

God's Madmen (Or, Time without the Devil)

By John Patrick Bray

Inspired by Bram Stoker's Dracula

Run time: 75 minutes



MEMBER

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Characters:

Harker, 20's
Seward, 30's
Mina, 20's
Lucy, late teens/early 20's
Countess, youthful in appearance, but quite old
Renfield, 40's
Captain, 40's
Mate, 30's
Van Helsing, 50's

Suggested doubling: The actor playing Renfield can also play Mate and Van Helsing (suggested in the script.) The actor playing Seward can play the Captain. The actor playing Lucy can play Countess. Cast size: 5 (3M, 2W)

Notes: The play is written without an act break and should be presented as minimal as possible, relying on an easel and boards to suggest changes in time and location (think “Victorian Music Hall”).

Synopsis:

What if there was a Dracula story in which Dracula...never showed up? What if fear and paranoia drove the residents of Seward's asylum to perform unspeakable acts – bloodletting; sexual infidelity; gender-confusion; without ever actually seeing the Prince of Darkness? Using Bram Stoker's novel as a starting point, *God's Madmen* examines the ways in which each act of communication contains beginnings and the hope of a happy ending – and the seeds of that hope's destruction.

Production History:

God's Madmen has had workshop productions or staged readings with Rose of Athens Theatre (2012), Acadiana Repertory Theatre (2013), and 5th Wall Productions (2016) in the US.

Louis Jordan is my favorite Dracula. Followed by Lugosi.

(LIGHTS UP on a placard on an easel. "God's Madmen." SEWARD enters, dusts the sign. Looks at audience. He exits. LIGHTS CHANGE. A catacomb. HARKER sits up. He is dressed in yesterday's clothes. He appears to be lost in a dream. He looks around.)

HARKER

Hello? I say, hello? (Beat.) Sleepwalking again. Count?! I've been sleep walking again! Used to happen to me as a child. My mother would catch me doing laps around the dining table. This happened once while guests were over, assembled for dinner. I had been sent to bed early for...I would rather not say what for...and I dreamed. I can't remember the dream.

(He looks around, obviously nervous.)

And I walked around the table, guests laughing, pointing. I heard nothing. Can you hear me, Count?! (Beat.) Blast.

(A rustle. Gentle, blue light fills the room. COUNTESS enters, in an almost see-through night dress. She looks as if she is about to celebrate her honeymoon.)

COUNTESS

Welcome to my house, Come freely. Go safely. And *leave some of the happiness* you bring.

HARKER

I am grateful for the sound of another human voice. I get nervous when I'm alone, and I feel the need to talk. I talk too much. Have you noticed?

COUNTESS

(Beat.) Do you bring happiness?

HARKER

I bring...contracts.

COUNTESS

Oh.

HARKER

I guess they are a form of happiness. The promise of a new life. The hope of a new tomorrow.

COUNTESS

Are all contracts so full of hope?

HARKER
Surely. The contract of marriage.

COUNTESS
Ha.

HARKER
You don't believe me?

COUNTESS
I am a wife.

HARKER
Oh?

COUNTESS
His wife.

HARKER
Oh. Well. I have a fiancée, so. We are both hopeful souls.

(COUNTESS gives him a bizarre look.)

Have I mentioned I talk too much?

(She smiles. A moment. She sits with him.)

And he has you down here? Cleaning?

COUNTESS
Cleaning. Sure. Cleaning. Insects. Rats. Children.

HARKER
You have children? You and the count?

COUNTESS
In a manner of speaking. (Beat.) So virile for such an old man.

HARKER
No, I didn't mean to –

COUNTESS
I need to be happy.

HARKER
Yes.

(She puts her feet in his lap. He reacts.)

HARKER

Cold!

COUNTESS

Very cold. Warm them?

HARKER

Miss...I mean, Mrs. Dracula. Countess?

COUNTESS

Yes?

HARKER

Please. I am to be married.

COUNTESS

And I am married.

(Pause. She kisses him. He moves into it.
She looks at her feet on his crotch.)

HARKER

I say, you're flexible.

COUNTESS

Feeling warmer.

HARKER

I am. Oh, you mean you. Countess, I –

(Pause. She looks at him. He looks at her. A
trance. He kisses her passionately. She
straddles him, kissing his ear.)

Well, when in Romania.

(He allows himself to be taken. She kisses
his neck. Opens his shirt. She continues to
kiss his neck. He is ecstatic. As she licks his
body. Blood appears across his chest and
stomach. He does not notice.)

Oh, my God.

COUNTESS

See? The catacombs don't feel so empty now.

HARKER

No, they don't.

(He looks at her. They are both covered in his blood. He smiles.)

You're smiling.

(He affectionately touches her nose leaving a spot of blood.)

COUNTESS

So are you.

(She affectionately touches his nose, also leaving a spot of blood.)

HARKER

I never knew I could be so happy...

(She gives him a bloody kiss. They continue kissing and nipping as LIGHTS CHANGE to reveal SEWARD'S desk. Note: The catacombs remain lit. SEWARD sits in his office with RENFIELD, a lunatic. Another Note: Seward's office can be simple: a desk, a few chairs; a small table with bourbon and a few shot glasses. There is a coat rack with SEWARD'S jacket, lab coat, and hat. He also has a flashy walking stick.)

SEWARD

Am I to believe this?

RENFIELD

I have no reason to lie, sir.

SEWARD

Completely cured.

RENFIELD

That's right, sir. Completely, sir. And I have you to thank for it, sir.

SEWARD

I see. May I just ask you a few questions?

RENFIELD

Oh, please do.

(SEWARD opens his journal.)

SEWARD

You really don't mind?

RENFIELD

Not at all, sir. For science.

SEWARD

Good. Well, to begin with...what makes you certain that you're cured?

RENFIELD

I have no desire to eat bugs. I wish to eat...meat.

SEWARD

Meat?

RENFIELD

Cooked meat.

SEWARD

Cooked? That is an improvement.

RENFIELD

Yes, sir. It is. I miss the taste of flame-licked hamburger. I miss fall-off-the-bone pork. Chicken. Lamb.

SEWARD

Grasshoppers?

RENFIELD

Grasshoppers?

(SEWARD places a jar in front of
RENFIELD. It contains a large insect.)

RENFIELD

I really am trying to cut back.

SEWARD

What if I cooked it for you?

RENFIELD
(Joking)

Maybe then.

SEWARD

And if I open this jar?

RENFIELD

Please, don't. They repel me.

SEWARD

Do they?

RENFIELD

Yes, sir. Insects completely repel me.

SEWARD

You were eating them, though. Spiders. Flies.

RENFIELD

Because...I believed they were giving me life.

SEWARD

And now? You don't believe it anymore?

RENFIELD

Sir. May I speak plainly?

SEWARD

Please do.

RENFIELD

At first, I ate them because I thought...I thought life eternal was to be mine. And I continued to eat them...because you made me.

SEWARD

Did I?

(RENFIELD nods.)

Does that seem like the sort of thing I'd do?

RENFIELD

Three months ago, I would not have believed it.

SEWARD

What has changed?

(Sound of thunder. RENFIELD reacts.
Distracted.)

RENFIELD

Storm's coming.

SEWARD

You are asking to leave, yes?

RENFIELD

Yes.

SEWARD

Because you are cured?

(Pause.)

Is there some other reason, Renfield?

RENFIELD

TAKE THAT THING AWAY FROM ME!

(RENFIELD moves away from the
grasshopper jar.)

SEWARD

Why? Don't you want it?

(SEWARD opens the jar. RENFIELD
catches the grasshopper. An agonizing
moment. RENFIELD returns the
grasshopper to the jar.)

RENFIELD

(Beat.) This is what happens. To all of us who deal in real estate. You end up showing mansions, houses, apartments, ruins. All covered with vermin. You need to convince the prospective buyer that their home is clean. No roaches under the sink. No rats in the cellar. No spiders in the loft. And so you dispose of the bodies in the easiest manner possible. Make them disappear. Consider all the blood this creature may have inside its little body.

RENFIELD (Contd.)

And, if I eat it...it's as if it doesn't exist anymore. But it would, Doctor Jack. Inside me. And you. Give me. More. Why do you continue to feed me?

SEWARD

(Beat.) Tell me again about the man. The curse of Transylvania.

RENFIELD

No, no, no, no. It was all a dream. It must have been. Otherwise, they wouldn't have sent Harker.

SEWARD

Harker?

RENFIELD

Harker. Another clerk. He's handling the paperwork now. He'll be dusting the catacombs.

(RENFIELD shakes the bottle. The grasshopper reacts.)

Disposing the vermin.

SEWARD

(Beat.) Who told you this?

RENFIELD

Harker's betrothed.

SEWARD

She visited you?

RENFIELD

Oh, yes. I've had plenty of visitors. Guards. Fellow lunatics. Church women. (Beat.) Please kill me.

SEWARD

Why should I kill you?

RENFIELD

I am already dead.

SEWARD

That's morbid.

RENFIELD

Dead vermin...I can't stay here, and you won't let me leave. Is that right?

SEWARD

I won't let you leave, that part's right.

RENFIELD

I think it's getting closer.

SEWARD

Is it?

RENFIELD

Yes.

SEWARD

Something is coming then? To eat you? Make this house look clean?

(RENFIELD smiles.)

RENFIELD

No. It was all a dream. Harker is there now, isn't he? All a dream.

SEWARD

Right. All a dream. (Beat.)

RENFIELD

You have bourbon.

SEWARD

Yes. Have you been snooping in my office?

RENFIELD

I would like a bourbon.

SEWARD

Would you? (Beat.) Sure. Let's both have a bourbon, what do you say?

RENFIELD

As if we are...friends?

(Seward sets up a couple of shots of
bourbon.)

SEWARD

I don't have any friends. Not really.

RENFIELD

Not even Ms. Lucy?

SEWARD
She. She says I am her *true* friend.

RENFIELD
Uh-oh.

SEWARD
Like a brother.

RENFIELD
UH-OH.

(Pause.)

SEWARD
It's the kiss of death.

RENFIELD
I've had the kiss of death. It's far less painful.

SEWARD
(Noticing RENFIELD'S mouth)
Your teeth.

RENFIELD
Filed them.

SEWARD
Why?

RENFIELD
They weren't working. (Beat.) Let's drink our whiskey.

(They raise their glasses.)

SEWARD
To life!

RENFIELD
The blood is the life!

SEWARD
Yes.

(SEWARD takes his drink. RENFIELD sets his down.)

SEWARD (Contd.)

Renfield?

RENFIELD

I'm sorry, Dr. Jack. I'm not staying for the fireworks.

(SEWARD goes limp.)

SEWARD

How did you?

RENFIELD

There's a nurse who respects me. She's going to marry me. It's why I got my teeth all pretty for her.

(RENFIELD leans in close to SEWARD.
SEWARD struggles against the drug.)

SEWARD

Will you kill me?

RENFIELD

No. Ms. Lucy has done a fine job of that.

(RENFIELD moves his mouth very close to
SEWARD'S neck. Watching SEWARD, he
opens the jar with the large insect.)

I am very good at cleaning up vermin, sir. Very good.

(He forces it into SEWARD'S mouth,
covering it with his hand. A moment. The
grasshopper is down.)

He's coming, sir. He's coming. I can feel him, smell him, taste him, he's coming. I'm not staying for this. I'm not staying to let you drive me mad.

(RENFIELD stands. He regards
SEWARD'S coat rack. Removes
SEWARD'S jacket and hat. RENFIELD
stands as if he's respectable. Society. This is
a pre-Dracula RENFIELD, though
something still seems off. He turns to
SEWARD and smiles.)

RENFIELD (Contd.)

See you, Jack.

(RENFIELD exits.)

SEWARD
(Weakly)

Bye...

(LIGHTS CHANGE. Next placard: "At Sea".)

(DARKNESS. The Sound of a storm.
LIGHTS FLASH, revealing two men on the deck of a ship. They are pulling ropes.
LIGHTS FLASH several times revealing them in various stages of struggle with the storm. MATE is tying CAPTAIN to the ship's wheel.)

CAPTAIN

Pull that rope.

MATE

Sir, this is suicide.

CAPTAIN

This boat. Will. Survive.

MATE

A boat is made of wood. Dead wood!

CAPTAIN

LIVE wood! Unpolished, doesn't splinter when hammered!

MATE

Dead trees, then!

CAPTAIN

They're serving a more important purpose! PULL THAT ROPE!

MATE

But it's getting closer.

CAPTAIN

The beast is controlling the storm.

MATE

It can't be sir. The storm is not an animal!

CAPTAIN

Live wood, storms with a soul! It's hell on earth -

(CAPTAIN and MATE are thrown. Both
manage to hold on. MATE screams,
CAPTAIN laughs.)

CAPTAIN

Tie yourself to something!

MATE

No, sir. If it's between the water and the beast, the water's teeth are kinder.

CAPTAIN

It is between the water and the beast and we will survive this. And kill the beast.

MATE

Crash the ship, sir!

CAPTAIN

What did you say?

MATE

Let her crash! Kill the beast! All on board are lost! We can end this now – take it with us!

CAPTAIN

I WILL NOT LOSE A SHIP!

MATE

Forget your ship, sir! Save mankind!

CAPTAIN

There is no mankind without a ship!

MATE

That – that makes no sense, sir!

CAPTAIN

You are either with the ship, or you are with the beast!

MATE

Sir! No, sir! Listen to reason!

(CAPTAIN withdraws his gun.)

CAPTAIN

THIS IS ALL THE REASON I NEED! Off you go! With a bullet in your hide or in your head!

MATE

No!!! NO!!!

(MATE leaps away. CAPTAIN fires after him. The storm gets worse. CAPTAIN reloads his gun.)

CAPTAIN

Off you go, then. WHERE ARE YOU, BEAST? I HEAR YOU! AS I HEARD BONES CRUNCHING IN YOUR TEETH! The ecstasy of human blood in your voice. WHERE ARE YOU?! SHOW YOURSELF DEVIL!

(THE STORM stops. LIGHTS are normal.)

There it is then. The eye of the storm. Quiet. Quiet! HAVE WE LOST YOU, BEAST?! ARE YOU VICTIM TO YOUR OWN TORRENTIAL TIDES?

(A shadow moves across him. He fires. He tries to reload quickly. THE STORM resumes. A shadow covers him. LIGHTS FLASH! Eyes of the beast! He drops the gun! LIGHTS FLASH! A LOW GROWL! LIGHTS FLASH! BEAST IS ON HIS THROAT! SCREAM! STORM REACHES A CRESCENDO! Sound of waves. The storm has passed. In the distance, there is a bell. A lighthouse light moves across the deck. The captain is dead. LIGHTS CHANGE. RENFIELD stands under a special. Placard "Jack has mail.")

RENFIELD

Doctor Seward. I hope this letter finds you well. There was an alarming lack of police after me. Which means either you have let me go or I am better at outfoxing you than I thought poss. Life is good. Out here, in the world. My wife, she understands me. We have traveled exotic lands, and she finds me...the greatest of crawling creatures. This morning she surprised me - The Madagascar Hissing Cockroach...drawn butter, pinch of pepper. No salt. This is what love is, Jack. A wife who feeds you. Can't leave an address. Don't know if anyone is looking for me. So, from the world, I am yours. Renfield.

(SEWARD enters at the end of the speech. He changes the placard; it now reads "Some Time Later." MINA enters. She is striking; possibly made of stone. COUNTESS giggles. LIGHTS UP on Catacomb where HARKER and COUNTESS are in the throes of carnal pleasure.)

MINA

Thank you for taking him, Dr. Seward.

SEWARD

We do have a reputation.

MINA

Yes.

SEWARD

You say your fiancé –

MINA

Jonathan.

SEWARD

Jonathan. Your fiancé –

MINA

No, not. Maybe. Oh, I don't know what he is anymore.

SEWARD

Oh?

MINA

He. He has –

SEWARD

Yes?

MINA

My fiancé has been with another woman.

SEWARD

Are you sure?

(HARKER giggles as COUNTESS straddles him also giggling.)

MINA

He has syphilis.

SEWARD

Syphilis?

(MINA nods.)

Are you sure?

MINA

There are marks all over his body. Strange marks. All over his....

SEWARD

Yes, I understand. Syphilis. And you are sure there are no possible explanations? Any explanation that would make your husband innocent of your accusations?

(COUNTESS bites HARKER again. He cries out – in pleasure and in pain.)

MINA

That's him, Doctor. Out in the hall.

SEWARD

Oh. I see. (Beat.) Have you come in contact with the, um, open flesh?

(MINA shakes her head no. She is fighting tears, remaining strong.)

MINA

I haven't been in contact with his flesh...any flesh. We are engaged. (Beat.) I am...I am marble. That's what I hear. Kiss me. You will see that nothing happens. It is my power. To be unfeeling. Practical. (Beat.) Kiss me.

SEWARD

Clearly you are in shock and need to be humored. (Beat.) Maybe as an academic interest?

(SEWARD approaches her.)

I could write a paper about...ahem...

(He kisses her. She does not react. It is as if nothing is touching her at all. He steps back. HARKER holds COUNTESS. LIGHTS FADE on HARKER and COUNTESS.)

SEWARD (Contd.)

I am utterly convinced. And embarrassed.

MINA

I just feel more...alone. (Beat.) He returned in the hold of a ship. With crates of dirt and bones. Laughing. Crying. Jonathan has syphilis, doctor. And I need you to help him.

SEWARD

I can make him comfortable, and that is all.

MINA

I see.

SEWARD

Tell me, where was he when he contracted this disease?

MINA

Transylvania.

SEWARD

Transylv...Transylvania?

(MINA nods.)

MINA

I had never heard of it before. I could not even find it on a map, and Jonathan *showed* it to me before he left. I believe it's somewhere near Romania. But it's as if it does not actually exist. It just...vanished. From the map. From every map. Consult your globe, you will see nothing. Not even a shadow.

(Pause.)

SEWARD

What was he doing in Transylvania?

MINA

My fian...my Jon...he...he. He is a clerk. He was bringing deeds to a Count.

(SEWARD reacts. A moment.)

SEWARD

Do you believe in coincidence?

MINA

Yes.

SEWARD

Oh.

MINA

If you don't believe in coincidence, then you believe in some divine plan. But I've seen it firsthand, Dr. Seward. The complete absence of God when my parents were taken from me. Cholera. In India.

SEWARD

You're wrong, Ms. Mina. There is a God.

MINA

You, a man of science, believe in God? (Beat.) He refuses my prayers, so he might as well not exist. I'm glad he's there for you. Oh, how the other half lives.

SEWARD

(Beat.) You talked to a former patient of mine. Mr. Renfield.

MINA

The solicitors sure weren't going to be seen coming in...here. Somebody had to tell him Jonathan would be taking over his work. Huh. He says you are the best. Renfield.

SEWARD

Too kind of him.

MINA

Perhaps. Two men sent, two men mad. (Beat.) *Former* patient, you say. He recovered?

SEWARD

I'm afraid so. I will miss his camaraderie.

MINA

Then perhaps...you can help Jonathan.

(Beat.)

SEWARD

I will admit Jonathan...Mr. Harker...today. You may stay, too. I have a guest room.

MINA

Thank you, doctor. I don't know if I wish to.

(JONATHAN screams off-stage.)

SEWARD

You cannot hear the sounds of the asylum in there. Please. Take the guest room. And see Mr. Harker in the morning.

MINA

I don't know if I want to see him tomorrow. Or any day.

SEWARD

Don't men deserve a second chance?

(Pause.)

One night. We can both talk to him in the morning.

MINA

Very well, doctor. I will stay for one night.

(She exits. HARKER freezes. COUNTESS stands and watches SEWARD. SEWARD falls on his knees.)

SEWARD

Please, God. Bring me Lucy. Bring me Lucy.

(COUNTESS exits. The wind opens the door and smashes the glass. SEWARD exits. BLUE LIGHT fills the catacomb. HARKER sits up, covered in blood. He is alone again. He looks at the blood. Feels his neck. A moment of panic. He finds his shirt and puts it on. COUNTESS enters holding a bundle.)

COUNTESS

We can be a family.

HARKER

Family?

COUNTESS

A real family. See?

(HARKER smiles, and moves weakly and lifts the sheet on the bundle. His face falls.)

HARKER

Is it alive?

COUNTESS
(Rocking the bundle)

Shh-shhh-shhhh

HARKER

It needs a doctor.

COUNTESS
What it needs is its mother and father together for the sanctity of the home!

HARKER
No! It needs...look, it's bleeding. Can't you see it's bleeding?

COUNTESS
It's beautiful.

HARKER
Is that what I am? Beautiful?

COUNTESS
I thought you wanted this.

HARKER
Countess, please –

COUNTESS
Aren't you lonely? Doesn't this make it...less lonely? (Beat.) I've named her. "Hope."
What do you think?

HARKER
She already had a name. Already had a mother and father. Before you –

COUNTESS
We can give her a better life.

HARKER
I think she's dead...

COUNTESS
We can give her a BETTER life.

HARKER
Oh my God.

(HARKER looks at the blood on his body.
He looks at the blood on his hands.)

HARKER (Contd.)

Have I been bleeding all this time?

(COUNTESS gives him a severe look.)

What will happen to the child?

COUNTESS

She'll cross over. She'll come back. She'll be raised in the shadows. There are far worse things than life.

HARKER

I've allowed this. All of this.

COUNTESS

Allowed? No, you *chose* this, Jonathan. *Chose* this.

HARKER

Please kill me.

(Pause.)

COUNTESS

That is your counter offer to *love*?

(Pause.)

Very well. I only bade you to leave some of the happiness you bring. (Beat.) You brought me a contract. Men and their contracts. *He* is leaving me, little paper-man!

HARKER

Dracula?

COUNTESS

LEAVING ME! After centuries of...the villages...the cities...and then the catacombs. And now...I am left here with you. A sad surrogate.

HARKER

When does he - ?

COUNTESS

They voyage to the ship at sunrise. Tomorrow night...it's all over. He is going out and taking the storm with him! And you want death...

(He nods. She leans near him.)

COUNTESS (Contd.)

This will hurt like hell.

HARKER

I know.

(She bites him. He lets out a scream. He throws her off.)

COUNTESS

Come to me.

(She raises her hand.)

Come to me.

HARKER

No!

(Pause.)

COUNTESS

No? Did you say...did you say "no?"

(Pause.)

He is gone. Dracula. He is gone.

(She waves her hand a bunch like a melodramatic magician summoning him to her. She grows impatient and snaps her fingers at him like a dog. Pats her lap. Points at him, and then dramatically at the space next to her. HARKER watches her.)

Nothing. I have no power over you. It must be sunrise. (Beat.) So, why do you stay?

(Pause. HARKER holds his neck. He stands. The baby starts to cry. HARKER looks at the baby. Looks at COUNTESS. A stream of sunlight pours into the catacomb. COUNTESS looks at HARKER. She runs into the sunlight and burns. She does not scream. A moment, and she is dust. HARKER watches. He moves to the crying baby.)

HARKER

We can be a family. (Beat.)

(SEWARD enters behind him. He places the Captain's hat and a large journal, which contains the ship's log, on his desk.

LIGHTS CHANGE. HARKER takes the baby bundle and shakes it out; it is merely a blanket which he wraps around his shoulders.)

"Come freely, go safely, and leave some of the happiness you bring." Something she said to me. I will never forget it.

SEWARD

What happened to the child?

HARKER

I took her to a hospital. I called her Harker. Hope Harker. I almost called her Hope Murray, but I'm not certain Ms. Murray...Mina, that is...I'm not sure she'd...*(approve)*

SEWARD

Is that really what happened? You didn't have to hold the baby in sunlight, or...or eat it?

(HARKER gives SEWARD a severe look.)

It's not unheard of. (Beat.) And so, you made it to the ship, was brought here unharmed in one of the worst storms our coast has seen, which killed everyone on board.

HARKER

Yes.

SEWARD

What did you see?

HARKER

Nothing. I dreamed.

SEWARD

What did you dream?

HARKER

I can't say.

SEWARD

Can't or won't?

HARKER

Just talking about it makes it real.

SEWARD

So, tell it to me like a story. A folk tale one might hear in the mountains.

HARKER

Once upon a time, there was a real estate clerk. He entered the castle of a vampire, fled, made it to a ship where the crew members were all systematically torn to pieces. Devoured. He himself was spared. Perhaps because the vampire had plans for him later. Perhaps because the vampire was full. Perhaps because the vampire did not want the blood of a coward in its body.

(A moment.)

SEWARD

Why do you cut yourself?

HARKER

I am poisoned.

SEWARD

Your betrothed thinks you have....

HARKER

Yes?

(Pause.)

SEWARD

Is your room comfortable?

HARKER

It's not my room.

SEWARD

Sure it is.

HARKER

It is a place where I am being kept, that in no way makes it mine.

SEWARD

(Beat.) What will you do now?

(Pause. HARKER moves to SEWARD's desk. He looks at the Captain's hat.)

HARKER

Where did you get this?

SEWARD

You recognize it?

HARKER

Yes. It belonged to the Captain.

SEWARD

Yes. You were holding it when Ms. Mina brought you here. (Referencing the journal.) And the ship's log.

HARKER

Oh.

(HARKER sets down the Captain's hat.)

Do I need to stay here?

SEWARD

Yes.

(HARKER reacts.)

We can get to the bottom of what really happened. I'm sure it was something. Something which caused you to be in such a state. But what? What really happened?

HARKER

What do you propose?

(SEWARD looks at a pocket-watch.)

Hypnosis?

SEWARD

(Regarding the watch)

No. Just seeing the time. (Beat.) My mentor, Dr. Van Helsing, would suggest putting you in a state of hypnosis. But I do not agree with it. You see, prior to hypnosis was a process by Franz Mesmer, mesmerism. Mesmerism has to do with energy moving from one body to another. Think of it as animal magnetism. No, really. Think about those two words, and what they mean. Magnetic forces between bodies. A movement of energy. With

SEWARD (Contd.)

hypnotism, you would be asleep. With mesmerism, you will be awake. Truly awake. Can you open yourself to me, Jon?

HARKER

How?

SEWARD

Tell me the story again. Just as you told me.

HARKER

Once upon a time, there lived...or didn't live...or unlived...I need to be still.

SEWARD

That is impossible. There is too much energy in a living body. You cannot be still.

HARKER

Do the dead possess energy? What can make the dead...move?

SEWARD

There is no energy.

HARKER

Cold. Lifeless thing.

SEWARD

Strings from above. Puppets.

HARKER

No. Nothing up there to make us...

SEWARD

Unliving things are governed by different principles. We are alive.

HARKER

She stands in the light.

(COUNTESS enters, and stands in the blue light, looking up, almost frozen. There is music.)

She burns...does she burn? Do I see her burn? She doesn't...scream...she doesn't cry. She should have been named Joan. Like St. Joan. A proper name. Far more proper than...countess. Wife.

SEWARD

But the child lives.

HARKER

Yes. Not dead. Not undead. She is alive. I...I saved her.

SEWARD

You saved her. Know it. Feel it.

HARKER

But what she has seen. Can she live a normal life?

SEWARD

The child?

HARKER

Mina...what she has seen...why am I seeing Mina?

SEWARD

Animal magnetism....

HARKER

She waits for me...but...she doesn't wait for me. She stands near me. Doesn't she know I've returned?

SEWARD

Yes. She knows.

HARKER

She knows. But she does not feel it. What is it when you know something, but cannot feel it?

SEWARD

That is loss. Sadness. Isolation.

HARKER

I don't want to know this. I need...I need to not know this.

(THE MUSIC STOPS. LIGHTS CHANGE.
COUNTESS disappears.)

(Beat.) I say, the Count wasn't very wise, was he?

SEWARD

Was?