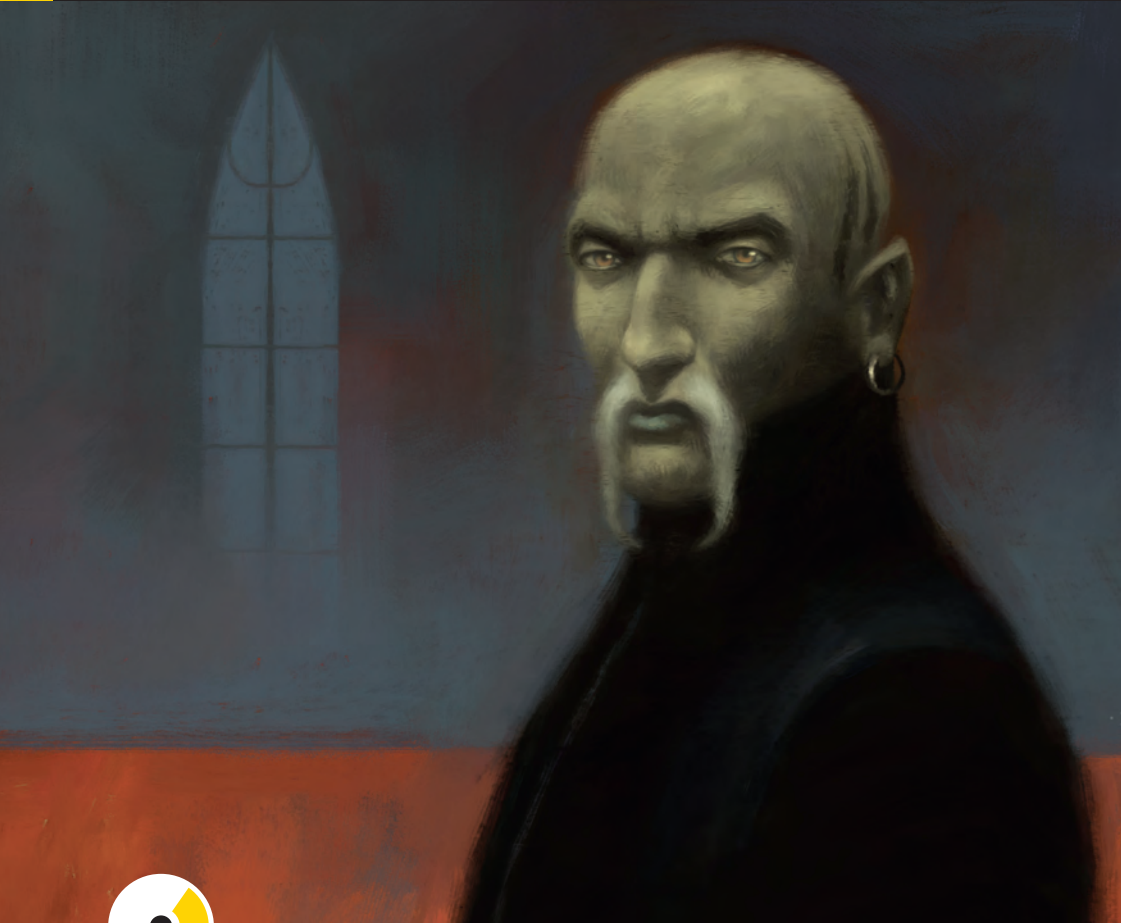


Bram Stoker

# Dracula



Audio CD



Vicens Vives - Dracula (Blackcat. Reading & Training)

- ISBN: 9788853009609

Bram Stoker

# Dracula

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# Contents



About the Author	4
CHAPTER ONE The Dead Travel Fast	12
CHAPTER TWO A Prisoner in Count Dracula's Castle	27
CHAPTER THREE The Count Arrives in England	47
CHAPTER FOUR Giving and Taking Blood	61
CHAPTER FIVE The Bloofer Woman	80
CHAPTER SIX Battle Plans	94
CHAPTER SEVEN 'The Girls You Love Are Mine'	104
CHAPTER EIGHT Racing against the Sun	119
<b>Dossiers</b> Real Vampires	40
Vampire Bats	75
Victorian Villains, Monsters and Fears	134



**INTERNET PROJECTS** 25, 59, 133, 139

**ACTIVITIES** 11, 22, 37, 56, 71, 90, 99, 115, 130

**AFTER READING** 140

**FCE** Cambridge FCE-style activities 11, 22, 46, 60, 74, 91, 92,  
93, 99, 101, 103, 118, 132

**T: GRADES 7-8** Trinity-style activities (Grades 7-8) 23, 58, 133

Chapters 1, 3, 4, 5, 8 are recorded on the accompanying CD.

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**Bram Stoker** (about 1880).

## *About the Author*

Bram Stoker, who was born in Clontarf, Ireland in 1847, grew up listening to great horror stories. He was a sickly boy and his mother often helped him pass the time by telling Irish tales of banshees,<sup>1</sup> demons and ghouls.<sup>2</sup>

1. **banshees** : women spirits in Irish folklore that appeared screaming in front of the house of a person who was dying.
2. **ghouls** [gu:lz] : evil spirits that rob graves and eat the dead bodies.

# The Dead Travel Fast

*Jonathan Harker's Diary (written in Bistritz)*

3 May

I left Munich for Transylvania on 1 May. When I arrived there at the Golden Krone Hotel, the landlady,<sup>1</sup> a very friendly old woman, welcomed me at the door of the hotel and said, 'The English gentleman?' 'Yes,' I replied, and she gave me this letter:

*My Friend,  
welcome to the Carpathians. Sleep well tonight.  
At three tomorrow a coach will start for Bukovina. A place on it  
is kept for you. At the Borgo Pass my coach will wait for you and  
bring you to me.*

*Your friend,  
Dracula*

1. **landlady** : the woman who owns a hotel, inn or apartment.



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*4 May*

Just before I was about to take the coach, the landlady came up to my room.

‘Must you go? Oh! young gentleman, must you go?’

Then she asked me, ‘Do you know what day it is?’ I told her that it was 4 May.

‘No, no, more than that,’ she said. ‘It is the eve<sup>2</sup> of St George’s Day. Don’t you know that tonight at midnight all the evil<sup>3</sup> things in the world will have complete power?’

She then fell down on her knees and told me not to go, but I had to go.

The landlady then stood up, and taking a crucifix from her neck, offered it to me. I did not know what to do. I was a member of the Church of England, and we see such things as somewhat idolatrous.<sup>4</sup> But I did not want to offend the old lady.

She saw the doubt on my face and put the crucifix around my neck and said, ‘Take it for your mother’s sake.’<sup>5</sup>

I do not know why, but I am feeling worried. If this diary reaches Mina before I do, then it will be my good-bye. Here comes the coach!

*5 May, the Castle*

When I got on the coach the driver was talking with the landlady. Some people came and listened and then looked at me with pity. A number of words were repeated often. I looked them

2. **eve** : the night before.

3. **evil** : very bad, wicked.

4. **idolatrous** : considered divine. An idol is usually a sculpture that is considered a god.

5. **for your mother’s sake** : for the good of your mother.

# The Dead Travel Fast

up in my polyglot<sup>6</sup> dictionary. They were ‘Ordog’ – Satan, ‘pokol’ – hell, ‘stregoica’ – witch, ‘vrolok’ and ‘vlkoslak’ – both of which mean the same thing, one being Slovak and the other Serbian for something that is either were-wolf<sup>7</sup> or vampire. (I must ask the Count about these superstitions.)

I soon forgot my fears as we travelled through this green hilly land of forests and farmhouses. The driver clearly wanted to arrive quickly to the Borgo Pass.<sup>8</sup> After some time we could see the Carpathian Mountains above these hills.

As it became dark, the other passengers kept telling the driver to go faster. Then through the darkness I could see an area of grey light ahead of us. Then the mountains seemed to come nearer to us on each side: we were entering the Borgo Pass. Then the coach stopped and we waited for the Count's coach to arrive. The driver said softly to another passenger that we were an hour early. Then he said to me, ‘You see, no one is here for you. You can go on to Bukovina and then return another day.’

Just then the horses became very excited. The passengers screamed and crossed themselves.<sup>9</sup> A coach with four beautiful black horses arrived. Its driver was a tall man, with a long brown beard and a great black hat that hid his face. His eyes seemed red in the lamplight.

He said to our driver, ‘You are early tonight, my friend.’

‘The English gentleman was in a hurry,’ our driver said.

6. **polyglot** : multilingual, with many languages.

7. **were-wolf** : a man that is part wolf.

8. **Pass** : an opening in the mountains through which you can travel.

9. **crossed themselves** : made the sign of the cross (in order to have the protection of Christ).

## The text and **beyond**

### **FCE** 1 **Comprehension check**

For questions 1-7, choose the best answer – A, B, C or D.

- 1 Jonathan saw the crucifix as something that could
  - A  only protect Transylvanians.
  - B  not really protect anybody.
  - C  only protect sons.
  - D  only protect women.
  
- 2 What didn't the Count and his driver have in common?
  - A  a large beard
  - B  sharp white teeth
  - C  very strong hands
  - D  red lips
  
- 3 The voyage to the castle seemed like a bad dream because
  - A  wolves came near the coach and howled.
  - B  the driver did not talk.
  - C  the horses were beautiful, black and very fast.
  - D  the same strange events happened again and again.
  
- 4 The Count wanted Jonathan's help in purchasing the property and
  - A  learning English grammar correctly.
  - B  becoming like an English nobleman.
  - C  transporting his possessions to England.
  - D  speaking English like an Englishman.
  
- 5 People in Transylvania had often put their treasures underground
  - A  to keep them away from witches and vampires.
  - B  to give the dead money.
  - C  to keep them away from nobility like the Count.
  - D  to keep them away from foreign armies.

- 6 In the end, Jonathan was glad he had written so much in his diary because
- A  it would help him to explain things to Mina.
- B  writing helped him to relax and stay calm.
- C  it kept him in touch with reality.
- D  it helped him remember questions for the Count.
- 7 How was the Count supernatural?
- A  He hated mirrors.
- B  Blood excited him.
- C  His breath stank.
- D  He had no reflection.

**2 The dead travel fast**

The line 'the dead travel fast' comes from the narrative poem *Lenore* by Gottfried August Bürger (1748-94). What do you think its meaning is? Give reasons for your answer.

- A  The dead always have the best horses and carriages.
- B  The dead no longer have bodies and so they have no physical limits.
- C  Other .....

**T: GRADE 7**

**3 Speaking: national customs**

Prepare a short oral report about customs or beliefs in your country to present to the class.

- Describe two superstitions or local customs.
- Say whether you believe in them or not.
- Say why people believe in superstitions.