk is making me hungry.

Bewildered, LOU continues mumbling as they BOTH exit right.

BY MATTHEW CARLIN

LOU: It's making me bored.

Blackout.

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