

# **Dracula Study Guide**

## **Dracula by Bram Stoker**

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# Plot Summary

In the story *Dracula*, a young solicitor named Jonathan Harker travels to Transylvania to finalize paperwork with a client named Count Dracula. The paperwork is related to a house Dracula purchased in London. Jonathan disparages the superstitious peasants until he arrives at Dracula's isolated, dark castle. He notices many strange things there, including Dracula's non-reflective appearance, lack of appetite, and sharp teeth. Locals bring wooden boxes to the house, and Jonathan discovers them filled with dirt in a chapel. Dracula sleeps in one. Jonathan feels like a prisoner as the weeks drag on, and he fears Dracula and his harem of three wanton women will kill him. He keeps a detailed diary of all that transpires as he frets about Mina, his fiancé at home in Exeter.

Mina is worried about Jonathan as well when weeks pass without letters from him. She visits her childhood friend Lucy Westenra in a coastal village named Whitby. Lucy, though happily engaged to a man named Arthur Holmwood, seems restless. She takes to sleepwalking. Mina finds her one night in a churchyard with a strange dark being over her. A storm brings a mysterious ship to Whitby, with only a dead captain and many wooden boxes on board. Mina receives word from a hospital in Budapest that Jonathan is ill with brain fever. She immediately goes to him. They marry simply, and Jonathan, who cannot remember what happened in Transylvania, gives Mina his journal, asking her to keep it safe but not to read it.

Lucy goes to London with her mother, but her health is poor. Her fiancé Arthur asks his friend, Dr. John Seward, to examine her. Seward runs a lunatic asylum where he studies a particularly interesting patient named Renfield, a man who eats any live creatures that he can find. Seward is also a rejected suitor of Lucy. He finds nothing physically or mentally wrong with her, beyond two strange puncture wounds on her neck. He sends for his Dutch friend Dr. Van Helsing to look at her. Van Helsing has a theory about Lucy's illness, but he won't share it.

Lucy's health gets better and worse as she frequently and mysteriously loses blood overnight. Van Helsing uses some strange objects to treat her, including garlic and crucifixes. Despite constant transfusions from Arthur, the two doctors, and another former suitor named Quincey Morris, Lucy dies. When a newspaper story reveals that a woman has abducted children nearby and the children return home with neck wounds, Van Helsing finally asks Seward to open his mind to the idea that Lucy is a vampire. Seward is doubtful until he sees Lucy's lifelike body in her tomb. Van Helsing enlists Arthur and Quincey to witness Lucy out of her tomb during the night. Then, they give her eternal peace by staking her through the heart and cutting off her head. Van Helsing asks the men to join him in the quest to kill Dracula, Lucy's demon maker.



# Chapters 1 - 2

## Summary

Jonathan Harker, a young English solicitor's clerk, travels by train across Europe on his way to Transylvania, where he has business with a man named Count Dracula. Dracula has recently purchased property in London with the help of Jonathan's firm. Jonathan is simultaneously charmed by the simple peasant lifestyle he sees as he crosses Eastern Europe, and irritated by their lackadaisical train schedules. He has heard the peasants are superstitious, which he sees firsthand while spending a night in Bistritz, a town in the Carpathian Mountains.

Jonathan questions the staff at the Golden Krone Hotel about Count Dracula, but the old couple in charge refuse to speak about him. They beg Jonathan not to continue his trip that day, which is the eve of St. George's Day, when "all the evil things in the world will have full sway" (Page 6). Jonathan insists he must continue as planned, and the woman gives him a crucifix, which embarrasses Jonathan. As the coach prepares to leave Bistritz for the Borgo Pass, the villagers make the sign of the cross and point two fingers at Jonathan, a charm against the evil eye.

The coach sets off at a breakneck pace. Evening falls and there is an ominous feeling about the trip. When they arrive at the Borgo Pass, there is no vehicle waiting for Jonathan, and the driver tells him he will have to continue on to Bukovina. A carriage appears, whose driver admonishes the coach driver for arriving early. As Jonathan continues in the new carriage, howling wolves nearby make him anxious. After midnight, strange blue flames appear along the road. The driver stops to chase them down, wandering so far from the carriage that wolves surround it. Jonathan is terrified. The driver easily scares the wolves off. They finally arrive at Dracula's castle.

The castle is completely dark, and the driver unloads Jonathan's bags and drives off, leaving Jonathan alone. Just as Jonathan is getting scared, Count Dracula opens the door. Dracula is polite and welcoming, showing Jonathan to his rooms and offering him a late night supper. Dracula himself does not eat. They chat into the dawn, and Jonathan is both charmed and repulsed by the Count. Dracula urges Jonathan to sleep late the next day.

Jonathan wakes up in the early evening. He explores a library filled with English language books. Jonathan is surprised by the castle's lack of mirrors, and uses his own little travel mirror to shave. Jonathan asks Dracula later about the blue flames and his driver's strange behavior. Dracula explains that on St. George's day, the blue flames mark buried treasure; the region has a history of invasion, and the natives hid their possessions from outsiders. But the peasants are too superstitious to go out on St. George's night. Jonathan has Dracula sign paperwork related to the purchase of Dracula's estate in London, called Carfax. Jonathan describes the old, secluded house that perfectly suits Dracula's needs.



The next day, Jonathan is shaving when the Count enters his room. Jonathan is startled because he did not see Dracula in his shaving glass, though the Count is directly behind him. Jonathan cuts himself accidentally, and Dracula tries to grab Jonathan's throat but touches his crucifix. Dracula blames Jonathan's cut on his mirror, and throws the small glass out the window. Jonathan eats breakfast alone, wondering that he has yet to see Dracula eat. Jonathan explores the castle, discovering many locked doors, and finds himself feeling like a prisoner.

## Analysis

There is a stark division in Stoker's world between the modern England Jonathan Harker comes from, with its science and efficient technology, and rural Eastern Europe with its simple, perhaps backward people and superstitions. Jonathan is condescending about Transylvania, treating the local superstitions like a charming anthropological subject he can study. Readers may foreshadow that his flippant attitude may prove ironic given the menacing warning signs around him. Jonathan also encapsulates a class division; he, an English solicitor, comments haughtily about the "peasants" he encounters in Eastern Europe, deriding the "barbarianism" of the Slovaks and the women who "were pretty, except when you got near them." Readers should make note of the tension between the modern, science-driven world and the supernatural, superstitious world (in today's world, this tension continues as the dichotomy of west versus east). The conflict between two opposing worldviews is apparent from the first pages of the novel, and they are bound to clash.

Stoker dives right into creating an ominous feeling as Jonathan Harker travels east which heightens the conflict. The landscape and weather add to a sense of foreboding – the weather gets darker and colder the closer Jonathan gets to Dracula's castle, and the wolves howl more frequently and louder. Stoker anthropomorphizes nature to give the surroundings an unwelcoming air: shadows "creep" around Jonathan (page 10) and the mountains "frown" (Page 11). Dracula's castle is literally dark when Jonathan arrives, and all the allusions to the color black (the horses, Dracula's clothes) resonate metaphorically to conjure ideas of evil, death, and fear. The cold snow that begins as Jonathan approaches the castle mirrors Dracula's cold, pale skin; winter is the season of the dead. The snow covers the carriage in a "white blanket" (Page 15), marking its passengers as potential innocent prey to Dracula. The use of black and white underscores one theme of the novel: this is a world of absolutes, good and evil.

Modern readers will be familiar with Dracula's appearance and skills due to the pervasiveness of vampires in popular culture; but these readers should be aware that Stoker popularized this image: pale, icy skin, emaciated face, sharp teeth, "vice-like" strength. The other mythology will also be familiar: the garlic and crucifix to ward off Dracula, the Count's nocturnal existence and his lack of mirror reflection. Readers can foreshadow another significant part of the vampire lore from Dracula's strange greeting to Jonathan upon opening the door to the castle for him: "Welcome to my house! Enter freely and of your own free will!" (Page 19). Dracula himself cannot enter any space without such a specific invitation. His use of the phrase "free will" is somewhat ironic,



given his own ability to control people's minds and reduce their free will. In any case, Dracula may seem somewhat quaint to modern readers inundated with horror stories and films, but these contemporary fright-fests exist in large part thanks to Stoker's work.

The first several chapters of the novel are Jonathan's personal journal, with entries written almost daily, giving readers a sense of real-time as events are unfolding, and keeping them as unenlightened about what may happen next as Jonathan himself is. The first entry notes the journal was originally kept in shorthand, a system of abbreviations and symbols for rapid writing. Jonathan is writing in a sort of code, which gives the reader a deeper sense of the voyeur, reading his personal thoughts; not all of these thoughts make sense to the reader, as Jonathan references "Mina," though readers do not yet know who she is. It seems clear she is important to Jonathan, however.

## Discussion Question 1

Discuss how descriptions of the setting, both natural and manmade, help set the tone and atmosphere of the novel.

## Discussion Question 2

Compare and contrast Jonathan Harker to the Eastern European peasants he encounters. How does he feel about the peasants? Do you think readers are supposed to agree with Jonathan's assessment? Why or why not?

## Discussion Question 3

Compare and contrast Dracula to more modern representations of vampires. How much influence does Stoker have over vampire mythology today? Do you think Dracula is scary? Why or why not?

## Vocabulary

dawdle, prepossessing, reticent, imperative, idolatrous, polyglot, prevalent, bestrew, cleft, conveyance, alacrity, prodigious, salient, imperious, impalpable, interminable, intonation, forestall, dissipate, malady, physiognomy, aquiline, profusion, virility, pallor, protuberant, remiss, myriad, patronymic, mirth, malignant, saturnine, preternatural, diffuse, prosaic, precipice, chasm, veritable



## Chapters 3 - 4

### Summary

Jonathan feels like a prisoner, which makes him feel crazy. He realizes there are no servants in the castle, and that Dracula was the driver who controlled the wolves. The crucifix that Jonathan disparaged now comforts him. He asks the Count about his ancestral and national history. Dracula is a Boyar descended from Attila the Hun and a long line of warriors who have defended their native land. A few days later, Dracula asks Jonathan legal questions about working with several solicitors. It seems that he doesn't want any one person to know all of his business.

Dracula encourages Jonathan to write to inform his employer, Peter Hawkins, that Jonathan will be in Transylvania another month. Jonathan notices Dracula's mail addressed to businessmen in England, Varna, and Budapest. Dracula warns Jonathan not to fall asleep in any room but his own or he will have bad dreams. Jonathan looks out a window where he feels less confined because of its large view and notices Dracula crawling along the outside walls of the castle.

One evening when Dracula goes out, Jonathan explores the castle and is dismayed that he cannot open the front door. He finds rooms with a feminine air that he finds comforting, so he sits to write in his journal. He gets sleepy and has a dreamlike experience. Three women surround him, and he finds them sexually attractive. One approaches to kiss him, but instead he feels her sharp teeth against his neck. Before she bites him, the Count appears and admonishes the women. He promises they can "kiss" Jonathan after he, Dracula, is done with him. Jonathan watches Dracula give the women a bag containing a live child. The women fade away without leaving the room.

Jonathan wakes up in his own room, unsure if he dreamed the whole thing; the women's room is now locked. A few days later Dracula asks Jonathan to write three post-dated letters to Hawkins, tracking his travels once he leaves the castle. Jonathan fears his death is imminent. A group of Szgany (gypsies) arrives at the castle to work for Dracula. Jonathan throws letters to them. He wants the gypsies to mail the letters for him. Instead of mailing them, the gypsies give the letters to Dracula. Since the one to Mina is written in code, Dracula can't understand it. He burns it. He locks Jonathan in his room that night.

Jonathan soon notices all his documents, money, and travel suit are gone. He hopes a group of Slovaks might help him to escape, but they laugh at him as they unload wooden boxes. A few days later Jonathan sees Dracula crawl down the castle in his suit. He knows that Dracula is pretending to be Jonathan, creating evidence that Jonathan is "free." Dracula carries the bag, which contained a child. Jonathan watches for Dracula to return and notices a hypnotic dust in the air, which materializes into the three toothy women. He hears them feasting in Dracula's room. A woman appears in the courtyard, demanding her child, and Dracula sends the wolves to destroy her.



Jonathan realizes he has never seen Dracula during the day, so he decides to search in daylight for a means of escape. He climbs along the outside wall as he has seen Dracula do and enters the Count's room to search for keys. He is surprised to find the room filled with ancient gold coins. Jonathan can't find any keys, but follows a staircase to a ruined chapel, full of freshly dug dirt and the wooden boxes. Jonathan discovers Dracula lying in one of the boxes.

On June 29th, the date of Jonathan's last Count-dictated letter, Jonathan sees Dracula crawl from the castle and knows he is posting it. Dracula comes to Jonathan's rooms later and tells him Jonathan can leave the following day. Jonathan demands Dracula let him leave that night, and Dracula assents. At the castle door they are greeted by howling wolves, and Jonathan knows he is trapped. He later hears the three women whispering outside his room; Dracula reprimanding them to be patient until the following night. Jonathan is determined to escape the next morning, but he cannot open the front door. He again searches for keys, descending to the chapel, where he is shocked to see Dracula looking younger, his mouth stained with blood. Jonathan wants to destroy Dracula, but only manages to leave a gash in Dracula's forehead with a handy shovel.

Jonathan decides to wait for the Szgany and Slovaks to open the door and then run out. He can hear them but can't tell where they are. He listens as the Szgany and Slovaks leave again, locking him in. Jonathan decides to scale the wall as far as he can, taking some gold in case he can use it. He would rather fall to his death than wait for the three women to bleed him dry.

## Analysis

Keen readers will note how quickly Jonathan begins to doubt his own perceptions, making him feel crazy. This raises questions about his reliability as a narrator, and draws the reader deeper into the novel by making them doubt their own ideas about reality. Jonathan represents a worldview that means anything outside the realm of empirical science is impossible; anyone who believes the impossible must be mad. Yet, since Jonathan's perspective is the only one readers have, they must trust it, and believe the impossible even if he can't. The novel returns to the theme of madness frequently, underscoring the blurred world of reality, science, and experience: does an over-reliance on science and technology keep humanity from a deeper interaction with the natural and supernatural worlds? Are those who are mad actually more connected to the truth of reality?

Jonathan's self-doubt makes him more susceptible to the superstitious world he is immersed in. The crucifix, which he disparaged when the old hotel woman gave it to him, is now a comfort: "It is odd that a thing which I have been taught to regard with disfavor and as idolatrous should in a time of loneliness and trouble be of help. Is it that there is something in the essence of the thing itself, or that it is a medium, a tangible help, in conveying memories of sympathy and comfort?" (Page 33). Thus Jonathan wonders if the object itself has "power," or if it just reminds him that there are people, including God himself, who care about him and will protect him.





The crucifix is an important symbol, as it essentially pits God himself against Dracula. The novel depicts an epic battle between Christianity and Satan, heaven and hell, good and evil. Dracula's eyes flash red, a color which, like black, has negative associations: blood, death, and the devil. Dracula is from the devil himself. Readers should remain vigilant for Christian iconography and symbols. There is little subtlety in this struggle, and characters themselves may be interpreted in the most basic terms.

On page 58 Jonathan writes, "This was the being I was helping to transfer to London, where, perhaps, for centuries to come he might, amongst its teeming millions, satiate his lust for blood, and create a new and ever-widening circle of semi-demons to batten on the helpless." Here again the pitfalls of modernity rises up as a theme. London, one of the most industrialized and progressive cities in the world, would be no match for Dracula precisely because of its modernity. Its reliance on technology and science has reduced its faith and religion. Without this connection to the inexplicable, England will shut its eyes to the reality of Dracula. Its self-enforced ignorance will lead to its own destruction.

Jonathan notes the names and addresses on Dracula's personal mail. Readers can expect the towns of Whitby, Varna, and Budapest to play roles in the unfolding drama.

## Discussion Question 1

Do you think Jonathan is a reliable narrator? Why or why not? Why is his journal so important to him?

## Discussion Question 2

Discuss three images or symbols that reinforce the novel's theme pitting good versus evil.

## Discussion Question 3

Does the novel advocate for modernity over ancient custom or vice versa? Explain how you can tell using examples from the text.

## Vocabulary

menial, tangible, militate, acumen, compunction, nocturnal, repose, obstinacy, languorous, lurid, countermand, obeisance, cudgel, nebulous, aerial, gambol, gorge, replete, satiate, malice



# Chapters 5 - 6

## Summary

Chapters 5 and 6 relate a variety of “primary source” documents similar to Jonathan’s journal in the first four chapters. The timeline jumps backward, so that the first letter from Jonathan’s fiancée, Mina Murray, to her childhood friend Lucy Westenra, dates from May 9. Mina writes to Lucy about her tiring job as an assistant schoolmistress. She keeps herself busy while Jonathan is away by practicing shorthand and stenography. She keeps a detailed record of her daily life in a journal as a memory exercise. She recently received a letter from Jonathan claiming he will be home in a week.

Lucy writes back, briefing Mina on a man she is in love with named Arthur Holmwood. She mentions a doctor, John Seward, whom she thinks would suit Mina if Mina were free. Seward runs a lunatic asylum. Lucy writes again on May 24, describing three marriage proposals she received in one day. The first was from Seward; the second from a Texan named Quincey P. Morris. Both men promise Lucy eternal friendship. Finally Arthur proposes, thrilling Lucy.

The chapter then switches to Dr. Seward’s diary from May 25, kept via phonograph, in which he laments his broken heart over Lucy. He throws himself into his work at the lunatic asylum to distract himself. He is focused on a patient named R.M. Renfield, aged 59.

A letter from Quincey Morris to Arthur Holmwood, also dated May 25, invites him and Seward for a drink to celebrate Arthur’s engagement. Quincey assures Arthur he and Seward have no hard feelings, as the three men have a longstanding friendship. Arthur accepts the invitation.

Chapter 6 begins with Mina’s journal. She arrives in Whitby to visit Lucy on July 24. Whitby is a small town on the Yorkshire coast. The church and graveyard overlook the harbor, and Mina likes to sit in the cemetery writing in her journal. She befriends an old man named Mr. Swales, a former sailor who is nearly one hundred. A week later, Mina and Lucy visit the graveyard and Mr. Swales debunks legends of the sea for them. He claims ghosts and omens are a way of keeping people in line. He further claims the gravestones lie, since most of them mark spots for men who died at sea or committed suicide. Mina thinks the tombstones are to console the relatives. Mina worries about Jonathan, whom she hasn’t heard from in a month.

Dr. Seward dictates to his diary about Renfield, starting from June 5. Renfield collects flies, and then spiders, which eat the flies. He switches to sparrows, which eat the spiders, until he finally begs for a cat, but Seward refuses. Seward is disturbed when Renfield eats a blowfly; Renfield claims the insect is full of life and thus gives him life. Renfield keeps an inexplicable accounting book. Seward visits Renfield on July 20 and discovers Renfield ate the sparrows; he classifies Renfield as a “zoophagous,” a life-



eating maniac. Seward is tempted to let Renfield continue eating upward so Seward can write a case study of Renfield's particular madness.

Mina's journal continues from July 26. Peter Hawkins, Jonathan's employer, forwarded a letter saying Jonathan had left Dracula's castle. Mina worries because a one line letter is not Jonathan's style. Mina is also concerned because Lucy has begun sleepwalking, and Mina must lock them both into their room at night. Lucy inevitably wakes up Mina each night, which is wearing her out. She is slightly jealous of Lucy, who will be entering her marriage to Arthur in a better financial situation than she and Jonathan will have.

Mina still hasn't heard from Jonathan by August 6, as Whitby prepares for a large storm. Mina sits in the cemetery and chats with Mr. Swales, who apologizes for all his morbid humor, admitting he is afraid of his own imminent death. As the storm gets closer, a member of the coast guard points out to Mina a schooner near the harbor that doesn't seem to have a fixed direction and is bound to be caught in the storm.

## Analysis

The first four chapters of the novel are all told from Jonathan Harker's perspective, through his carefully observed journal. But beginning in Chapter 5, the novel switches perspectives, and readers are given a range of narrative voices – Mina, Lucy, Seward – and through these characters' recording of events, some ancillary characters are given voice as well, such as the sailor, Mr. Swales, and the American Quincey P. Morris. Each character is trying to give a precise record of events, and the effect gives the novel a documentary feel, as readers glimpse journals, letters, and recorded dialogue. The use of dialect is pervasive as Mina writes Swales dialogue phonetically, giving readers a sample of his Yorkshire accent and manner of speaking. The same is true of Quincey when Lucy writes down his proposal – his idioms and speech patterns are distinctly American. Readers can almost hear these characters speak.

This focus on voice and the daily recording of events gives the novel a sense of urgency – what will happen next? – and also credibility – it creates a sense of objectivity, allowing readers to accept it as “true.” There is something scientific and modern about the compilation of documentation (particularly given the references to shorthand and stenography), a macrocosm of the case study Seward would write about the isolated experience of Renfield. It is an unusual stylistic choice for the novel, and it raises the question about who the protagonist might be; it seemed clear Jonathan was the hero for the first four chapters, but now the shift in perspective is slightly disorienting. It also builds suspense, as Jonathan's fate at the end of Chapter 4 as he tries to escape the castle is unclear, and readers are now experiencing the same period of time (May through July) from an entirely point of view. The reader can piece together all the information in ways the characters can't, giving the reader a more direct stake in acting as detective and fitting simultaneous events together.

Seward has diagnosed Renfield as a “zoophagous” - life-eating maniac. Readers, who have more information than individual characters, will immediately recognize Renfield



as a reflection of Dracula, a sort of human vampire. Life (via blood) is key to sustaining life. Seward, a doctor and scientist, associates this lust for life with madness. Readers can foreshadow Seward's reaction to Dracula, who represents Renfield in an extreme form, but exists outside the laws of nature. Anything outside the boundaries of scientific and societal order must be classified as madness; Seward will assume some madness when confronted with vampires, but whose? Readers can also presume there will be a more direct connection between Renfield and Dracula as they pursue their mutual goal.

These first encounters with Mina and Lucy introduce the theme of gender roles into the novel. Both women are sweet and proper, completely devoted to their fiancées. Lucy's value is implicit in the fact that three men propose to her in a single day – she is an ideal of chaste, compassionate womanhood. Their attitudes toward their own virtues and that of the men who love them is summed up when Lucy writes, "My dear Mina, why are men so noble when we women are so little worthy of them?" (Page 66). These women subscribe to traditional gender roles to an almost alarming extent: they are completely without flaw. They set up a stark contrast to the three women vampire who tried to bite Jonathan. The vampires, fallen from God's grace, are overtly sexual; Stoker uses the word voluptuous as a pejorative to describe them. They are a temptation to Jonathan, who finds himself attracted to their "ruby" lips (again the color red has a symbolic association with both blood and the devil; it is a color of evil). This dichotomy, with the virtuous and dedicated Mina and Lucy on one hand and the three wanton female vampires on the other, is a stereotypical black-and-white representation of women as Madonna and whore, an old motif pitting two sides of male desire for women. Readers should question how these representations of women may help create rigid and unhealthy perceptions of female sexuality.

## Discussion Question 1

Discuss the structure of the novel. Who offers the main perspective? Why is it unusual? Does it make the plot more or less suspenseful?

## Discussion Question 2

Compare and contrast Lucy and Mina to the three vampire women at Dracula's castle. How does each represent an idea of feminine gender roles?

## Discussion Question 3

Compare and contrast Renfield and Dracula. How are they alike? How are they different? Do you think Renfield is truly mad? Why or why not?

## Vocabulary

assiduous, imperturbable, heresy, rebuff, sanguine, expostulate, acquiesce, cerebration, congenital



## Chapters 7 - 8

### Summary

Chapter 7 begins with a newspaper clipping from the August 8th edition of "The Dailygraph" that Mina pasted into her journal. The article is about the storm. It describes the same wayward schooner that the coast guard noticed making it into the harbor and crashing to shore. A dead man is lashed to the steering wheel with ropes and a rosary. A dog runs away from the ship. They learn the Russian schooner, the Demeter, sailed from Varna. It was consigned to a Whitby solicitor named S.F. Billington. No one can find the dog, which may have killed a local dog. The transcript of the ship's log describes the first few uneventful days of travel through the Black Sea with a cargo of wooden boxes. The crew becomes anxious about a stranger on board, and one of the crew goes missing. They find no stowaways. They have bad fog and more crew missing.

The last days' log was found in a bottle in the captain's pocket. By August 3, only the captain and first mate remain, and the first mate seems mad as he describes a strange, incorporeal man. The first mate searches the boxes for the stranger, then throws himself overboard. On August 4, the captain sees the strange man. He straps himself to the helm with cords and his rosary beads. The reporter notes that no trace of the stranger has been found, nor of the dog. The captain will get a hero's funeral along the river Esk before being buried in the Whitby churchyard.

The narrative switches to Mina's journal. Lucy was restless and sleepwalked on the night of the storm. On August 10, she and Lucy watch the captain's funeral from the churchyard. Mina wonders why Lucy is anxious. Mina wonders if the sudden death of Mr. Swales, who was found in the churchyard looking scared, is affecting Lucy. She hopes a long walk will wear her out.

The walk helps as Lucy seems in better spirits, and she goes to sleep easily. But Mina wakes to discover Lucy is gone, despite the locked door, and in only her nightdress. Mina sees Lucy in the churchyard with a dark presence bending over her. By the time Mina reaches Lucy, Lucy is alone. Lucy has trouble breathing and puts her hand to her throat. Thinking she is cold, Mina pins a shawl around her. The next day, Mina is surprised to find Lucy looking healthy and cheerful. Mina blames herself for clumsily safety-pinning Lucy's shawl when she notices two tiny puncture marks on Lucy's throat. That night Mina ties the room key around her wrist.

Lucy tries to get out twice the next night, but during the day she is more relaxed than she has been. The following night, Lucy sits up in bed pointing to the window, where Mina sees a bat. On their way home from the churchyard the next evening, they look back at the view. Lucy speaks dreamily of "his red eyes," and Mina notices a dark figure sitting on their bench, whose eyes glow red even from a distance. She chalks it up to the sunset. Lucy goes to bed early and Mina takes a walk, thinking about Jonathan. She



returns to find Lucy sleeping at the open window with a large bird on the windowsill. Mina worries about Lucy's heavy breathing and pale coloring.

Arthur Holmwood writes that his father is better. He wants to married as soon as possible. Lucy's mother confides in Mina that she is glad Lucy will be settled, because she herself is dying. Lucy's illness continues, and Mina finds her sleeping with her head out the window. Mina can't wake her. Mina frets that the two puncture wounds in Lucy's neck seem bigger.

The chapter continues with a letter dated August 17, from the solicitor Samuel Billington of Whitby, to a London firm called Carter, Paterson, and Co., with arrangements for the delivery of fifty wooden boxes to the estate of Carfax, instructing that they be picked up from Kings Cross station and put in the mansion's former chapel as quickly as possible. The firm of Carter, Paterson, and Co. responds on August 21 that all the arrangements have been made as instructed.

The chapter returns to Mina's journal from August 18, and Mina rejoices that Lucy is healthier, sleeping through the night and regaining her color. As they sit in the churchyard, Mina asks Lucy if she remembers any dreams from the night she sleepwalked to the churchyard. What Lucy remembers felt more real than a dream. There were dogs barking as she walked. She sat on the bench with a long creature with red eyes near her. She felt as if her soul left her body, returning as Mina shook her awake. Mina is disturbed but glad that Lucy continues to be in better health.

On August 19, Mina receives a letter from Mr. Hawkins, with a forwarded letter from a nurse, Sister Agatha, at a Budapest hospital. Sister Agatha writes that Jonathan has been in the hospital of St. Joseph and St. Mary for six weeks, suffering from a brain fever. He needs to stay a little longer. Sister Agatha writes privately to Mina that Jonathan has been ranting deliriously about blood and wolves and demons. Mina prepares to go to Budapest to be with him.

The narrative returns to Dr. Seward's diary, on August 19, as he recounts the strange agitated behavior of Renfield, who claims enigmatically that "The Master has come." Renfield has taken to treating the asylum staff poorly, and they think he is experiencing a religious mania. Renfield escapes out his window. Seward traces Renfield to the chapel door of the neighboring mansion, Carfax. Asylum workers subdue Renfield into a straightjacket and chain him in a padded room, while Renfield continues to call out to his "Master."

## Analysis

The storm is a fitting backdrop for Dracula's arrival in England; it symbolizes the dark tempest he will wreak in his new home. Similarly, the bat that flaps at Lucy and Mina's window, which readers can assume is Dracula in an transformed state, has a number of semiotic associations that makes it a fitting metaphor for the Count: bats are nocturnal (in keeping with the pervasive black/darkness Dracula surrounds himself with), some





species are blood-sucking, and in contemporary society are frequently used in Halloween decorations.

Mina continues to uphold the male's version of a feminine ideal when she says, "Some of the 'New Women' writers will some day start an idea that men and women should be allowed to see each other asleep before proposing or accepting. But I suppose the 'New Woman' won't condescend in future to accept. She will do the proposing herself. And a nice job she will make of it too! There's some consolation in that" (Page 98). Here Mina is disparaging the nineteenth century's nascent feminist movement. Stoker's vision of a perfect woman would not seek independence and masculine tasks but knows her delicate, virtuous place.

Again, through the thorough collection of documents, readers have a sense of the veracity of the overall narrative – sources outside the main cast of characters, such as the newspaper article and the Demeter's log, unwittingly but objectively back up the strange reality of events. This pervasive documentation is most useful to the reader, who can interpret the information in ways the characters cannot at the present moment of the story. For example, readers will recall the solicitor Billington in Whitby from the pile of Dracula's mail that Jonathan snooped over. Readers understand that Dracula has officially made it to England and he has brought the boxes Jonathan saw the Slovaks unloading at the castle. Mr. Swales, at the age of nearly 100, fears natural death, but readers know Dracula caused his frightful death. They also know Seward's asylum is directly next to Dracula's mansion Carfax, which sets them up for an inevitable clash.

Renfield clearly seeks Dracula, a life-eating mentor, though how Renfield could know about the vampire remains a mystery – perhaps it is simply a part of his greater attunement to the supernatural world implicit in his madness. Renfield looks to Dracula as a savior; Dracula is a perversion of the Christian ideal. Catholics eat Christ's flesh and drink Christ's blood as part of the transubstantiation ritual of the Mass (a somewhat supernatural idea based in faith), but Dracula drinks blood in an unholy and destructive way). Though Seward is unaware of Dracula's presence thus far in the novel, he recognizes the perverseness of what he believes is Renfield's sudden religious mania. Renfield will no longer interact with people now that his "Master" is at hand. Seward notes, "The real God taketh heed lest a sparrow fall" (Page 110). Each life is precious to God in the Christian ideal, but life means little to vampires, who kill indiscriminately and without remorse.

The suspense of Jonathan's fate is resolved here; he survived and escaped from Dracula's castle, though there is no explanation of how.

## Discussion Question 1

Describe how the storm that hits Whitby acts as a metaphor for Dracula's arrival in England.





## Discussion Question 2

Explain what is actually happening to Lucy throughout these chapters, through her periods of sleepwalking and then restfulness.

## Discussion Question 3

Discuss how Dracula is a perversion of Christian rituals. What threat does he pose to Victorian society?

## Vocabulary

prolific, undulating, spume, cleave, contravention, abate, allay, maelstrom, stolid, adduce, agglomeration, languid, consign, obviate, wan, servile, apathy, enigmatic, errant, paroxysm



# Chapters 9 - 10

## Summary

On August 24, Mina writes to Lucy from Budapest that Jonathan is stable but still ill. Neither he nor Sister Agatha will say what happened to him. Jonathan claims not to remember, and Mina is happy to believe him. Jonathan gives her his journal, telling her she can read it, but he would prefer they both remain ignorant of its contents. Mina arranges a simple wedding. As a gift to Jonathan, she wraps up the diary and promises to keep his trust and never read it. Lucy writes to Mina on August 30, claiming her health is better; she does not sleepwalk or have nightmares anymore. Arthur visits her and they plan their wedding for September 28.

The chapter continues in Seward's diary, from August 20. Renfield is violent during the day but calm from dusk until dawn, and Seward wonders what is influencing him. He gives Renfield another chance to escape, which at first Renfield doesn't take. When he finally runs out, the asylum staff again find him at the chapel door of the adjoining mansion. He gets violent as they restrain him, but is soothed by a bat flying nearby, and goes willingly back to the asylum.

Lucy begins a journal and writes her first entry on August 24 from Hillingham in London. She is having bad dreams again, but cannot remember the details. They leave her weak and tired. She tries to stay awake but can't. She notices a flapping at the window before dozing off. Arthur finds her listless pallor disturbing, and writes to Seward, begging him to examine her. Seward agrees to see Lucy. He cannot find anything physically or mentally wrong with her, so he sends for his friend and mentor, Professor Van Helsing of Amsterdam. Van Helsing is also concerned about Lucy's health. He has a theory about her illness, but he won't share it with Seward. Van Helsing returns to Amsterdam, ordering Seward to update him daily about Lucy's condition.

At the asylum, Renfield, has a violent fit at noon, but by 5pm he is happily eating flies and begging Seward if he can return to his own room. He mutters that he has been abandoned. Renfield has another fit as the sun sets, but quickly calms down again. Seward formulates a theory about how the sun's movements might affect his mood. Three days after Van Helsing leaves, Seward telegrams Van Helsing that Lucy has deteriorated overnight.

Chapter 10 begins with a letter from Seward to Arthur Holmwood, hinting that Lucy is worse. Van Helsing, back in London, instructs Seward to take detailed notes about Lucy's condition. Van Helsing calls for a blood transfusion. Arthur shows up unexpectedly and they use his blood. Lucy seems better. Seward notices that Lucy has two small puncture marks on her neck. Seward cannot find a reason for the wounds, but Van Helsing continues to work on a theory, and returns to Amsterdam for books and equipment. He instructs Seward to stay up all night with Lucy.



Lucy fights sleep because of her bad dreams, but Seward promises to keep vigil over her. Lucy sleeps peacefully and wakes up completely refreshed. Seward leaves to attend his asylum business, glad to learn Renfield has been well-behaved for 24 hours. He returns to the Westenras for the night. He sleeps in a room adjoining Lucy's; she is well enough to write in her journal, proclaiming her devotion to Arthur, whose "warm presence" she feels nearby.

Van Helsing returns in the morning, and he and Seward examine Lucy, finding her much worse. They perform a transfusion using Seward's blood. Lucy revives, and they agree to keep the transfusion from Arthur. Seward wonders how Lucy could have lost so much blood in one night; he dreams of the puncture marks in her neck without understanding the connection. Van Helsing goes to the telegraph office, but returns to watch Lucy overnight, sending Seward home to rest.

Seward returns to the Westenras on September 11. Van Helsing makes a necklace of garlic "flowers" for Lucy, rubbing the rest over all the entrances to the room. Seward trusts Van Helsing too much to be entirely skeptical, but he finds Van Helsing's actions unscientific. They order Lucy to wear her necklace and keep the windows close, and then both men leave for the night. Van Helsing is confident in his garlic, but Seward fears another relapse.

## Analysis

Readers know that Dracula is now in London, and by piecing together the timeline of journal entries and letters, particularly the events surrounding Lucy and Renfield, they can track his movements and activities in ways that are not clear to the characters who are not yet aware of him. The use of language mirrors their ignorance; the word vampire does not appear anywhere in the text thus far. Jonathan has blocked out his memories of Transylvania and what he saw Dracula and the women do, and Van Helsing will not reveal his theory to Seward about Lucy's illness, though his use of garlic indicates he has an understanding. Seward gets closer to the truth than he realizes when he describes Lucy as "bloodless." However, for the time being in the novel no one wants to acknowledge the possibility of supernatural occurrences.

Van Helsing's use of garlic baffles the scientific-minded Seward, and the tension between science and superstition frequently raises questions about the nature of madness itself. Van Helsing is too well-trained for Seward to question his sanity, but Jonathan's experiences in Transylvania are explained away through a medical diagnosis – brain fever – rather than facing the reality of superstitious strangeness Jonathan witnessed at Dracula's castle, and Jonathan clearly doubts his own mind. He refuses to remember anything rather than face the possibility that he is crazy. Renfield is the epitome of "madness," yet readers know what he is experiencing is related to the real external force of Dracula – so is he actually crazy at all? When Renfield claims he would never hurt Seward, Seward muses, "It was soothing, somehow, to the feelings to find myself disassociated even in the mind of this poor madman from the others, but all the same I do not follow his thought. Am I to take it that I have anything in common with



him, so that we are, as it were, to stand together” (Page 118). Seward cannot imagine he has anything in common with the lunatic Renfield, but because readers know Renfield’s actions are not just the product of his own mind, the line between sane and insane is blurred. Seward may find, as events unfold, that Renfield is more similar to Seward than Seward thought – which makes the reverse also true (i.e., Seward may be just as “mad” as Renfield – or anyone). Madness is not as clear-cut as Seward may like to think, and Van Helsing sums up the moral of this theme the best by saying, “All men are mad in some way or the other, and inasmuch as you deal discreetly with your madmen, so deal with God’s madmen too, the rest of the world” (Page 129).

Van Helsing is a new character in the novel, but his character is immediately vouched for by Seward. He is repaying a debt to Seward, who once saved his life; the fact that Seward would save him and the fact that Van Helsing would do anything for Seward in order to repay this debt and remain honorable gives readers permission to trust Van Helsing immediately, despite his unorthodox “medical” techniques. Seward describes Van Helsing in a letter to Arthur as having “an absolutely open mind” (Page 122), and this invites readers to have an open mind to Van Helsing’s theories, when he makes them known. Van Helsing has credibility, which reinforces the documentary style of the novel – readers should continue to believe everything within its pages is absolutely true.

There is an absurdity in the fact that Mina is relieved to learn, upon arriving in Budapest, that Jonathan has not cheated on her. She says, “I felt a thrill of joy through me when I knew that no other woman was a cause for trouble” (Page 115). Little does she know that what is ahead is so much worse than an unfaithful husband – though to her strict idea about gender roles, perhaps Dracula is no greater a force against her than another woman. These chapters further reinforce the role of women in late nineteenth century society, and the main framework for that role is marriage, as exemplified by Mina and Jonathan. The buzzwords for women are duty, trust, and obedience. At the beginning of Chapter 9, Mina writes to Lucy about the joy she takes in her “duty” to Jonathan. She talks of the trust between them, but the wrapping of Jonathan’s diary, and the ignorance to its contents, may foreshadow a rift between them; they are not maintaining the absolute trust required by marriage. Later, in a slightly different context, Van Helsing admonishes Lucy to wear her garlic necklace because, “We must obey, and silence is a part of obedience, and obedience is to bring you strong” (Page 142). Whether within the marriage or without, women were urged to be submissive to the men around them; as personified by Mina and Lucy, such submission should bring them happiness.

## Discussion Question 1

Seward thinks Renfield’s moods are contingent on the movement of the sun, but what really affects Renfield’s behavior? Create a timeline tracking Dracula’s movements using the behavior of Renfield and Lucy.



## Discussion Question 2

Discuss the theme of madness in the novel, comparing and contrasting Jonathan, Renfield and Van Helsing. Are these characters reliable? Why or why not?

## Discussion Question 3

Why do Seward and Van Helsing keep Lucy's second blood transfusion a secret from her fiancé Arthur? What does this secretiveness reveal about the relationship between a man and a woman in Victorian England?

## Vocabulary

cessation, suffuse, furtive, ominous, demur, infer, lethargic, indomitable, geniality, inert, converge, emanate, potency, vivacity, prostration, presage, arrears, induce, pallid, remonstrate, retrograde, intercede



# Chapters 11 - 12

## Summary

Lucy makes a brief journal entry on September 12, noting her gratitude to Van Helsing and Seward and the comfort she takes in the garlic. Seward's journal continues the narrative, as he and Van Helsing arrive the next morning, only to find that Lucy's mother removed Lucy's garlic necklace as she slept and opened the windows. Seward performs a transfusion using Van Helsing's blood. Van Helsing decides to stay at the house for the duration.

Lucy writes again in her journal on September 17, expressing her joy at four good nights' sleep. The narrative continues with an article from the Pallmall Gazette, in which a reporter interviews Thomas Bilder, an animal keeper at the Zoological Gardens, about an escaped wolf. The wolf, Bersicker, has never misbehaved but the previous day Bersicker tried to get free. A man watched him (readers will recognize it as Dracula). That night the wolves howl, and Bersicker goes missing. As the reporter pays Thomas, Bersicker appears, with a head of broken glass but docile.

Seward's journal from this same night recounts Renfield breaking into his office and cutting Seward's wrist, lapping up Seward's blood from the floor and claiming, "The blood is the life." The next morning Seward receives a late delivered telegram from Van Helsing asking him to spend the previous night at the Westenra's house. He hurries to Hillingham, fearing the worst.

Lucy writes a memorandum describing the same evening. She can't sleep because of a bat and dog outside her window. She asks her mother to stay with her. Suddenly, a wolf breaks through the window. Mrs. Westenra dies of shock. Lucy loses consciousness. The maids discover them and go for a glass of wine to calm down, but the wine is drugged with laudanum. Lucy arranges her garlic flowers on her mother. She sees specks floating at the window, and fears she will die.

The next morning Seward and Van Helsing break into the house. Lucy has a faint heartbeat, and they put her in a hot bath. Lucy revives, and Seward and Van Helsing discuss options, shocked to find Quincey Morris in the house, on an errand from a worried Arthur. Quincey offers his blood, which saves Lucy but her neck wounds look worse. Van Helsing shows Lucy's memorandum to Seward, who does not understand it, though Van Helsing seems to.

Quincey vows to help protect Lucy. Van Helsing returns Lucy's note to her nightdress; Lucy falls asleep and starts to rip it up, though Van Helsing keeps her from destroying it entirely. The men keep vigil over her all night. Lucy does not seem better despite the transfusion, and Seward notices that her face is gaunt and her teeth look sharper. Arthur arrives and Lucy rallies a bit.



Mina writes a letter to Lucy, which goes unopened. She and Jonathan have returned to Exeter, where Jonathan has become a full partner in Hawkins firm. They are shocked when Hawkins tells them that he intends to leave them his small fortune, as he has no heirs. Mina writes again the next day, with the news that Peter Hawkins has died suddenly. Mina and Jonathan will travel to London for the funeral, and Mina promises to try to visit Lucy.

Seward receives a letter from the asylum, reporting the news of Renfield. Renfield sees two men carting some wooden boxes from Carfax. He screams obscenities at them, and breaks out of his window to attack them. He nearly kills one before the attendants can subdue him. The two carriers are mollified with alcohol and money. On September 20, Seward writes in his diary that Lucy is not improving. Seward notices a bat flapping at the window. The puncture wounds on Lucy's throat are gone, and Van Helsing predicts she will die soon. They bring in Arthur to say goodbye. Seward notes Lucy's strange behavior: she demands in an atypically sultry voice that Arthur kiss her, but Van Helsing intervenes. Seward is shocked by Lucy's subsequent rage. She wakes up later as her old self, and she and Arthur say goodbye. Lucy looks peaceful and lifelike in death, as if she were sleeping. Van Helsing cryptically claims they must wait and watch her.

## Analysis

Death itself is a pervasive theme of the novel, coming inescapably in all forms. Peter Hawkins, Jonathan's employer dies suddenly (though conveniently after writing his will to leave Jonathan and Mina everything he has); Arthur's father loses his battle with a long illness; and Lucy's mother, who has long had a heart problem, dies as predicted from a sudden shock (the wolf smashing through Lucy's window). Dracula may not directly cause any of these deaths, but his very presence in England seems to act like an ominous blanket over the nation. No one is safe from death; there are chaotic and disruptive forces at work, no matter how many medical and scientific advances are made. Death is not merely spiritual or physical, but also legal, and Seward goes to quietly get a death certificate for Lucy's mother rather than allowing authorities to examine the body and do an inquest. He does so theoretically to save Lucy the hassle of intruders while she grieves, but in reality, the circumstances of Mrs. Westenra's death are so strange he doesn't want anyone else involved, lest unanswerable questions arise.

This emphasis on propriety is the flip side of the coin to avoiding potential accusations of madness (why all the garlic surrounding the deceased?) and madness continues to be a major theme. Lucy feels relaxed and confident surrounded by Van Helsing's garlic before she goes to sleep, but she makes a reference to feeling like Ophelia from Shakespeare's Hamlet – a character who commits suicide after going crazy. Furthermore, by claiming to “[lie] like Ophelia in the play, with 'virgin crants and maiden strewments.’” (Page 144) – as Ophelia did during her funeral – Lucy innocently foreshadows her own death (as does the nightingale singing outside her window, a bird whose song has a history of symbolizing a death's lament). Seward cannot understand





what is causing Lucy's extreme overnight blood loss. He wonders, "What does it all mean? I am beginning to wonder if my long habit of life amongst the insane is beginning to tell upon my own brain" (Page 146). He cannot stretch himself to look for an explanation outside science or medicine because to even consider a possibility in the supernatural makes him feel he is going crazy. Lucy's account of events on the night her other dies only makes him wonder if she too is crazy.

Like Mr. Swales in Whitby, Stoker writes the dialogue of Thomas Bilder, the zookeeper, phonetically, emphasizing his accent. Their use of language – dropping beginning "h's" and the "g's" of gerunds, calling the reporter "guv'nor" – indicates their social status; they are working class, and their language is informal and loose. Van Helsing, on the other hand, has a different accent, which is much more formal, yet slightly off in terms of syntax and usage. This demonstrates that Van Helsing is well educated and of the upper class, but not a native English speaker. Stoker uses the dialogue and diaries to create individual speaking voices, building a portrait of a character through the language choices themselves.

Blood is an important symbol throughout the novel, representing life itself. It works on many levels, from the horror of Dracula's bloodsucking, destroying life in order to sustain his own. Christ's blood sacrifice – he died so that others might live – is antithetical to Dracula. Renfield, claims, "The Blood is the life" (Page 153). He tries to drink Seward's blood after cutting him, a grotesque parody of Dracula himself but also a further perversion of the Christian ritual of drinking Jesus' blood during Mass. There is also a strange sexual subtext to the blood transfusions Lucy receives from four separate men. Van Helsing claims, "A brave man's blood is the best thing on this earth when a woman is in trouble" (Page 161) and his statement contains an element of chivalry and honorable sacrifice. However this surfeit of bodily fluid exchanges seems somehow inappropriate, underscored by the doctors' desire to keep the transfusions secret from Arthur, Lucy's fiancé. Before she dies she asks Arthur to kiss her, using a "voluptuous" voice that is reminiscent of the three women at Dracula's castle. Readers can assume she will become more like them after her death; her conversion from Madonna to whore will be complete.

## Discussion Question 1

Discuss Stoker's use of the word "voluptuous" in the text. Does it mean the same thing to him that it does today? How does his use of the word describe attitudes toward female sexuality in Victorian England?

## Discussion Question 2

Describe all the powers that Dracula has exhibited so far in the text. Does he have any limitations? Is there any obvious way to beat him so far?





## Discussion Question 3

What does blood symbolize in the novel? Discuss how various characters go about getting blood; do they all have the same goal for obtaining it? Is the pursuit of blood positive or negative? Why?

## Vocabulary

perilous, query, insolent, perambulator, penitent, vulpine, prodigal, solicitude, placid, pacify, aperture, acrid, ingress, stertorus, chafe, reprehensible, avarice



# Chapters 13 - 14

## Summary

Seward finalizes preparations for the funerals of Lucy and her mother. Van Helsing goes through Lucy's things, keeping her private paperwork. He surrounds Lucy's corpse with more garlic and puts a golden crucifix on her lips. Van Helsing requests that Seward bring him post-mortem knives the following evening, so that Van Helsing can cut off Lucy's head and cut out her heart. Seward is shocked, but Van Helsing asks that Seward trust him. Seward agrees. The next day, Van Helsing cancels the plan; the crucifix was removed overnight, and now they must wait.

They send for Mrs. Westenra's solicitor, who informs them that Arthur, now Lord Godalming due to his father's death, has inherited all of the Westenras property. Arthur returns to say his final goodbyes; Seward has to assure him that the lifelike Lucy is really dead. Van Helsing asks Arthur if he may keep Lucy's personal papers, and Arthur agrees. After the funeral, Arthur, accompanied by Quincey, returns home. Arthur believes because of his transfusion, he and Lucy were married in the eyes of God – he never knew of the other transfusions. Van Helsing has an attack like hysterics, struck by the grim irony of Arthur's statement and the circumstances of burying a young, beautiful girl. With Lucy's burial, Seward ends his diary.

An article in the Westminster Gazette from September 25 describes how several children have gone missing in Hampstead Heath in the evening, returning in the early morning with two small puncture wounds in their necks. Each was asked to accompany a lady on a walk.

On September 22, Mina and Jonathan return from London to Exeter after Hawkins' funeral. Jonathan saw a man on a London street, whom he thought was Count Dracula, though younger. Jonathan immediately forgets the event. Mina decides she must read Jonathan's journal to prevent him from relapsing into illness. Mina is devastated by a telegram from Van Helsing announcing the deaths of Lucy and her mother. She reads Jonathan's journal while he is at work. She doesn't know if it is true or the result of his fevered brain, but she decides to transcribe it (the journal is in shorthand). It is good timing, because she receives a letter from Van Helsing, introducing himself and asking if he can visit Mina in Exeter. Mina invites him immediately.

Van Helsing gets right down to business, asking her about Lucy's churchyard sleepwalking, and Mina gives him her transcribed journal, which confirms Van Helsing's suspicions. He inquires after Jonathan's health, and Mina tells him of his recent shock in London. Van Helsing promises to help Jonathan however he can. Mina gives him her typed transcription of Jonathan's journal. Van Helsing reads the journal at his hotel, and immediately writes to Mina that both she and Jonathan can trust the journal as real. When Jonathan gets home, he is relieved by Van Helsing's letter; doubting his own experiences was making him unwell. He begins his own journal again, and gives Van



Helsing all the paperwork related to his visit to Transylvania. Van Helsing reads the Westminster Gazette's article about disappearing children.

Despite the "Finis" in his journal, Seward takes up his narrative again when Van Helsing arrives back in London and shows him the article from the Westminster Gazette. Seward assumes that whatever killed Lucy is harming these children as well, but Van Helsing urges him to probe deeper. Van Helsing asks him to look beyond science, to open his mind to the possibility that the supernatural might exist. Van Helsing reveals his idea: that Lucy herself abducted the children.

## Analysis

Blood continues to take on a sexual symbolism when Arthur, "speaking of his part in the operation where his blood had been transfused to his Lucy's veins... he felt since then as if they two had been really married, and that she was his wife in the sight of God" (Page 187). But what does that mean considering she also had blood from three other men? This does in fact lend itself to interpret her as less than virtuous, though she had no choice – no agency – in allowing the blood of other men to enter her veins (including Dracula's own). Dracula perhaps visited Lucy because on some level she wanted him to, causing her own downfall.

With Lucy lost, both literally and metaphorically, the novel pins all its ideas of female virtue on Mina, whom Van Helsing praises vociferously throughout the section, saying, "She is one of God's women, fashioned by His own hand to show us men and other women that there is a heaven where we can enter, and that its light can be here on earth. So true, so sweet, so noble, so little an egoist, and that, let me tell you, is much in this age, so skeptical and selfish" (Page 203). Mina taught etiquette and decorum, a fitting profession for a paragon of feminine perfection. Yet despite all this virtue and social value, women are still not equal to men in this world. Mina unconsciously offers a reason, when she teases Van Helsing by giving him the shorthand diary rather than her typed out transcription to read: "I could not resist the temptation of mystifying him a bit, I suppose it is some taste of the original apple that remains still in our mouths, so I handed him the shorthand diary" (Page 197). This reference to Eve's temptation of Adam, leading to the fall of man, keeps women in their place despite their virtues. They must be subdued lest they lead to further destruction. Lucy, in her newly minted voluptuousness, has become little more than another temptation and force for devastation.

Readers know before Van Helsing pushes his idea on the skeptical Seward that Lucy is likely behind the disappearance of children in Hampstead Heath. Just as Dracula has only preyed on women thus far (creating more sexual subtext to his lust for blood), Lucy's choice of victim creates a system of meaningful associations. Lucy was cut down in her prime and will never fulfill her "true" role as a woman: to be a mother. Preying on children represents a fundamental human longing in her that cannot be crushed even with the loss of her soul, though of course it is warped; biting children – hurting them – is a mockery of a mother's maternal instinct to protect. The children themselves are an



apt metaphor, representing a loss of innocence. Lucy herself lost her innocence, and if Dracula succeeds in infiltrating British society, the nation as a whole could lose its innocence. Dracula may symbolically represent foreigners and immigrants entering England and changing the culture in negative ways.

Trust is an important theme in the novel. Van Helsing asks Seward to trust him when it comes to cutting off Lucy's head after she dies. Van Helsing also extols the trust that exists between Mina and Jonathan, calling them noble because "trust cannot be where there is a mean nature" (Page 199). Jonathan felt crazy when he didn't trust his own senses, but when Van Helsing validates his experiences in Transylvania, his sense of self is restored. This trust more broadly encompasses the idea of faith, which becomes more and more important in this section. Faith stands in direct opposition to science, the study of empirical facts. The tension mounts as characters are forced to confront the existence of the supernatural and explicable. The novel acts as a document of supposed facts, asking the reader, as Van Helsing asks Seward, to "To believe in things that you cannot. Let me illustrate. I heard once of an American who so defined faith, 'that faculty which enables us to believe things which we know to be untrue.' For one, I follow that man. He meant that we shall have an open mind, and not let a little bit of truth check the rush of the big truth" (Page 208). Faith in God and the soul and the inherent goodness of human nature are accepted with complacency bordering on indifference; science is destroying humanity's ability to have faith. Van Helsing, a man of science, refuses to rely entirely on science to explain the world around him. The novel itself argues that trusting one's senses is the only empirical data one needs to understand reality and faith must be maintained at all costs.

## Discussion Question 1

Why does (presumably) Lucy prey on children in Hampstead Heath? What does her choice of victim symbolize in terms of gender roles?

## Discussion Question 2

Compare and contrast Seward and Van Helsing's attitudes toward faith and science.

## Discussion Question 3

Why does Mina finally decide to read Jonathan's journal? Is her decision justified? Why or why not?

## Vocabulary

urbane, obsequious, efface, premonitory, bier, ague, pedantry, cicatrize, conjecture, inure



# Chapters 15 - 16

## Summary

Seward's diary continues. He thinks Van Helsing is mad. Van Helsing offers to show Seward proof, by visiting the most recently abducted child as well as Lucy's tomb. They find the child has neck wounds similar to Lucy's. His doctor theorizes that he was bitten by a vampire bat. After sunset, they open Lucy's coffin; it is empty. Seward won't believe Lucy is walking around. They wait until dawn outside the tomb and see a white figure carrying a child, but Seward is still unconvinced.

They return to the tomb the next day, and Van Helsing opens the coffin to reveal Lucy's healthy body, not decomposed despite a week in the grave. Seward cannot find a reason for the healthy corpse, and Van Helsing launches into his theory that Lucy was bitten by a vampire. Seward finally starts to believe him. Van Helsing must stake her through the heart and cut off her head. He decides to wait until after Arthur has seen Lucy, lest he doubt that Lucy was not buried alive. He sends for Arthur and Quincey to witness the undead Lucy. He keeps vigil in the churchyard, writing to Seward beforehand as a precaution in case Dracula appears at Lucy's tomb. Van Helsing pens Lucy into the tomb using garlic and a crucifix. The night is thankfully uneventful.

Seward wakes up the next morning from a good night's sleep, and his doubts about Van Helsing's theories have returned. Arthur and Quincey arrive. Van Helsing immediately asks for their trust and a promise to let him do what he thinks is right. He reveals that he intends to cut off Lucy's head. Quincey is willing to trust Van Helsing without further explanation, but Arthur has a harder time. Van Helsing explains his theory that she is not dead and her soul cannot rest in peace until they have returned her to natural death. Van Helsing urges Arthur to accompany him to see Lucy in order to believe him. Arthur and Quincey agree.

The four men arrive at the tomb before midnight, and Van Helsing shows Arthur and Quincey the empty coffin. Van Helsing seals the door with putty that is embedded with the Host (Catholic Communion wafers), which will keep Lucy from re-entering her tomb. They hide until dawn, when Lucy approaches feeding on a child. Lucy tries to seduce Arthur, who seems entranced by her, but Van Helsing repels her with a crucifix. Arthur agrees to let Van Helsing do his work. Van Helsing removes the putty, and Lucy passes through the solid door like a ghost.

The men return to the tomb the next day. Van Helsing offers to let Arthur give Lucy peace by staking her through the heart. As Van Helsing, Seward, and Quincey pray, Arthur drives a wooden stake into Lucy's heart with a hammer. The corpse writhes, screams, and bleeds. However, soon Lucy returns to her pale and pure human form. Arthur is grateful to Van Helsing for restoring Lucy's soul and allowing her to go to heaven. Van Helsing finally allows Arthur to kiss Lucy. Van Helsing and Seward



decapitate the body and fill her mouth with garlic. Seward, Arthur, and Quincey promise to help Van Helsing destroy Count Dracula.

## Analysis

Science is a discipline of order, cause, and effect. Victorian England was also a society of order, with laws and custom governing how people behaved. Dracula's "invasion" is disturbing societal order in more ways than one, and Seward is constantly worried over the disruption in legalities. To avoid facing a coroner's inquest, he quietly procures and fills out death certificates for Lucy and her mother. He frets when Van Helsing goes through Lucy's paperwork with the intention of keeping it. Dracula is forcing Seward and Van Helsing to act outside the accepted laws of science and society. Seward, in particular, is not comfortable with this rogue behavior.

Furthermore, there are sacred laws that Van Helsing ignores that make Seward and Arthur uncomfortable. There is a ritualized sanctity awarded to the dead in Christian tradition and a belief in the immortality of the soul, which either ascends to heaven or descends to hell based on the actions of one's lifetime. Dracula himself disrupts this Christian order, taking away the eternal peace of his victims by making them soulless monsters. Dracula's actions force men to circumvent the sacred order as well, and Van Helsing and the other men desecrate Lucy's tomb by entering it and opening her coffin. Seward expresses his unease with interfering with this sacred order by saying, "Again I felt that horrid sense of the reality of things...I realized distinctly the perils of the law which we were incurring in our unhallowed work" (Page 216).

Honor is just as important in death as it is in life; Lucy maintained her virtue as a woman while she was alive, and her fiancée Arthur is determined to defend it even in death. He admonishes Van Helsing when he asks permission to cut off Lucy's head. Arthur tells Van Helsing that he has "a duty to do in protecting her grave from outrage, and by God, I shall do it!" (Page 223). The final resting spot of a body is just as sacred as the soul itself. A person's honor is similarly sacrosanct. Dracula does more than just take a human life when he sucks blood.

The entire discussion of sacredness and honor is wiped out as soon as the men actually see the "undead" Lucy. She is a figure in white, but the white of her burial clothes is an ironic mockery, as there is nothing "pure" about Lucy anymore, symbolized by the blood dripping from her mouth that "stained the purity of her lawn-death robe" (Page 227). The constant use of the word "purity" – and Lucy's lack thereof – has loaded Christian associations with virginity, sin, and the Garden of Eden. Her purity has turned to "voluptuous wantonness" – two words with heavily sexualized connotations. She has indeed become a demonic figure, full of rage and hell-fire, tempting Arthur with a kiss to join her in immortality. Though the men are able to disassociate this "thing" from the Lucy they knew and loved because it isn't really Lucy, there is still a disturbing dichotomy at play in the novel about the two extremes of feminine potential. A woman is considered as a saint or a whore. The whore end of the spectrum is little more than a woman who expresses sexual desire and negative emotions like anger and impatience.



Lucy is still technically a virgin despite her “voluptuous wantonness.” The men enact the superstitious rites to return Lucy’s soul to eternal peace by staking her through the heart and cutting off her head. Though they may not have saved her life, the noble men have saved the damsel in distress from a fate worse than death. They have saved her purity. Like the storm approaching with Dracula’s ship, nature once again reflects the plot: as the men finish restoring Lucy’s soul and rest, “Outside the air was sweet, the sun shone, and the birds sang, and it seemed as if all nature were tuned to a different pitch. There was gladness and mirth and peace everywhere: (Page 235). God himself is pointing out the righteousness of their actions, despite the seeming sacrilegious nature of events.

Van Helsing uses the “Host,” the blessed Communion wafers consumed by Catholics during Mass that they believe are ritually turned into Christ’s actual body in a process called transubstantiation. Despite the seemingly “unnatural” and sacrilegious use of such a holy object, it is telling that only God himself can be used to fight the absolute evilness of vampires. In this section, good triumphs over evil.

Readers will note that Stoker finally uses the word “vampire” in this chapter, which is halfway through the novel. He introduces other terms like “undead” and “nosferatu.” Nosferatu, in particular, connects Dracula with the mythology of bloodsuckers that has existed in many cultures for thousands of years.

## Discussion Question 1

Why are Seward and Arthur so conflicted about entering Lucy’s tomb? Discuss the Christian significance of death rituals and the soul.

## Discussion Question 2

Compare and contrast Lucy before and after death. The men see Lucy as a “thing” in death rather than a manifestation of her true self. Do you agree with this assessment? Why or why not? Does Lucy deserve her fate?

## Discussion Question 3

Why is Christianity itself so significant in the novel? Do you think it would be possible for someone of another religion to repel a vampire? Why or why not?

## Vocabulary

affront, laconic, scud, exodus, phlegmatic, repudiate, cerement, adamantine, livid, interstice, consternation, debase, dispel





# Chapters 17 - 18

## Summary

Van Helsing receives a telegram from Mina, who is on her way to London. Van Helsing enlists Seward to host her while he is in Amsterdam. He gives Seward a copy of Jonathan's journal to familiarize himself with Dracula. Mina arrives and offers to type up Seward's oral journal. He hesitates, afraid of what Mina will learn about Lucy, but realizes he must trust Mina. Mina begins a master document, in chronological order, of the various journals, letters and newspaper clippings to build a complete picture of events. Jonathan arrives and adds the letters from Dracula's various solicitors to the document. In his journal he chronicles his dealings with the solicitor Billington in Whitby, who gives him all shipment paperwork related to the Demeter's fifty wooden boxes. He speaks to the harbor workers who moved the boxes, as well as the agents at Kings Cross station and the Carter Paterson firm, tracking the boxes' movements in London. He is sure all fifty boxes were placed in the chapel at Carfax.

Jonathan, after helping shape the master narrative with Mina, suggests that Renfield is a good indicator of Dracula's movements. Seward visits Renfield, who is quiet and lucid. He's asking to be released from the asylum. Seward almost believes Renfield's sanity is restored, but he knows now that his moods are connected to Dracula's proximity/ So, he denies Renfield's request.

Mina welcomes Arthur and Quincey to Seward's house. She knows about them from Lucy's letters. Mina lets them read the full document that she and Jonathan have created. Arthur breaks down about Lucy, and Mina consoles him. Everyone adores Mina's gentle, kind, helping spirit.

Chapter 18 begins with Seward's diary on the same evening. Mina asks to meet Renfield, and Seward consents. Renfield seems lucid, though he eats his entire insect collection before seeing Mina. He shows shocking clarity, revealing an awareness of Seward's personal life. Renfield philosophizes on his own desire to consume life and blood. Van Helsing returns from Amsterdam, happy to learn of Mina's project to consolidate documents.

Mina's journal documents a meeting of the entire group. Van Helsing warns of the risks of fighting Dracula, but everyone wants to complete the mission. Van Helsing summarizes Dracula's powers (turning into mist, animals, particles), limitations (he cannot enter unless invited, he must retire during daylight hours), and potential weapons against him (garlic, crucifixes, wild rose, sacred bullets). Van Helsing believes that Dracula has lived for centuries, fighting for his homeland. Quincey briefly excuses himself to shoot at a bat near their window. Van Helsing wants to discover how many of the 50 boxes remain at Carfax, and where the others have been taken. He then tells Mina she can no longer participate in their work, and Mina agrees. Quincey suggests they go explore Dracula's house immediately, and they send Mina to bed.





Before they go to Carfax, an asylum attendant tells Seward that Renfield wants to see him. Seward brings the men with him. Renfield demands immediate freedom. His dignified manner surprises everyone, but Seward doubts how long he can sustain his behavior. Renfield claims that his request is for the safety of others. Van Helsing urges him to explain more fully, but Renfield refuses. He begs to be sent somewhere else, for the sake of his conscience and his soul. Seward still denies him, and Renfield warns Seward to remember his efforts later on.

## Analysis

As Jonathan interviews everyone involved in the transport of Dracula's wooden boxes, he is told time and again that the work of moving the boxes produced the most unquenchable thirst. In simple terms, they men are humorously needling for tips to buy alcohol, but the repetition of this desire to drink is reminiscent of Dracula's own unquenchable appetite for blood. Being near Dracula and his possessions stirs up all manner of unfulfilled lusts and greeds. He is the ultimate bad influence.

With Lucy finally completely out of the picture, dead and returned to God, Mina moves to the fore as the apex of feminine good. While Lucy preyed on children in a perversion of the maternal instinct, Mina uses hers as intended to soothe Arthur's loss. She says, "We women have something of the mother in us that makes us rise above smaller matters when the mother spirit is invoked. I felt this big sorrowing man's head resting on me, as though it were that of a baby that some day may lie on my bosom, and I stroked his hair as though he were my own child" (Page 248). Implicitly, this nurturing instinct, this desire to give birth and raise children makes women a creator of life that is antithetical to Dracula, who destroys it.

Arthur's immediate confidence in Mina, whom he has never met, signifies to the reader how trustworthy and perfect Mina is. She is the epitome of womanhood, and all the men sing her praises. Van Helsing extols her combination of a "man's brain" and "a woman's heart" – yet this heart is also a liability, something that may "fail her" if she is allowed to proceed deeper into the battle against Dracula. Van Helsing and the team place her firmly on a pedestal as "our star and our hope" (Page 261). There is something quaint and chivalrous about this desire to protect Mina, despite her obvious capability to hold her own among them – she did not panic when she read Jonathan's journal; instead she began a thorough and scientific document of all events. (Readers will note that the "novel" they are reading is this brainchild of Mina's). Mina is intelligent and strong, but the men treat her as frail. Mina plays her role as "ideal woman" by meekly agreeing to be kept out of the loop going forward. All this overly vociferous adulation, as well as their determination to leave Mina completely alone while they go about their "men's work" has a whiff of foreboding. Leaving a virtuous woman like Mina unprotected with Dracula still on the loose foreshadows trouble ahead for her. Renfield's final warning to Seward that Seward remember that Renfield "did what I could to convince you tonight" (Page 266) further foreshadows danger, and since Mina is the only person not present for this warning, readers can perhaps presume a connection between the two.



Renfield's sudden lucidity calls into question the blurred line between the sane and the insane. His dispassionate reasoning for eating smaller life forms and his polite reception of guests belies a self-awareness that has not always been evident. But as each of the supposedly sane characters has questioned his sanity as he or she leapt into the belief of Dracula's existence, the entire understanding of madness is here called into question. Renfield only ate life to obtain life, the same as Dracula; he was correct in feeling Dracula's presence nearby. How insane is he? Whether or not Stoker intends to indict the late nineteenth century's system for diagnosing and treating mental health, he nevertheless creates a world where the supposedly insane are more connected to the natural and supernatural than those who lead "sane" lives, shielded from nature by a technological and scientific wall of logic and progress. As Van Helsing lectures the group on how to battle Dracula, he places his reliance on simpler times, claiming, "because, after all these things, tradition and superstition, are everything....A year ago which of us would have received such a possibility, in the midst of our scientific, skeptical, matter-of-fact nineteenth century? We even scouted a belief that we saw justified under our very eyes" (Page 257). Perhaps Stoker suggests the drive of progress is causing madness by making people doubt their own senses.

## Discussion Question 1

Van Helsing claims that Dracula's "power ceases, as does that of all evil things, at the coming of the day" (Page 258). Discuss why the night time is so generally associated with evil. Is the night inherently more dangerous than the day, or is this a projection of human fears?

## Discussion Question 2

In what ways does Mina conform to the Victorian ideal of a woman? Are there any ways in which she diverges from this ideal? Is Mina a believable character? Why or why not?

## Discussion Question 3

How does Mina's idea to gather all documents related to Dracula's arrival in England relate to the novel itself? What is accomplished by using this variety of "primary sources"? What effect does it have on the reader?

## Vocabulary

tacit, alacrity, sojourn, paucity, asinine, sophistic, auspice, necromancy, abhor, pabulum, importunate, supplication



# Chapters 19 - 20

## Summary

Chapter 19 begins with Jonathan's journal. He is relieved that Mina bowed out of the "men's work" gracefully. He and the other men discuss Renfield's condition. Seward is conflicted but believes Renfield is too tied up with Dracula to free him. As they arrive at Carfax, Van Helsing arms them with crucifixes, garlic, communion wafers, knives, and revolvers. Jonathan leads them through the dusty rooms to the chapel. They count twenty-nine wooden boxes. The place swarms with rats, but Arthur uses a whistle to call his dogs, which kill the rodents. Jonathan notices that Mina is pale and overly tired the next day, but he chalks it up to all the excitement.

Van Helsing asks Seward if he can visit Renfield, but Renfield refuses to talk to him. Mina writes about her distress at Jonathan's sudden reticence. She blames herself for Lucy's fate. The previous night she had trouble sleeping. She heard Renfield praying in the asylum. She noticed a white mist at the window and dreamed that she couldn't move as the mist seeped into the room around the door. The mist formed a column that seemed to have eyes. She fainted in her dream, as a white face bent over her. The next night she sleeps without dreaming, but she wakes up weak and tired. Renfield asks to see her. He prays a blessing for her. The men return from their errands and send Mina to bed so they can discuss their discoveries. After two poor nights of sleep, Mina asks Seward for a sleeping draught. After taking it, she realizes that she won't wake up easily.

In Chapter 20, Jonathan recounts his visits to Thomas Snelling and Joseph Smollet, the two carriers that Renfield accosted as they removed boxes from Carfax. Smollet tells him they removed six boxes, taking them to addresses in Mile End and Bermondsey. Smollet refers Jonathan to a man named Bloxam. Jonathan is concerned about Mina's health and decides to send her back to Exeter. Jonathan tracks Bloxam, who took nine boxes from Carfax to a house on Piccadilly. Jonathan uses rudimentary detective work to find this house. He visits Mitchell, Sons, and Candy, the agents who sold it. He drops Arthur's title, Lord Godalming, to discover the house's owner. It is a man named Count De Ville, but the firm knows nothing about him.

The narrative backtracks to October 1 in Seward's diary. After Renfield rebuffs Van Helsing, Seward visits him and suggests that by taking life Renfield is responsible for the souls of all creatures he has eaten. Renfield does not want responsibility for souls, and he becomes upset. Renfield seems on the verge of a violent fit. When Seward calls for a straightjacket, he promises to behave. Seward concludes that the Count has promised Renfield something and trouble is coming. Seward shares his suspicions with Van Helsing, and they visit Renfield again. He has reverted to collecting flies. Attendants monitor Renfield's behavior, but he is quiet. Seward hopes he and the others will sterilize the imported earth the next day. He wonders if Renfield can sense his "Master's" coming destruction. Renfield has a bad accident.



## Analysis

The characters in the novel are still unable to trust their senses or their previous experiences. Mina seems tired and out of sorts, but no one connects this with Lucy's earlier behavior, not even Mina herself. Nor does she connect her "dream" of a column of mist (anthropomorphized to eerie effect as "creeping") that takes on corporeal form with red eyes to Lucy's nightmares and the red-eyed man in the Whitby churchyard. They have read all the documents. They know that they are fighting Dracula, yet no one wants to believe anything out of the ordinary is happening to Mina. There is another metaphor of trust here. As soon as Jonathan removes Mina from his confidence (a great deal of time is spent explicating how the couple has shared everything since before they were even married, a symbol of the strength of the marriage bond as the backbone of social order), another "man" (i.e., Dracula) moves in to seduce her. Without that impenetrable marriage bond, someone else can penetrate her. Lying in bed, Mina writes that "sleep begins to flirt with me" (Page 405). Readers know, even if the characters remain stubbornly oblivious, that it is Dracula who is drawing her into a dark, sexualized stupor.

Seward torments Renfield with the idea that for each life he consumes to increase his own life, right down to the smallest fly, he is also accountable for that creature's soul. He deduces that Renfield has made some sort of deal with Dracula, who has promised him "higher life," presumably humans. The immortality of the soul is a Christian concept, intangible and faith-based, that obviously plays a major role in the novel; Van Helsing and the men were supremely concerned with giving Lucy Westenra's soul its heavenly reward. Renfield is agitated by the thought of souls. He does not want the responsibility for them. Though obsessed with life, Renfield retains his humanity and his own soul. Unlike Dracula, he is not a cold-blooded killer. Dracula, soulless, can destroy life without remorse. Renfield has not considered the question of the soul until Seward brings it up. Then, he suddenly has pangs of conscience. He is faced with the consequences of his destructive actions for the first time, and he does not like them. Renfield still understands basic Christian morality and guilt, proving he might not be as insane as Seward imagined. His newly found accountability for the souls of Dracula's gifted prey may set him at odds with his "Master." Readers may foreshadow a conflict between Renfield and Dracula as Renfield may be forced to battle for the immortality of his own soul.

Keen readers will note that Dracula purchases the house on Piccadilly under the name "Count de Ville," which is simply a fancy way of saying "devil." Dracula's chosen alias explicitly personifies what he is at heart.

## Discussion Question 1

Discuss the novel's implicit endorsement of trust between people. Does the withdrawal of trust between Jonathan and Mina foreshadow a negative outcome? Why or why not?



## Discussion Question 2

Compare and contrast Mina's current night time experiences with Lucy's before her death. Why do characters continue to doubt their senses given what they have already witnessed with their own eyes?

## Discussion Question 3

Compare and contrast Renfield's and Dracula's (implied) attitudes toward the human soul. What does Renfield's attitude say about him? Do you think he wants to become a vampire? Why or why not?

## Vocabulary

amenable, desecrate, dexterity, opacity, malodorous, miasma, lugubrious, obliquity, implacable, infallible, sentience, appease, repugnant, allusion, prostrate, ineffable, terrestrial



# Chapters 21 - 22

## Summary

Seward finds Renfield with a bloody face and a broken back, two injuries he could not have sustained simultaneously. Seward calls for Van Helsing, and they are joined by Arthur and Quincey. Van Helsing performs an operation that briefly restores Renfield to consciousness. Renfield tells the men that on the night he asked for his freedom, Dracula compelled Renfield to invite him to enter his room. He expected to be rewarded, but Dracula ignored Renfield. Renfield realizes when Mina visited him that Dracula has been sucking her blood. Renfield tries to fight Dracula, but Dracula hypnotizes Renfield and throws him to the floor.

The men rush to gather their weapons, knowing Dracula is after Mina. They crash into the Harkers' room, where Jonathan is in a stupor and Mina is bleeding as she sucks blood from Dracula's chest. The men use their Communion wafers and crucifixes to repel Dracula, who turns into vapor and disappears. Jonathan and Mina go through an emotional roller coaster at their fate, angry, ashamed, despairing, but Jonathan promises to stay loyal to Mina despite everything.

Arthur discovers that Dracula had burned all the copies of Mina's manuscript, except one hidden in a safe. Quincey sees a bat fly away from the house, but not toward Carfax. He thinks they can get into the mansion immediately to destroy the boxes. Mina describes falling into a deep sleep as a mist filled the room. She could not wake Jonathan as the mist resolved itself into Dracula. He threatened to kill Jonathan if she screamed, and then drank from her neck; she was surprised that she did not want to fight him. Dracula promised her that she would become his eternal companion even as he punished her for working against him. He forced her to drink his own blood.

Chapter 22 begins with Jonathan's journal. Mina will again be included in all strategy meetings. She wants to kill herself before she becomes a vampire, but Van Helsing reminds her that they must kill Dracula in order to ensure her peaceful death. The men decide to go to Piccadilly once it is full morning, when they can move with anonymity through the bustling city, to assess the situation there. Jonathan wants to stay with Mina, but she urges him to go in case his expertise as a solicitor will help with the Count's papers.

Before they set off for Carfax, Van Helsing primes Mina's room so Dracula cannot enter, but when he tries to safeguard her by touching her with a piece of Eucharist wafer, it burns her forehead, much to everyone's shock. Mina is horrified, but Van Helsing believes it will go away when they destroy Dracula. Jonathan, in his love with his wife, vows to become a vampire and go through eternity with her if they cannot reverse Dracula's work. The men sterilize the wooden boxes at Carfax by sprinkling bits of the sacred wafer in the soil.



They go to Piccadilly, where Arthur and Quincey act as owners of the house and use a locksmith to get in. They discover there is one box unaccounted for. They sterilize the eight boxes in the house, and find all the Count's paperwork, which Arthur and Quincey use to locate his other houses. They set off to sterilize them while the others wait at the house for their return or for Dracula himself.

## Analysis

The men burst into the Harkers' bedroom to find Mina kneeling on the bed, sucking blood from Dracula's chest. There is something disturbingly sexual about this image – a woman on her knees, sucking bodily fluids from a man – and in this moment we see Mina's fall from her virtuous pedestal. Though Dracula compelled her to drink his blood, her active rather than passive role (he is not simply drinking her blood) speaks directly to the Victorian fear of female sexual agency. She is no longer the saintly feminine ideal but moving through space and time into the category of "whore." The bloodstain on her "pure" white nightdress further underscores the symbolism of this moment, as the chastely married woman exchanges fluids with another man. Mina repeats over and over that she is "unclean" – impure, lusty, and sinful, she is forbidden from receiving God's grace, as symbolized by the Eucharist wafer, which scars her (in the most visible place possible, her forehead, so all the world can recognize her impurity). As Jonathan learns what happened to his wife while he laid helpless in bed beside her, his hair turns white. This is another symbol of the loss of innocence that permeates the novel; the sweet honeymoon period of the Harkers' relationship is over, and the real work of marriage is about to begin.

Fortunately, the men don't hold Mina responsible for her actions, recognizing Dracula's power to compel and continuing to view Mina as so "good and brave that we all felt that our hearts were strengthened to work and endure for her" (Page 313). They should also recognize that Mina was left open to victimization precisely because they took her out of their trust. The group has been backed into a corner, and the stakes are at their highest now to destroy Dracula – Mina's soul is literally hanging in the balance. Under these circumstances, the group turns not to science and technology to save Mina, but they turn to God himself as Mina says, "It is in trouble and trial that our faith is tested. That we must keep on trusting, and that God will aid us up to the end" (Page 311). In an age when religious belief was falling away and superstition scoffed, this group of educated, upper middle class Brits is relying exclusively on God and His grace and iconography to save them. In the ultimate battle of good versus evil, only God himself can prevail. Thus the only way to sterilize Dracula's earthen homes is by sprinkling the soil with bits of Jesus' own body, the transubstantiated Eucharist. Van Helsing and the others have become no more than God's hands to do His work on earth, and their faith in Him is complete as Van Helsing says, "For so surely as we live, that scar shall pass away when God sees right to lift the burden that is hard upon us. Till then we bear our Cross, as His Son did in obedience to His Will. It may be that we are chosen instruments of His good pleasure, and that we ascend to His bidding as that other through stripes and shame" (Page 320).





If Stoker intends his novel as an indictment of modernity, science, and technology, he does so to good effect by having Dracula purchase a house in the heart of busy, fashionable London – Piccadilly in the West End. Dracula is most anonymous in the place where there are the most people. His ability to survive for centuries has led him to this moment where he too can take advantage of all that science and technology have to offer – his easy seas transport over thousands of miles and countries, the international mail system which allows him to arrange his business without being present in person (in daylight), a large city thronging with so many people of all shapes and sizes that no one will notice his strange appearance, nor when individuals go missing. He has been waiting centuries for precisely this confluence of factors – the technology to transport himself to the most inhabited smorgasbord available at the same moment where people’s urbane, modern, enlightened sensibilities make them most unlikely to even believe a creature like Dracula could exist. By dropping their faith in the supernatural and their connection to the natural world, people have made themselves most vulnerable to an attack from someone like Dracula. Stoker offers a bold warning to his compatriots to turn back to a life of faith rather than the relentless reliance on modern comforts.

## Discussion Question 1

Discuss the sexual undertones of the scene in which the men catch Dracula with Mina. What message does it send about female sexuality? Why would it be shocking to Victorian England’s readers? Is it as shocking today? Why or why not?

## Discussion Question 2

Mina blames her tragic situation on fate. Do you think it is fate or free will that led her to become Dracula’s victim? Elaborate on your answer using examples from the text.

## Discussion Question 3

Compare and contrast Dracula’s home in Transylvania to life in London. What are the advantages and disadvantages of each? How does Van Helsing’s team also strategically take advantage of the positive aspects of city life?

## Vocabulary

celerity, trephine, impassive, inquest, exigency, abasement, prosaic





# Chapters 23 - 24

## Summary

Chapter 23 begins with Seward's diary, as he, Van Helsing, and Jonathan receive a telegram from Mina who saw Dracula leave Carfax, heading south. They assume he is checking his other houses. Arthur and Quincey return, having destroyed the boxes. They prepare themselves to face Dracula, who arrives soon after. The fight is minimal. Jonathan manages to cut through Dracula's robe, spilling documents and money. Dracula scoops up some money and throws himself through a window, threatening the men before disappearing into a stable in the back. Van Helsing senses fear in Dracula's words, and wonders why he took the money.

Mina bravely remains cheerful as they fill her in on what transpired at the Piccadilly house. She reminds them that though they work to destroy Dracula, they should not do it out of hatred, but with compassion. Their work is to save Dracula's immortal soul. Jonathan has a hard time hearing this, and lashes out. Mina's unflappable goodness soothes Jonathan and the others. The men decide to keep watch on the Harkers' room all night, in case Dracula turns up.

Jonathan recounts events from October 4. Just before dawn Mina awakes and sends for Van Helsing to hypnotize her. Through the hypnosis they ascertain that Dracula is on a ship. Van Helsing assumes Dracula is trying to escape to Transylvania. Mina thinks this means they are safe, but Van Helsing reminds her that until Dracula is dead, her own immortal soul is in danger.

In Chapter 24, Mina keeps notes on a group meeting from October 5, as Van Helsing recaps their day seeking Dracula's box. They hunt down only one ship sailing for the Black Sea, the Czarina Catherine. They speak to a clerk on the dock, who confirms that a strange man paid to send a box on the ship. The ship didn't sail on schedule because of a mysterious fog that exclusively surrounds Doolittle's Wharf. The man returned at high tide to check his box, and comes aboard though no one sees him leave. The ship finally sailed, and Van Helsing and the others make a plan to intercept the box at Varna, traveling over land. Mina once again hesitates at the idea of hunting Dracula, but Van Helsing reminds her that if they don't destroy him now, he can wait until they are all dead, then return to London and wreak havoc in the overcrowded city.

Seward writes in his diary of his concern that Mina cannot speak openly with them. Van Helsing theorizes that Dracula has access to her mind, preventing her from revealing too much to them and giving him warning of the group's plans. Van Helsing realizes they must again hide their plans from Mina, but Mina herself has reached the same conclusion. The men discuss logistics of departure and equipment; Van Helsing thinks Jonathan should stay with his wife. They are surprised the next morning when Mina announces she must go with them – she is safer with them rather than alone and at Dracula's beck and call. She has discovered she can speak freely at both sunrise and



sunset, and thinks her daily hypnosis might be useful in tracking Dracula's movements. They decide to each create a will in case any of them don't survive the trip to Varna.

## Analysis

At the beginning of Chapter 23, Van Helsing speaks at length about Dracula's similarity to a child, an ironic perversion of evolution, as Dracula morphed from wise and experienced man to new and immature vampire. Stoker mirrors some of Freud's ideas on the "id," a person's basest instinctive drives, though Freud wrote about the levels of consciousness much later than Stoker wrote his novel. Dracula is caught in a childlike selfish mindset, and all he is worried about is his own personal survival. Whatever psychoanalytic diagnosis Freud might give Dracula, Dracula's "child-brain" and selfishness sets him in stark contrast to Mina, who selflessly offers to take her own life in order to avoid perpetuating the same terror that Dracula has enacted. Her willingness for self-sacrifice also aligns her with Christian values epitomized by Jesus, who gave his life to save humanity itself. Jonathan points out that "if ever there was a woman who was all perfection" (Page 332) it is Mina, which further aligns her to Jesus, the only person born in Christian tradition without original sin.

Mina further demonstrates her perfection and Christian virtue when she encourages the men to destroy Dracula as an act of compassion rather than an act of violence, proclaiming, "I know that you must fight...But it is not a work of hate. That poor soul who has wrought all this misery is the saddest case of all. Just think what will be his joy when he, too, is destroyed in his worser part that his better part may have spiritual immortality. You must be pitiful to him, too, though it may not hold your hands from his destruction" (Page 332 -3). There is something unique about this justification of violence in the name of mercy, but Stoker follows a long tradition of Christian thinking that rationalizes violence for the sake of God's glory. Mina's Christian selflessness leads her to be just as concerned for Dracula's soul as for her own, yet her absolute goodness makes her a flat and perhaps unbelievable character; Seward himself calls her a "symbol" with all her "goodness and purity and faith" (Page 332). She is Stoker's manifestation of the feminine ideal, a mascot and talisman for the men around her to ruminate on in their fight against the devil himself. This fight is little less than a Crusade, as Van Helsing claims, "Thus are we ministers of God's own wish. That the world, and men for whom His Son die, will not be given over to monsters, whose very existence would defame Him. He have allowed us to redeem one soul already, and we go out as the old knights of the Cross to redeem more" (Page 344-345).

Van Helsing uses the metaphor of hunting a fox to describe their mission to pursue Dracula as he flees back to his homeland. It is an apt metaphor, but speaks to a particular segment of society in particular: upper or upper middle class white Englishmen, who organized groups for fox hunting as a leisurely sport. He further compares the chase to stalking a man-eating tiger in India, an allusion to British imperialism; the British Empire was at its height during Stoker's lifetime, but only certain sections of society were allowed to colonize (and rule) in India. Readers should take care to note these subtle references to class in order to discern Stoker's attitudes



towards class divisions. The use of this metaphor and his earlier smug condescension toward the peasants of Eastern Europe narrow the scope of Stoker's intended audience.

## Discussion Question 1

Why does Dracula flee back to Transylvania, and why does the Van Helsing team pursue him despite his inability to hurt them from that distance? Do you think this is the right decision? Why or why not?

## Discussion Question 2

Compare and contrast the selfishness and/or selflessness of Dracula and Mina. How do they symbolize absolutes? Do you think Mina's immortal soul is truly in danger? Why or why not?

## Discussion Question 3

What does Mina say should motivate the men in their fight against Dracula? How does this align with Christian teaching? Do you think it would be possible to hold onto this motivation in such a frightening, violent struggle? Why or why not?

## Vocabulary

beneficent, essay, implicit, trenchant, palpitate, vivify



# Chapters 25 - 26

## Summary

Chapter 25 begins with Seward recounting one of Mina's sunset freedoms, when she can speak at will. Mina forces all the men to promise to kill her if she becomes too much like a vampire. She makes Jonathan read the Burial Service, in case she dies unexpectedly.

Jonathan notes in his journal that the team arrives in Varna on October 15. Mina sleeps a lot, but always rises for her hypnosis; Dracula is still on the ship sailing south. Arthur receives daily telegrams from London on the Czarina Catherine's progress, but the ship is never reported anywhere. They make arrangements to get on board the ship as soon as it docks, under the pretense of looking for stolen goods. After a week of waiting, the ship is reported at Dardanelles.

The ship should arrive the next day, but after three days there is no sign of it. They are shocked to learn via telegram that the ship has docked in Galatz instead of Varna. They make plans to take a train to Galatz. Van Helsing and Seward are concerned that Mina is feeling freer of Dracula's influence, knowing this means he used Mina to learn where they are, and is now hiding his own movements from her. Van Helsing thinks Dracula's movements will be fairly predictable as he tries to return to his castle, the place he always went to regroup after a defeat in battle.

Under hypnosis, Mina reveals that Dracula is still on the ship, though he has left his box. He cannot leave the vessel unless he is carried off because of his inability to move across water. The train to Galatz experiences delays, and they worry they will not arrive in time to confront Dracula. It is getting more difficult for Van Helsing to hypnotize Mina. Her next two hypnotic reports are mysterious, and no one knows where the Count might be.

Once in Galatz, Arthur gets them access to the Czarina Catherine, where they talk with the ship's captain, named Donelson. Donelson tells of the ship's easy course, always with a wind in their favor, even in fog. Some of the ship's crew wanted to throw the wooden box overboard, but Donelson saw his duty as captain to deliver the goods. He was surprised to find himself in Galatz when the fog cleared, but he was happy to offload the box, which was bound for Galatz anyway.

The team visits Hildesheim, the man who received the box on behalf of Count de Ville. He was instructed to give the box to a river trader named Skinsky. Skinsky's body turns up with a ripped out throat. They assume the box is on a river somewhere. Mina uses deductive reasoning to pinpoint Dracula on a river called Sereth. They make plans to follow. Arthur and Jonathan travel by steam launch, while Quincey and Seward take horses along the riverbank. Van Helsing buys a carriage to take Mina to the castle where he will make Dracula's home inhospitable.



Jonathan marks the passing days in his journal, with little to report. They hear of a larger boat with a double crew that is moving quickly up the river, but they can't track its turns. Seward's diary is similarly sparse of information as he and Quincey travel by land. They learn Arthur and Jonathan have an accident, which delays them on the Bistritza River. Snow is closing in, which will make traveling more difficult. Mina writes in her journal about the beginning of her journey with Van Helsing, laden with fur blankets, food, and weapons.

## Analysis

Mina urges Jonathan to not shirk the responsibility of potentially killing her if she becomes a vampire by telling him, "Think, dear, that there have been times when brave men have killed their wives and their womankind, to keep them from falling into the hands of the enemy. Their hands did not falter any the more because those that they loved implored them to slay them. It is men's duty towards those whom they love, in such times of sore trial" (Page 356). Mina's selflessness again stands out in this declaration and makes her the antithesis of Dracula, whose selfish mind is analyzed at great length: "Then, as he is criminal he is selfish. And as his intellect is small and his action is based on selfishness, he confines himself to one purpose. That purpose is remorseless" (Page 368).

The dichotomy is simple. Mina, a virtuous Christian, is good; while Dracula, a remorseless criminal, is evil. But Mina's acceptance at the prospect of being killed also resonates with a historical predilection for female sacrifice to appease a higher cause. Mina's death would be for a greater good, as is befitting her emblematic status as the feminine ideal. There is a disturbing sense of justification in this sentiment of violence against women. Women are little more than pawns in the games men play to perpetuate their causes and ideals.

As Van Helsing, Seward, and Mina analyze Dracula's motives throughout his bloody history of defending his homeland, they claim "Dracula came to London to invade a new land" (Page 367). His so-called invasion has the potential to be devastating to English society. Perhaps, he is a symbol of a Victorian fear of an influx of immigrants in the late nineteenth century. Newcomers could change the fabric of society with a lower morality of selfish ruthlessness; they could suck the very life out of England's traditions and values. This may be an indictment against the lower classes. Though Dracula is supposedly a well-bred Count, most immigrants would arrive seeking opportunities to rise in society.

Mina makes a strange speech about the value of money, saying, "it made me think of the wonderful power of money! What can it not do when basely used. I felt so thankful that Lord Godalming is rich, and both he and Mr. Morris, who also has plenty of money, are willing to spend it so freely" (Page 382). It is the responsibility of the upper class to maintain English values and strike back against invading foreigners who will only dilute tradition. It's apparent that Donelson, the captain of the Czarina Catherine, is of a lower class because of his accent. He personifies the values of the lower class. He is willing to



get in bed with the devil in order to get his work done faster. He explains the ease with which his ship moved along its route, “as though the Devil himself were blawin’ on yer sail for his ain purpose.” But, this does not worry him because “If we had a quick voyage it would be no to our miscredit wi’ the owners, or no hurt to our traffic, an’ the Old Mon who had served his ain purpose wad be decently grateful to us for no hinderin’ him” (Page 374). These are not the morals and values the well-bred English want taking over their proud country, and so it is up to them to use their resources to beat back the devil themselves, with God’s blessing and assistance.

## Discussion Question 1

Discuss the question of class in the novel. To which social class do most of the characters belong? Which class is Stoker’s intended audience? What are Stoker’s feelings on different social groups? How can you tell?

## Discussion Question 2

Van Helsing tells Mina she has a “man’s brain.” Is this a positive or a negative compliment? Does this adhere to her position as the feminine ideal? Why?

## Discussion Question 3

What Victorian fear might Dracula’s arrival in England personify? How is this related to the theme of modernity and progress? Ultimately, what do you think Stoker’s position on modernity is? Why?

## Vocabulary

potent, volition, predestinate, cunning, requisition, ribald



# Chapter 27

## Summary

Mina's journal begins Chapter 27, as she and Van Helsing travel across Transylvania. Her forehead scar gets some unwanted attention. Mina's hypnotized state indicates that Dracula is moving along the river. Eventually Mina begins to sleep so much that Van Helsing takes over writing the journal. They reach the Borgo Pass, and Mina points the way toward the castle. The hypnosis stops working, and Mina stops eating. When they rest, Van Helsing makes a circle around them, spreading pieces of Communion wafers in the circle so no evil can approach them.

One night the horses are frightened, and Van Helsing thinks he perceives the specks of the three women who tortured Jonathan materializing around them. They try to make Mina join them, but she refuses. They cannot enter Van Helsing's sacred circle. They must leave at dawn.

On November 5, Seward and Quincey see the Szgany leave the river surrounding a wagon. On the same day, Van Helsing goes to the castle alone, fearing to bring Mina closer. He leaves her inside the sacred circle, though worried that wolves might attack her. He finds the three women sleeping in their graves. He fights a strange attraction to them as he destroys them. He puts a Communion wafer in Dracula's tomb and seals the castle entrances from Dracula.

Van Helsing returns to Mina, who takes over the journal on November 6. Their horses have died, so they make their way on foot to a place where Mina senses Jonathan approaching from. They find shelter in a small cave which keeps them from the harsh weather while they wait. They finally see the men – Arthur, Quincey, Jonathan, and Seward – approaching and surrounding the Szgany and the box they carry on a cart. The Szgany want to get Dracula to his castle before the impending sunset, but the Englishmen are faster. They surround the Szgany and everyone draws their weapon.

Jonathan and Quincey storm the circle of Szgany. Jonathan is so terrifying that the gypsies move aside, but Quincey is stabbed as he passes. The two men pry the lid off the box just as the sun is about to set, and Dracula's face looks triumphant. Jonathan quickly cuts off Dracula's head as Quincey stabs the Count through the heart. Dracula's body crumbles to dust. The gypsies run away as the team rush to Quincey's side. As the sun flashes off the castle overhead, they notice that Mina's scar is gone. Quincey dies, happy to have served such a worthy cause.

Seven years later, Jonathan writes a note. He and Mina have a son, born on the same date that Quincey died, whom they named after the brave American. They visit Transylvania. They cannot believe all the fantastic things that took place there. It further seems unreal because Dracula burned all of their firsthand evidence. Van Helsing is not





bothered by the lack of proof, only glad that little Quincey will hear the tale and know how wonderful his mother was, that so many men were willing to save her soul.

## Analysis

In the final days leading up to the confrontation with Dracula, Van Helsing, the steadfast leader of the group, has some strange moments. Even he begins to doubt his senses and worry that he is insane as he and Mina travel across the bleak Transylvania landscape toward Dracula's castle. Furthermore, after all the efforts to keep Mina safe, he leaves her unattended in the wilderness to perhaps meet her fate amongst the wolves. He says, "I resolve me that my work lay here, and that as to the wolves we must submit, if it were God's will. At any rate it was only death and freedom beyond. So did I choose for her. Had it but been for myself the choice had been easy, the maw of the wolf were better to rest in than the grave of the Vampire! So I make my choice to go on with my work" (Page 397). Though he claims to be leaving things to God's will, he is perhaps playing God himself, choosing for Mina this potential fate. Presumably his faith in God is so unshakable that he believes Mina will be safe.

Van Helsing then experiences that same seductive enchantment with the three female vampires that Jonathan felt at the beginning of the novel. This lust is simply a temptation that a good Christian man must overcome, and Van Helsing destroys them admirably. He is the staunchest supporter of feminine virtue around, getting the final word on the purpose of the grand battle against Dracula: they did it all for a woman. Seven years later, holding Mina and Jonathan's son, he contemplates how they will tell the boy of their adventures, saying, "This boy will some day know what a brave and gallant woman his mother is. Already he knows her sweetness and loving care. Later on he will understand how some men so loved her, that they did dare much for her sake." (Page 406). Mina, whose forehead scar faded as soon as Dracula was destroyed, has returned to her virtuous pedestal, a beacon for men to turn to whenever faced with temptation or the prospect of evil.

In the battle of good versus evil, good easily wins. Though winter is a season associated with cold and death, the snowy backdrop against which Dracula dies evokes a sense of purity and good with its whiteness. There is only one casualty (besides the virginal Lucy), and that is Quincey Morris. Quincey, an American with no known attachments and a brave and trusting nature, is the most expendable character. His death helps ensure a "happily ever after" for everyone else. Even Seward and Arthur, so deeply devastated by Lucy's death both move on and marry, presumably finding wives as pure and selfless as Mina and Lucy.

## Discussion Question 1

Stoker subtitles the novel "a mystery story." Do you agree that the novel is a mystery? Why or why not?



## Discussion Question 2

Given that the novel is told from so many perspectives, who do you think is the protagonist of the novel? Be sure to support your argument with examples from the text.

## Discussion Question 3

There is a clear winner in the battle between good versus evil. Is there also a clear winner between science/modernity and faith/superstition? If so, which is it? Be sure to support your argument with examples from the text.

## Vocabulary

deign, cumbrous, replenish, clarion, dissolution, reproach, elude, eddy, ardor, impetuosity, parry, vindictive



# Characters

## Lucy Westenra

Lucy Westenra is a young and beautiful English woman, so virtuous that she receives marriage proposals from three men on the same day. Like Mina, Lucy represents the pinnacle of the ideal female. She is sweet, chaste, and kind. She is in awe of the goodness and nobility of men. But, after Dracula bites her, Lucy begins a slow descent from one female stereotype (the Madonna/saint) to the other (the whore). Upon coming “undead,” Lucy switches from chaste purity to voluptuous wantonness, tempting her fiancé Arthur to kiss her and join her in her new dark world. She represents a Victorian fear of female sexuality. Only by destroying her body – through decapitation and a stake in the heart – can the men who love her restore her purity and send her immortal soul to its eternal reward in heaven.

## Mina Harker

Mina Harker (nee Murray) is a young and beautiful English woman, devoted completely to her husband Jonathan. Mina is the personification of the Victorian (and Christian) feminine ideal, a teacher of etiquette and decorum who is smart, capable, obedient, selfless, and pure. It is Mina’s idea to gather all the documents related to Dracula into one narrative (which is the basis of the novel), and she exhibits powers of deductive reasoning which make her the mental equal of her male colleagues. However, she frequently extols the “bravery” of the men around her for taking care of a “poor, weak woman” like herself. She humbly does as she is told by the men around her. She would gladly sacrifice her own life rather than cause harm to another person. She nurtures those around her like a mother, the ultimate female vocation. Once bitten by Dracula, she acts as a motivating force in the quest against the vampire. The men are willing to do anything to save her immortal soul.

## R.M. Renfield

R. M. Renfield is a fifty-nine year old mental asylum patient of Seward’s whom Seward describes as having a “sanguine temperament, great physical strength, morbidly excitable, periods of gloom” (Page 68). Renfield is classified as a zoophagous, a life eating maniac, who eats small creatures like spiders, flies, and sparrows. His madness is questionable, as he goes through many lucid and quiet periods. Though his talk of an approaching “Master” seems crazy, he is actually correct in tracking the movements of Dracula as he arrives in London. Renfield, despite his lust for blood, is actually good at heart, as he becomes agitated at the thought of destroying souls when he takes life. He does his best to protect Mina from Dracula, even though the vampire outmatches him and takes his life.



## Abraham Van Helsing

Abraham Van Helsing is a Dutch doctor, scientist, and lawyer. He's a modern renaissance man who knows a little about everything. Mina offers a physical description of him on Page 196, describing him as "medium weight, strongly built with his shoulders set back over a broad, deep chest and a neck well balanced on the trunk as the head is on the neck. The poise of the head strikes me at once as indicative of thought and power," as well as having reddish hair and blue eyes, and presumably middle-aged. Despite his education, Van Helsing is the first to suggest the possibility of supernatural forces at work in the novel. He has an open-mind to faith and superstition of all kinds and has to work hard to convince the others of their validity. He is the de facto leader of the group, having the most widespread knowledge on the subject. Van Helsing also seems like a devout Catholic, procuring an indulgence to obtain some blessed Eucharist wafers. He is motivated by this faith in God as well as a bottomless love for virtuous women, as he spends paragraphs elucidating the perfections of first Lucy and then Mina. He is a bachelor, but these specimens of the ideal female have returned his faith in "that there are good women still left to make life happy, good women, whose lives and whose truths may make good lesson for the children that are to be" (Page 200). Van Helsing is the fearless leader in the crusade to destroy Dracula and restore the peace of Mina's eternal soul.

## Count Dracula

Count Dracula is an ancient vampire from Transylvania. He is described as tall and thin, with gray hair and mustache, pale skin, long, sharp teeth, and a vice-like grip. The more he drinks blood the younger and more robust he looks. He is the prototype for all vampire literature in the 20th and 21st centuries. Dracula has the ability to change form, taking on the shape of a bat, a dog, mist, or fog. He can compel wolves and humans to do his will using only his mind. Dracula is one of the few characters in the novel who does not have a voice of his own to illuminate his thoughts and feelings. He expresses personal and national pride to Jonathan for his lineage defending his homeland, but he desires to relocate from his isolated, depopulated castle to the busy streets of London, where he can move with anonymity, feeding at will without being noticed. He has prepared long and hard for this move, learning the English language and history in order to blend easily into his surroundings. Dracula has elements of the satanic about him, including his red eyes and remorseless killing. He has no compassion, having lost access to his own soul upon becoming a vampire. Within the novel he preys exclusively on beautiful and virtuous women, adding a forbidden sexual element to his character. Dracula is the personification of evil, a completely unsympathetic villain, making his ultimate destruction cathartic for the reader.

## John Seward

John Seward (also referred to occasionally as Jack) is a twenty-nine year old English doctor who runs a lunatic asylum in London. He is a modern man, dictating his personal



journal over a phonograph. Seward is noble and good, promising his eternal friendship to Lucy when she spurns his marriage proposal, yet sensitive enough to wallow in his heartbreak at her loss. He works tirelessly to protect first Lucy and then Mina from danger. Seward is fascinated by madness and its causes. He lives a rational, scientific life, making it difficult for him to accept the possibility of vampires in the world. He does not see that the division between sane and insane is more blurry than his rational mind would like, and he is much more skeptical than his fellow doctor Van Helsing about issues of faith and superstition, wanting to attribute everything outside known reality to some form of madness. He is trusting and strong and willing to follow Van Helsing, his friend and mentor, wherever the Dutchman may lead.

## **Jonathan Harker**

Jonathan Harker is a young English solicitor's clerk, whose travels to Transylvania to help Dracula on business set the novel in motion. Jonathan is a staunch journal keeper, documenting everything he sees and experiences. He is young and rational, disparaging of the simple superstitions of the "peasants" he encounters in Eastern Europe. His disinterest in spiritual matters causes him to doubt his perceptions of reality, believing the events that occurred in Transylvania were nothing more than the result of a brain fever until Van Helsing confirms their veracity. Jonathan is a good and noble man, completely devoted to his wife Mina, willing to do anything, including sacrificing his own life, to protect her from harm. He is occasionally motivated more by hate for Dracula's evil than compassion for the vampire's restless soul, but Mina is able to rouse his generous and sympathetic nature to tamp down such hatred. Though initially not well off, he inherits his employer's business and fortune, bumping him up into a more stable, upper middle class lifestyle.

## **Arthur Holmwood**

Arthur Holmwood (later known as Lord Godalming) is an Englishman, probably in his mid-late twenties, who wins the hand of Lucy Westenra over his friends Quincey Morris and John Seward. The three previously had many adventures, traveling around the world, proving Arthur's bravery. He comes from a wealthy family (hence his title) and isn't afraid to use his name and position of power to quickly get what he wants. Arthur is preoccupied with honor, both his own and his fiancé's, and this leads him to a creepily romantic notion that by giving Lucy his blood in a transfusion, they were married in the eyes of God. Arthur is strong and stalwart, unflinchingly stabbing the undead Lucy through the heart to give her eternal peace.

## **Quincey Morris**

Quincey Morris is an American man from Texas, probably in his mid-late twenties, who previously spent time with Arthur and Seward on traveling expeditions and vied for Lucy Westenra's hand in marriage. As an American, Quincey is prone to using modern slang



and has an informal, laid back nature, but he demonstrates bravery and strength that belie his casual air. Quincey is quick to trust, almost instantly believing Van Helsing about Lucy's vampirism, and quick to join the fight against Dracula, never hesitating to throw himself directly into the line of danger. He is the only casualty in the final fight with Dracula, but his noble nature means he gladly sacrifices his life to save Mina's immortal soul.

## **Mr. Swales**

Mr. Swales is a one hundred year old former sailor who lives in the Yorkshire town of Whitby, where he befriends Mina and Lucy. Mr. Swales fears death, but he hides his fear by making morbid jokes. He introduces the theme of the sanctity of death. He is Dracula's first victim in England, dying of fright rather than the old age that should have taken him.



# Symbols and Symbolism

## Wolves

Wolves are animals that are at Dracula's beck and call. They have a reputation for being "lone" creatures, which acts as a good metaphor for Dracula himself, as is their association with danger. Dracula has wolves do his bidding, as when he compels them to destroy a woman whose child he has stolen, as well as compelling the zoo wolf Bersicker to break into Lucy's bedroom. Their howling creates a sense of foreboding.

## A Wooden Stake

A wooden stake is a tool for destroying a vampire. The stake is driven into a vampire's heart to "kill" it. It then returns to its state as a regular corpse, helping to free the body's soul to go to heaven.

## Wild Rose

Wild rose is a plant that can be used to repel vampires. Van Helsing lays it across a coffin to keep a vampire (Lucy or Dracula) from emerging.

## The Wooden Boxes

The wooden boxes are what Dracula uses to transport sacred Transylvania soil to England, in order to have a resting place in a foreign land. He spreads the earth over fifty boxes and spreads the boxes over several locations, giving him multiple refuges around the large city of London.

## Communion Wafers

Communion wafers, also called "the Host," are the blessed bread that has been transubstantiated into Jesus' body. They are consumed during Catholic Mass. They are also a tool to repel vampires, being the ultimate symbol of sacrifice, love, and good. Van Helsing uses them to keep Dracula at bay in moments of danger.

## Garlic

Garlic is a plant with a history in superstitious myths of repelling vampires. Van Helsing uses it to this effect in the novel. He creates garlic flower necklaces and rubs it around room entrances to keep Dracula at bay. There is never any explanation as to why





vampires dislike garlic, but it works throughout the narrative, justifying Van Helsing's open-minded acceptance of ancient superstitions.

## Blood

Blood is the ultimate symbol of life in the novel. It is Dracula's source of sustenance. The asylum patient Renfield covets it as well, eating small creatures in order to absorb their life force.

## The Crucifix

The Crucifix is a symbol of Jesus' death on the cross, a revered Christian icon. Jonathan receives one from a villager before traveling to Dracula's castle, and Van Helsing uses them frequently to repel Lucy and Dracula, who cannot stand to be in the presence of a symbol of absolute love and goodness.

## Jonathan's Journal

Jonathan's journal is a document that is written in shorthand and later transcribed into typing by Mina. This use of both shorthand and a typewriter, as well as the document's expression of Jonathan's innermost thoughts and feelings, make it a thoroughly modern artifact. It sparks Mina's plan to amass all the documents related to the events surrounding Dracula, creating a chain of evidence as to their veracity despite their strangeness.

## The Phonograph

The Phonograph is a recording device that Seward uses to dictate and record his oral journal, making it another piece of writing immersed in modern technology.

## The Bat

The bat is Dracula in a transformed state which allows him quick and undetected movement and easier access to the bedrooms of his victims. The bat is nocturnal, and, in some species, it has the habit of feeding on blood. As such, it is an apt symbol of Dracula himself.

## Mina's Scar

Mina's scar is created when Van Helsing tries to use a piece of Communion wafer to bless her against further visitation from Dracula. Since the vampire has already defiled



her, the Host instead leaves a scar on her forehead, an outward symbol of her impurity and uncleanness.

## **Flies and Spiders**

Flies and spiders are creatures consumed by the lunatic Renfield, who covets the blood and life within them. He thinks by consuming life he can build up his own life force.



# Settings

## Varna

Varna is a city in modern-day Bulgaria, which is geographically close to Castle Dracula. Van Helsing's team lies in wait here for Dracula's shipped box of earth as the vampire makes his way home after his failed attempt to secure residence in London.

## Whitby

Whitby is a coastal town in Yorkshire where Lucy Westenra and Mina Murray spend time. It is the final port of a ship hired by Dracula to transport his wooden boxes of earth to England from Transylvania; this ship arrives with no crew except a dead captain. It is here that Dracula first begins to prey on Lucy.

## Bistritz

Bistritz is a town in Transylvania, the last place Jonathan Harker visits before going to Dracula's castle. Jonathan encounters many superstitious people in Bistritz, who all worry about his impending travels. This sets an ominous tone for the rest of his journey, giving readers an idea that he is heading into danger.

## Transylvania

Transylvania is a region of Romania that is the home base of the vampire Dracula. It is populated with simple peasants living in an isolated rural environment. Jonathan remarks that this region among the Carpathian Mountains is the home of "every known superstition in the world" (Page 25).

## Castle Dracula

Castle Dracula is the home of Count Dracula in the Carpathian Mountains of Transylvania. It is a large and ancient isolated building, completely empty except for the Count himself. Its isolation and perpetually locked doors make it seem like a prison to the visiting Jonathan Harker.

## London

London is the capital city of England and the final destination of Count Dracula on his voyage from Transylvania. As a large metropolis filled with people, it represents a



location where the Count can move around anonymously while having a constant stream of people from which to feed.

## **Carfax**

Carfax is the mansion that Jonathan's firm buys on behalf of Dracula in London. It is in an area called Purfleet. It is old and isolated within its own grounds and includes an old decrepit chapel, making it an ideal spot for Dracula's relocation.

## **The Asylum / Seward's House**

The Asylum/Seward's House is adjacent to the Carfax mansion, making it simple for Dracula to communicate with his self-professed slave, the lunatic Renfield, as well as Mina. Seward lives in the same building that houses the asylum.

## **Hillingham**

Hillingham is the name of the Westenra mansion in northern London. It is where Dracula visits and preys on Lucy, despite the efforts of Van Helsing and Seward to protect her.

## **Piccadilly**

Piccadilly is a popular street in London's West End, where Dracula purchases an additional home in which to house some of his wooden boxes. Van Helsing briefly confronts Dracula here before he begins his return voyage to Transylvania.

## **Budapest**

Budapest is the capital of Hungary. Jonathan makes his way to Budapest when he manages to escape from Dracula's castle, and he ends up in a hospital there being treated for brain fever.



# Themes and Motifs

## The Role of Women

Dracula presents a strict interpretation of gender roles for women. Females are characterized in one of two ways: as a madonna or a whore. Lucy and Mina are clearly madonnas. They are pure, chaste, generous, submissive, and constantly in grateful awe to the nobility and virtue of the men around them. These are women men want to marry; Lucy receives three marriage proposals, and every man among the Harkers' circle of friends would give their life to protect Mina. These women embrace their roles and eschew the "New Woman," which is the name used for the feminists who are rallying for more independence and rights for women at the end of the nineteenth century.

On the other hand, the three female vampires who live at Dracula's castle personify the whore side of the dichotomy. As vampires they are evil, but their evilness is tied closely to their sexuality. They are described as "voluptuous" and "coquettish." Readers understand how damning these adjectives are when used to describe the women. Their tremendous beauty acts as a luring temptation for men, who cannot resist attraction to them. Lucy herself becomes the same after she is reborn as a vampire, her "sweetness was turned to adamantine, heartless cruelty, and the purity to voluptuous wantonness" (Page 228). She wants to kiss Arthur, to bring him to the dark side with her, just as Eve caused the fall of Adam in Genesis.

The metaphor is clear. Having exchanged bodily fluids with a man, these women have lost their virtue and are therefore evil. Even Lucy's life-saving transfusions from Seward, Van Helsing, and Quincey have a sordid air, and they refuse to tell Arthur, her actual fiancé, about them lest they shame him, particularly when he proclaims that because of his own transfusion to Lucy he believes "the two had been really married, and that she was his wife in the sight of God" (Page 187). A woman's value was entirely tied to her purity, and Mina also worries endlessly about being "unclean" after Dracula bites her. In chivalrous fashion, the men all work to restore that lost virtue, even to the point of death. The novel reinforces negative gender stereotypes, making it a steadfast product of its time, but one which modern readers must view with a critical eye.

## Science vs. Faith

In the opening pages of Jonathan Harker's journal, he disparages the quaint superstitions of the Eastern European peasants that surround him as he travels to Dracula's castle. When one such peasant gives him a crucifix, he is embarrassed but after some time with Dracula he is happy to have it, saying, "It is odd that a thing which I have been taught to regard with disfavor and as idolatrous should in a time of loneliness and trouble be of help" (Page 33). Jonathan exemplifies the tension between science, an outgrowth of modern life, and superstition. After escaping Dracula's castle he doesn't even trust his memories, assuming he must be mad to believe he experienced such



supernatural things. Throughout the novel, anything outside the realm of empirical, scientific data is associated with madness, including other characters like Seward who also thinks he must be mad to even consider Van Helsing's theory on vampires.

Van Helsing, a scientist and a doctor, is the only one who gives himself over easily to the belief in Dracula's evil roots and the superstitions that might be used to battle against him. Stoker uses him as a mouthpiece to propose that the impossible exists in reality and believing in the inexplicable does not make one mad. There is a greater battle at stake here, and Jonathan's earlier statement sums it up: he, as an English Christian believed crucifixes were the embarrassing symbols of the faithful who trusted inanimate objects to help them. What is Christianity but an international superstition, whose followers believe they actually eat the body and blood of Christ during a ritual that transforms ordinary bread and wine? Dracula is literally the anti-Christ, drinking blood without spiritual edification. The modernization of the world, through science and industrialization, has destroyed people's faith and pushed them to ignore their spirituality and the fate of their immortal souls. The superstitions Van Helsing relies on to fight Dracula is a metaphor for Christian faith itself, a call to slow down the world's rapid progress into the future and remember to find space for God in one's daily life, lest the world itself go to ruin. As Jonathan points out, "the old centuries had, and have, powers of their own which mere "modernity" cannot kill" (Page 41). In many ways Dracula is a call back to a life of faith.

## Good vs. Evil

Dracula is a quintessential novel of good versus evil. Dracula himself has no redeeming qualities. He kills indiscriminately and shows no remorse. He is an absolute personification of evil. This is exemplified by many of the weapons used against him, such as the crucifix and the Communion wafers. Those weapons are symbols of Jesus himself. In the predominantly Christian world of Victorian England, the only way to fight evil is through its exact opposite, absolute good.

Stoker also creates his team of vampire fighters to embody all goodness. The virtue of Mina and Lucy is constantly held up as a beacon. Lucy receives three marriage proposals, and the two suitors she rejects both vow eternal friendship to her, demonstrating to readers her absolute good and worthiness. Mina becomes the rallying point for the vampire hunters, each willing to sacrifice his life for her honor and immortal soul. Van Helsing sums this up on the final page, in discussing Mina's son: "Already he knows her sweetness and loving care. Later on he will understand how some men so loved her, that they did dare much for her sake" (Page 406). This goodness cuts both ways, for both Mina and Lucy also continuously praise the exemplary men who surround them, as when Mina says, "I know that all that brave earnest men can do for a poor weak woman, whose soul perhaps is lost, no, no, not yet, but is at any rate at stake, you will do" (Page 354). None of these characters exhibits any personal flaws, each always acting for what they think is morally right and just. These characters tend to lay flat on the page in their one-dimensionality, acting as little more than archetypes in this epic battle. They rely heavily on God's will and protection, aligning themselves with

the greatest power for good at their disposal. The fact that they succeed in destroying Dracula symbolizes the ultimate triumph of good over evil.



# Styles

## Point of View

Dracula is told from a variety of points of view. Most of the text consists of journal entries that move the narrative forward as they recount events. The entries belong to Jonathan, Mina, Seward, Lucy, and Van Helsing. Since there is an emphasis on accurate documentation, the dialogue recorded in these journals also tends to offer the perspectives of those characters without journals, like Arthur, Quincey, and Renfield, as well as peripheral characters like Mr. Swales, the Demeter's captain, and the Czarina Catherine's captain. Each of these characters has full-blown monologues recorded in the journals, giving readers at least a glimpse into their internal thoughts and motivations. These journals are all obviously written in the first person, and offer a very limited perspective. The reader who is reading the journals, along with other documentation such as newspaper articles, letters, telegrams, and the ship's log, has a much more omniscient perspective, and can stay one step ahead of the characters in piecing together the chain of events surrounding Dracula's movements.

This is a novel without a specific protagonist, resorting instead to "Us. Versus Him," with the "him" being Dracula. Everyone on the team who fights Dracula has an equal stake in destroying the vampire, and readers root for them all equally. In some ways Mina occupies the central role because she is the character who will lose her immortal soul if the Count continues to exist, and the men around her make her a touchstone for the worthiness of their fight. On the other hand, Mina is given no precedence throughout the collection of documents; her journal does not appear any more than the others, nor are readers given more insight into her than anyone else. Moreover, while Mina does a great deal to assist with her own salvation, she is also frequently pushed to the side as too delicate for the "man's" work of destroying Dracula. If she were considered the protagonist, she would be a fairly passive one.

Dracula himself, beyond some dialogue written by Jonathan, is the only character whose inner life readers never see. He is literally and figuratively a shadowy character in the text, rarely appearing directly after the first four chapters except in disguise as a bat, a dog, or the fog. This adds to Dracula's persona as "other:" he is the absolute personification of evil rather than a complicated, three-dimensional character. This makes it easy for readers to root against him, and produces in them a catharsis when he is finally destroyed at the end of the novel.

## Language and Meaning

Dracula was published in 1897, giving the language a formal, dated feeling. There is a reliance on outmoded words that might be unfamiliar to modern readers, but it is not difficult to understand overall. The dialogue included in the journals and letters tends to



appear in block monologue form, which slows the pace of the novel, particularly for readers used to short rapid dialogue in modern texts.

Stoker makes a great effort to individualize characters' voices through the use of local dialects that distinguish region, nationality, or class. Thus Mina, Jonathan, Lucy, Arthur, and Seward, characters roughly of the same middle or upper middle class English background, all have a similar speaking (or writing) voice. Their journals and letters are only distinguishable based on what they actually say rather than how they say it. Dracula generally fits into this category as well, despite his Transylvania background, as a sign of his shape shifting nature; though he taught himself English, he did it so perfectly he would easily fit in upon arriving in London. Other characters have more unique voices. Working class Englishmen like Mr. Swales the sailor, Bilder the zookeeper, and Donelson the ship captain, all have much rougher accents, revealed by Stoker's use of phonetic spelling to demonstrate how words sound in these characters mouths; readers can practically hear them because of this device. Van Helsing, a Dutchman, has a slightly strange syntax and gently humorous grasp on grammar since English is not his first language. Quincey, the American Texan, has the most casual way of speaking, using slang and American expressions that clearly separate him from his fellow English speakers. The use of this dialectic device allows Stoker to further add credibility to his story, making it believable because of its specificity.

Stoker also works relentlessly with his language to create a sense of foreboding from the first page. Descriptions of landscape emphasize darkness and the indifference of nature; weather is used to create dread. Motifs vacillate between a fearful, negative semiotic state surrounding Dracula (the use of the colors black and red, the use of wolves and bats, the isolated, prison-like castle and mansion) and Christian iconography, relying on actual symbols of Christ like the crucifix and the Communion wafer, as well as Biblical words like "pure" and "unclean." The world of the novel is literally and metaphorically black and white, and Stoker uses language to clearly create this dichotomy.

## Structure

The novel is divided into twenty-seven chapters, more or less of equal length. The first four chapters stick entirely to Jonathan's journal, giving the reader the impression that the novel belongs to him, but after once the novel shifts from Transylvania to England, each chapter is subdivided into brief sections of journal entries, letters, telegrams, newspaper articles, and a ship log. There is not a single narrator guiding the reader through the story, but instead readers are given a role as detective, taking the clues of each piece of documentation and synthesizing them to reach conclusions before the characters can. Readers understand after the anti-Dracula team gathers in London that what they are looking at is essentially the document amassed and typed up by Mina as her main contribution to the battle against Dracula.

Stoker uses this nontraditional structure to create a feeling of credibility about the events contained in the novel. The relentless, all-encompassing nature of the



documentation has an air of scientific rigor, a case study such as Seward would put together about a patient. This pseudo-scientific aura works to draw readers into trusting the reliability of these “facts,” forcing them to accept the fantastical elements of the narrative as truth. Letters from various solicitors, the newspaper articles, and the captain’s log for the *Demeter* all work to corroborate Van Helsing’s theory about Dracula, working outside the subjective consciousness of the main characters and acting as “objective” references.

There is also a certain irony to this structural device. One theme of the novel proposes that science and modernity cannot destroy the ancient and supernatural, yet the narrative is relayed in a thoroughly modern, scientific style. In addition, the fact that the documents are combined slightly out of chronological order and kept as individual, limited perspective units, draws the reader in by making him or her work to synthesize the material. Readers must pay attention to dates and facts and fit the puzzle together for themselves. Theoretically, the sense of understanding what the characters themselves don’t and the task of remaining one step ahead enhance the readers’ pleasure in the novel.



## Quotes

I read that every known superstition in the world is gathered into the horseshoe of the Carpathians, as if it were the centre of some sort of imaginative whirlpool; if so my stay may be very interesting.

-- Jonathan Harker (Chapter 1 paragraph Page 4)

**Importance:** Superstition is a major theme in the novel, and Jonathan is aware of it from the opening pages. His slightly condescending attitude toward it little prepares him for what he experiences, and sets up a tension between our expectations of reality and our experience of it.

We are in Transylvania, and Transylvania is not England. Our ways are not your ways, and there shall be to you many strange things. Nay, from what you have told me of your experiences already, you know something of what strange things there may be.

-- Count Dracula (Chapter 3 paragraph Page 25)

**Importance:** Here Dracula sums up the tension between the Eastern and Western world, as well as between the simple, superstitious peasants and the thriving modernity of England. By moving to London, Dracula is going to bring this culture with him, "invading" the indifferent, dispassionate English with a nightmarish version of reality.

And yet, unless my senses deceive me, the old centuries had, and have, powers of their own which mere "modernity" cannot kill.

-- Jonathan Harker (Chapter 3 paragraph Page 41)

**Importance:** Jonathan sums up one of the central themes of the novel: the ancient power of the supernatural versus the scientific modernity that is pushing English society toward progress. It is a conflict that pits the western Europeans against Dracula for the duration of the novel.

In selfish men caution is as secure an armor for their foes as for themselves. What I think of on this point is, when self is the fixed point the centripetal force is balanced with the centrifugal. When duty, a cause, etc., is the fixed point, the latter force is paramount, and only accident or a series of accidents can balance it.

-- Dr. Seward (Chapter 5 paragraph Pages 68-69)

**Importance:** Seward is talking about Renfield in this quote, trying to analyze his character, but the theme of selfishness permeates the text. Dracula is a "selfish criminal," only interested in fulfilling his base desires and maintaining his survival. The team as lead by Van Helsing, is unselfish, working for the good of humanity as a whole but also to ensure rest for Mina's immortal soul. Mina herself would selflessly end her own life in order to ensure she never does harm to another living thing.

For life be, after all, only a waitin' for somethin' else than what we're doin', and death be all that we can rightly depend on. But I'm content, for it's comin' to me, my deary, and



comin' quick. It may be comin' while we be lookin' and wonderin'.  
-- Mr. Swales (Chapter 6 paragraph Page 83)

**Importance:** Mr. Swales is obsessed with death, which is a pervasive theme in the novel. When Dracula arrives in England, people begin to die left and right, whether the Count knows them directly or not. Readers know that despite his exceptionally advanced age, which should have allowed Mr. Swales to die naturally and peacefully, his death was frightening and unnatural, caused by Dracula. Death is a constant. However, the way that one dies is unpredictable, and therefore scary.

All men are mad in some way or the other, and inasmuch as you deal discreetly with your madmen, so deal with God's madmen too, the rest of the world.  
-- Van Helsing (Chapter 10 paragraph Page 129)

**Importance:** Anyone caught in the wake of Dracula's destruction seems to doubt his senses, believing perhaps he is mad. Yet the "lunatic" Renfield is more attuned to the reality of Dracula than the educated scientists, solicitors, and lords. Van Helsing here points out that sanity exists on a spectrum, and madness is not a neat black and white issue. The bottom line is that each individual should be dealt with compassionately no matter on what level they are suffering.

Remember, my friend, that knowledge is stronger than memory, and we should not trust the weaker.  
-- Van Helsing (Chapter 10 paragraph Page 130)

**Importance:** Van Helsing espouses the scientific method, urging close observation and documentation of events as they happen, rather than relying on fallible memories, in order to build evidence and draw conclusions. The novel itself represents an attempt at collecting this "knowledge," using a variety of sources to build a case proving Dracula exists.

What have we done, what has this poor thing done, that we are so sore beset? Is there fate amongst us still, send down from the pagan world of old, that such things must be, and in such way?  
-- Van Helsing (Chapter 11 paragraph Page 145)

**Importance:** The idea of fate runs throughout the novel; as characters can't control the events happening to them. Despite their knowledge and hard work, they automatically turn back to an earlier period in history when people did not understand why anything happened and had to attribute events to a higher power. Fate and God's will are two sides of the same coin. When the characters in the novel turn back to them the more inexplicable reality becomes. It is as if the powerful force of Dracula is forcing them to regress, just as Van Helsing ultimately turns to superstition and old wives' tales to find the best weapons to fight Dracula. This is another way of saying maybe modernity isn't better than the ancient ways after all.



I feel more than ever, and it has grown with my advancing years, the loneliness of my life. Believe me, then, that I come here full of respect for you, and you have given me hope, hope, not in what I am seeking of, but that there are good women still left to make life happy, good women, whose lives and whose truths may make good lesson for the children that are to be.

-- Van Helsing (Chapter 14 paragraph Pages 199 - 200)

**Importance:** Here Van Helsing describes Mina, and in his descriptions sums up an oft-repeated refrain of the novel, extolling the selfless virtue of Mina. He even brings in the ultimate feminine ideal, tying Mina to motherhood. Van Helsing and the others place Mina, generous, chaste, obedient, and trustworthy, on a pedestal, and use her as a rallying point in their fight against Dracula.

You reason well, and your wit is bold, but you are too prejudiced. You do not let your eyes see nor your ears hear, and that which is outside your daily life is not of account to you. Do you not think that there are things which you cannot understand, and yet which are, that some people see things that others cannot? But there are things old and new which must not be contemplated by men's eyes, because they know, or think they know, some things which other men have told them. Ah, it is the fault of our science that it wants to explain all, and if it explain not, then it says there is nothing to explain.

-- Van Helsing (Chapter 14 paragraph Page 206)

**Importance:** Van Helsing summarizes one of the central conflicts of the novel, that modern science has pushed people to doubt their own senses, or to view the universe through a single lens, alienating humanity from the natural and supernatural worlds. Van Helsing urges Seward, and by extension the reader, to not rely too heavily on science and to take a deeper look at the world around them.

I used to fancy that life was a positive and perpetual entity, and that by consuming a multitude of live things, no matter how low in the scale of creation, one might indefinitely prolong life. At times I held the belief so strongly that I actually tried to take human life....relying of course, upon the Scriptural phrase, 'For the blood is the life.

-- Renfield (Chapter 18 paragraph Page 252)

**Importance:** Renfield describes his obsession with consuming small creatures, even cutting Dr. Seward once so that he can lick up his blood. Renfield is bastardizing the Christian ideal, the blood sacrifice Jesus made to save humanity from its sin. Rather than relying on God for eternal life, Renfield is obsessed with prolonging his life on earth. He is an impotent version of Dracula himself, who destroys life without remorse in order to prolong his own, existing as a perversion of immortality and the Christian ritual of transubstantiation (Catholics drink Christ's blood during Mass as an act of faith; Dracula drinks blood only to extend own selfish survival.)

For so surely as we live, that scar shall pass away when God sees right to lift the burden that is hard upon us. Till then we bear our Cross, as His Son did in obedience to His Will. It may be that we are chosen instruments of His good pleasure, and that we ascend to His bidding as that other through stripes and shame. Through tears and



blood. Through doubts and fear, and all that makes the difference between God and man.

-- Van Helsing (Chapter 22 paragraph Page 320)

**Importance:** Van Helsing here makes the fight against Dracula the ultimate fight between good and evil. He places himself and the group firmly on the side of good, modern day crusaders who will use God's own weapons, including faith itself, to wipe the scourge of Dracula from the earth.