

Dracula

Curse of the Vampire

1

JONATHAN HARKER'S JOURNAL

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When we started for our drive the sun was shining brightly on Munich, and the air was full of the joyousness of early summer...

Having arrived in the Bavarian capital of Munich, with a day to spare before your train departs for Bistritz in the Transylvanian region of Romania, you decide to make the most of your enforced sojourn and ask Herr Delbruck – the maitre d’hotel of the Quatre Saisons, where you are staying – to hire a carriage for you, so that you might go for a drive in the surrounding countryside, it being such a gloriously sunny day.

Herr Dellbruck does as you ask and, just as you are about to depart, comes down to the carriage and wishes you a pleasant afternoon.

His hand still on the handle of the carriage door, he says to the coachman, “Johann, remember you are back by nightfall. The sky looks bright but there is a shiver in the north wind that says there may be a sudden storm. But I am sure you will not be late” – he smiles, before adding – “for you know what night it is.”

Johann answers with an emphatic, “Ja, mein Herr,” and, touching his hat, drives off quickly.

If you want to ask the coachman what is so special about tonight, turn to 7. If not, turn to 18.

2

You rush to the nearest cypress, but find it affords you barely any shelter at all from the hammering hailstones, leaving you no choice but to run for the refuge offered by the tomb.

Take an Endurance test. If you pass the test, turn to **17**, but if you fail the test, turn to **12**.

3

For an answer, Johann crosses himself again, points to the spot you have just left, and then to a wooden cross, set up at the road junction. "Buried him... him what killed himself."

You have heard of the old custom of burying suicides at crossroads, to prevent the corpse rising again from the dead, but for the life of you, you can't understand why that would frighten the horses.

Record the code word *Suicide* on your Adventure Sheet, and turn to **13**.



4

Reaching the deep Doric doorway of the tomb, you crouch against the massive bronze door, gaining at least some protection from the pummelling hailstones, for now they only drive against you as they ricochet from the ground or the marble walls.

But as you lean against the door, with a groaning of ungreased hinges, it opens inwards. The shelter of even a tomb is welcome in the midst of such a pitiless tempest, and you are about to enter when there comes a flash of forked lightning that lights up the whole expanse of the heavens.

In that instant, as the darkness of the tomb is banished, you catch sight of a beautiful woman, with plump cheeks and full red lips, seemingly asleep upon a stone bier.

As the thunder breaks overhead, she stirs and rises from her marble bed, but you are not even sure that her feet are touching the ground.

But how can this be? Surely to have been lying in a stone cold tomb, in the graveyard belonging to a village that was depopulated centuries ago, the woman must have been dead. But then how is it that she can appear as fresh as if she has just woken from a sleep?

(Add 1 point to Harker's *Terror* score and record the code word *Succubus* on your Adventure Sheet.)

She suddenly fixes you with eyes that seem to burn red, and glides towards you, her hair and gown streaming out behind her in the gale that has found its way into the sepulchre. Her pristine features twist into a demonic snarl and, speaking German, she shrieks, "Who would disturb my sleep this Walpurgis Night?"

And then, hands outstretched before her, reaching for you with fingers twisted into claws, she flies at you screaming: "No matter! You will pay with your life's blood!"

If you want to use *The Pen is Mightier* special ability, cross off one use and turn to **9**. If not, turn to **16**.

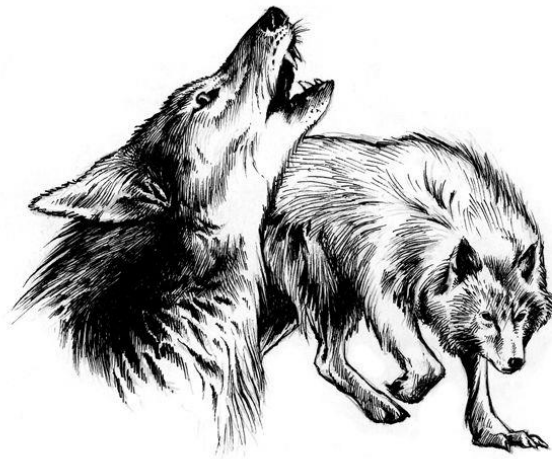
5

Turning down the side road, you head through the deepening valley. You do not see any reason for the coachman's objection to the route, and walk for a couple of hours without having any care of the time or distance covered, and without seeing a single person or even a house. The place is desolation itself.

And then, on turning a bend in the road, you come upon a scattered fringe of woodland. You sit down to take a moment's rest, and begin to look around. It suddenly strikes you how much colder it is now than at the commencement of your walk, and something like a strange sighing sound that seems to come from all around you is your constant companion.

Thick clouds are massing in the sky overhead, and sensing that a storm is coming, you resume your journey. Having lost all track of time, it is only when the deepening twilight forces itself upon you that you begin to consider how you might find your way back to the Quatre Saisons. The air is cold and a sound is carried on the wind, not unlike the mysterious cry you thought was made by a wolf, and for a moment you hesitate.

If you want to retrace your steps, back along the road that brought you into the valley, turn to **10**. If you would prefer to press on, determined to at least see the deserted village, having walked all this way, turn to **15**.



6

Shaking with cold and shock, you struggle to your feet. But as you do so, you find yourself surrounded by a vague, white, moving mass. It is as if all the graves around you have opened and sent forth the phantom forms of their sheeted dead, and they are closing in on you.

One of the ethereal spectres draws near and you begin to make out details – a skull-like visage beneath the hood of a shroud, and fleshless fingers reaching for you.

(Add 1 point to Harker's *Terror* score.)

If you want to use *The Pen is Mightier* special ability now, cross off one use and turn to **20**. If not, turn to **14**.

7

When you are clear of the town, you signal the driver to stop.

“Tell me, Johann,” you say, when you have the coachman’s full attention, “what is tonight?”

He crosses himself before answering: “Walpurgisnacht.”

Taking out his watch – a great, old-fashioned German silver thing as big as a turnip – he looks at it, with his eyebrows gathered together and an impatient shrug of his shoulders, clearly unhappy about this unnecessary delay.

If you want to press him to tell you more about this Walpurgis Night, turn to **11**. If you merely want to motion for him to proceed, turn to **18**.

8

You strike the spectre but your stick passes straight through it, leaving nothing but a trail of clinging mist in its wake. You are incapable of injuring the phantom!

(Add 1 point to Harker’s *Terror* score and record the code word *Spectre* on your Adventure Sheet.)

Turn to **20**.

9

Just then there comes another blinding flash, which strikes the iron spike surmounting the tomb and pours through it into the earth, shattering the marble edifice in an explosion of incandescent flame. You are hurled out into the storm, as if you have been grasped by the hand of a giant and pulled backwards.

For a moment you catch sight of the Countess, contorted in agony as she is lapped by the flames, and then her bitter scream of pain is drowned by another thunder-crash.

The relentless hailstones beat down upon you again while the air reverberates with the howling of wolves.

(Roll one die and deduct this many points from Harker's *Endurance* score. Alternatively, pick a card and deduct that many *Endurance* points, unless if it is greater than 6 or a picture card, in which case deduct 6 *Endurance* points.)

If you are still alive, turn to 6.

10

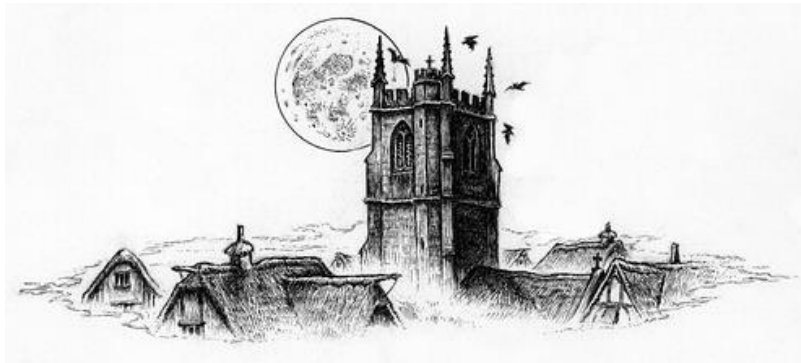
And so you set off back the way you have just come. But as you do, it is as if the twilight deepens with every hurrying step you take.

You hear the sound of the wolf more clearly now, for it seems to be circling you. You can hear its claws scraping the ground, and the low, guttural growl of its breathing, and you fear that you are heading into danger, rather than away from it.

Panting for breath now, you decide to go back the other way, in the hope of finding shelter from the beasts that hunt at dusk in the deserted village.

(Deduct 1 point from Harker's *Endurance* score and add 1 point to his *Terror* score.)

Turn to 15.



11

Johann shakes his head, clearly unwilling to divulge more, but you are insistent.

Through a combination of his broken English and your little knowledge of German, you learn that, at least according to the belief of millions of people, Walpurgis Night is when the Devil walks abroad, when graves open, and the dead come forth from them and walk. It is a time when all evil things of earth, and air, and water, hold sway.

Seeing the terrified look on the coachman's face, as he shares what he knows of this accursed night with you, leaves you feeling unnerved. (Add 1 point to Harker's *Terror* score and record the code word *Superstitious* on your Adventure Sheet.)

Wishing that you had paid more heed to the old adage '*a little knowledge is a dangerous thing*', you instruct Johann to drive on.

Turn to 18.

12

What before you sought to avoid, you now sprint towards, in seek of shelter from the hailstorm. However, before you reach the marble mausoleum, you are struck by the full force of the icy bombardment.

(Roll one die and divide the result by 2, rounding halves up; add 3 to this total and deduct that many points from Harker's *Endurance* score. Alternatively, pick a card and deduct that many *Endurance* points, unless if it is greater than 6 or a picture card, in which case deduct 6 *Endurance* points.)

Turn to 4.

13

"Well, Johann, I want to go down this road," you tell the coachman, as you disembark from the carriage. "I shall not ask you to come, but please tell me why you do not want to go."

At that he stretches out his hands appealingly to you and implores you not to go. There is just enough English mixed with the German for you to follow the drift of his talk. He seems always on the verge of telling you something – the very idea of which evidently frightens him – but each time he pulls himself up saying simply, "Walpurgisnacht!"

You suddenly hear a sound, somewhere between a yelp and a bark. It comes from far off, but it upsets the horses nonetheless, and it takes all Johan's skill to quieten them again.

"That sounded like a wolf," you say.

“Yes, but there are no wolves here now,” Johann replies.

“Is it a long time since the wolves were so near the city?” you ask.

“Long, long,” the coachman answers, “in the spring and summer; but with the snow the wolves have been here not so long.”

As Johann struggles to calm the horses, dark clouds scud across the sky, the sunshine passes away, and a breath of cold wind teases at your hair and clothes.

But it proves to be only a breath, a warning of worse weather to come perhaps, for once the clouds have passed the sun comes out brightly again.

Johann squints as he gazes towards the horizon. “The storm of snow, he comes before long time,” he mutters. Then he checks his watch and, keeping a tight hold on the horses’ reins, climbs back onto the driver’s box.

You do not immediately get back into the carriage.

“Tell me about the place where the road leads,” you say, pointing down the track.

Johann crosses himself yet again and mumbles a prayer before answering: “It is unholy.”

“What is?”

“The village.”

“There is a village?”

“No. No one lives there hundreds of years.”

“But you said there was a village,” you persist.

“Yes. There was.”

“So where is it now?”

Whereupon the coachman embarks upon a long story, in both German and English, so mixed up you struggle to understand exactly what he is saying.

As far as you can tell, hundreds of years ago much of the populace had died there and been buried in their graves; but sounds were heard under the clay, and when the graves were

opened, men and women were found rosy with life, their mouths red with blood. And so, in haste to save their lives – and their souls! – those who were left fled to other places, to where the dead were dead, and not... “Something else.”

Johann is evidently afraid to speak the last words. In fact, he is in a perfect paroxysm of fear – white-faced, perspiring, trembling, and looking round constantly, as if expecting some dreadful presence to manifest itself there, in the bright sunshine on the open plain.

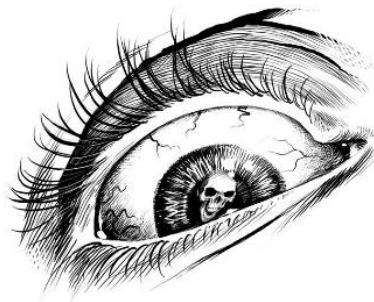
Finally, in agonised desperation, he cries, “Walpurgisnacht!” and points to the carriage for you to get in.

Your English blood rises at this, and standing back you say, “You are afraid, Johann. Go home. I shall return alone. The walk will do me good.” Taking your oak walking stick and closing the carriage door, pointing back to the city you say, “Go home, Johann.

Walpurgisnacht does not concern Englishmen.”

There is nothing the poor fellow can do to dissuade you from the course of action you have decided upon, and so, with a despairing gesture, he turns the horses towards Munich.

Do you want to watch him depart, to make sure he does as you have bidden (turn to **19**), or will you set off down the winding road into the valley (turn to **5**)?



14

Taking your stout stick in hand once more, you lash out at the phantom as it glides towards you over the icy ground. (In this battle the Phantom has the initiative.)

PHANTOM

COMBAT 8

ENDURANCE 9

If you manage to make a successful strike against the ethereal entity, turn to **8** immediately. After 4 Combat Rounds, even if you haven't managed to lay a blow against the wraith, turn to **20**.

Presently you come to a wide stretch of open country, shut in by hills all around. Their sides are covered with trees, which spread down to the plain, dotting in clumps the gentler slopes and hollows that are visible here and there. The winding road curves close to one of the densest of these thickets before vanishing behind it.

And then the snow begins to fall. Thinking of the miles and miles of bleak country you have passed, you hurry on, seeking shelter in the wood. Darker and darker grows the sky, while the snow falls faster and heavier until the ground all around you is a glistening white carpet, the furthest edge of which is lost in misty vagueness.

In only a little while, you realise that you must have strayed from the road, for you miss the hard surface underfoot and your feet sink deeper into the snow. The wind grows stronger, the air becomes icy cold, and in spite of your exertions, you begin to suffer its ill-effects.

(Deduct 2 points from Harker's *Endurance* score.)

The snow is falling thickly now and whirling around you in rapid eddies, so that you can barely see your hand in front of your face, while every now and again the heavens are torn asunder by vivid lightning. In the flashes you can see ahead of you a great mass of trees, chiefly yew and cypress, all heavily coated with snow.

As soon as you are in the shelter of the trees, the rush of the wind is muffled by their snow-bent boughs. You realise that the darkness of the storm has merged with the darkness of the night. As the storm dies down, you hear the weird wolf-sound again, which is now echoed by many similar sounds that come from all around you. (Add 1 point to Harker's *Terror* score.)

Now and again, a straggling ray of moonlight pierces the black mass of drifting cloud, lighting up your surroundings with its otherworldly monochrome luminescence. Skirting the edge of the copse, you find that a low wall encircles it, and following this you soon come upon an opening. Here the cypresses form an alley that leads up to the square mass of some manner of building.

Just then, the drifting clouds obscure the moon again and you pass along this path in darkness. Shivering from the cold – and nothing more, you are sure – knowing that there is at least the hope of shelter up ahead, you grope your way blindly on.

And then, suddenly the moonlight break through the clouds once more, revealing to you that you are not in a village, but a graveyard! The edifice ahead of you isn't a house, but a massive tomb of marble, as white as the snow that lies on and around it.

With the moonlight there comes a succession of long, low howls, as you might expect a whole pack of wolves to make.

Impelled by some form of fascination, you approach the sepulchre. Etched in German into the lintel above the Doric door are the words:

COUNTESS DOLINGEN OF GRATZ

IN STYRIA

SOUGHT AND FOUND DEATH

1801

On top of the tomb, seemingly driven through the solid marble, is a great iron spike, while on the back wall, graven in great Russian letters you see:

THE DEAD TRAVEL FAST

There is something so unsettling about this whole place that you start to wish you had taken the coachman's advice, and stayed away. You feel the cold perceptibly grow upon you, until it seems to grip you by the heart, and your whole body starts to shake from fear as much as the freezing effects of exposure.

You start to back away from the tomb, moving towards the trees that mark the boundary of the graveyard, when the storm decides to unleash all its fury upon you. The ground shakes, as though thousands of horses are thundering across it, and the storm bears upon its icy wings great hailstones that beat down both leaf and branch.

If you want to run for cover within the trees, turn to **2**. If you would prefer to seek shelter within the sepulchre itself, turn to **17**.

As the woman you can only suppose might once have been the Countess Dolingen of Gratz rushes towards you, her elongated incisors bared like fangs within a bestial grimace of a face, you prepare to defend yourself as best you can, using your stout oak stick. (In this battle, your assailant has the initiative.)

THE COUNTESS

COMBAT 9

ENDURANCE 11

If you are still alive after 6 Combat Rounds, or if you reduce the Countess's *Endurance* score to 5 points or fewer, whichever is sooner, turn to 9 at once.



What before you sought to avoid, you now sprint towards, in seek of shelter from the hailstorm. However, before you reach the marble mausoleum, you are struck by the full force of the icy bombardment.

(Roll one die and add 1, then divide the total by 2, rounding fractions up; deduct this many *Endurance* points. Alternatively, pick a card and deduct its face value from your *Endurance* score, unless it is 5 or above, or a picture card, in which case deduct 4 points from your *Endurance* score.)

Turn to 4.

Johann urges the horses forwards and the carriage bounces over the rutted road at speed, as if the coachman is trying to make up for lost time. Every now and then the horses throw up

their heads and sniff the air suspiciously, causing you to scan the surrounding countryside for any sign of what might have startled them. But there is never anything there – at least not that you can see.

The road is quite bleak, for you are now traversing a high, windswept plateau. As you drive, you catch sight of another trackway that appears little used and which dips through a winding valley. It looks so inviting that you call to Johann to stop, and when he has pulled up, you tell him that you would like to drive down this new road.

He starts to make all sorts of excuses and frequently crosses himself as he speaks, as well as looking at his watch, as if in protest.

The horses start to become restless again, their nostrils flaring as if they can smell something unpleasant on the wind, and Johann grows suddenly pale. Jumping down, he takes the frightened animals by their bridles and leads them on some twenty feet.

If you want to ask the coachman why he has done this and what has the horses so spooked, turn to **3**. If you do not want to know what has upset them, turn to **13**.



Leaning on your stick, you watch Johann leave. He drives slowly along the road for a while, but then you catch sight of a figure coming over the crest of the hill; a man, tall and thin. When he draws near the horses, they begin to jump and kick about, and even to whinny in terror. Johann is clearly unable to hold them and they bolt down the road, fleeing this place at a mad run.

You watch, concerned for the coachman, until the carriage passes out of sight, and then look for the stranger again; but he too has gone.

There is something unnerving about the man's sudden appearance and subsequent disappearance. (Add 1 point to Harker's *Terror* score.)

Turn to 5.

20

The waking nightmare you have found yourself in is too much to bear and you faint from shock, as the spectral dead close in on you en masse...

TO BE CONTINUED...



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