

THE INVISIBLE MAN

a retelling of the novel by H. G. Wells

① The stranger came to the village inn on a cold, windy winter day. He had walked from the railroad station and was chilled to the bone. Tired and shivering, he called out, "A room with a fire!"

Mrs. Hall, who ran the inn, soon showed him to a warm room. The stranger's face was hidden by his hat brim and coat collar. Mrs. Hall hardly noticed it. She felt lucky to have a guest in such bad weather.

Later, Mrs. Hall brought some dinner to the stranger's room. This time, Mrs. Hall got a shock. His head was wrapped in bandages. Large, dark glasses covered his eyes. All that showed was the place where his mouth was. And it was just a hollow slit. The rest of his body was covered with heavy clothes. Even his hands were hidden by gloves.

Mrs. Hall trembled, but got hold of herself. *The poor soul, she thought. He's probably had a bad accident, or some kind of serious operation.*

Then the stranger spoke. He told Mrs. Hall that he had left some boxes at the station. He wanted them picked up.

"I should explain," he said, "that I am a scientist. I came to this village because it is quiet here and out of the way. Sometimes I have to work alone in the dark for hours. I don't want anyone entering my room. Do you understand?"

"Certainly, sir," Mrs. Hall said, and left the room. She thought he was a strange one, but she didn't mind. He had paid his rent in advance.

② THE VILLAGE BEGINS TO TALK
The next morning, the stranger's boxes were brought from the station. Mrs. Hall's husband was curious about them and started to poke inside. The stranger didn't like that.

"Come along with those boxes!" he shouted. "I've waited long enough for them!"

As soon as the 13 boxes were in his room, the stranger opened them. There were all kinds of bottles in them. Some were filled with powders, some with liquids, and some were marked "poison."

That afternoon, the stranger locked his door and went to work. Sometimes Mrs. Hall listened outside. Once she heard a bottle smash on the floor. And the stranger shouted, "I can't go on!"

Before long, everyone in the village was talking about the stranger. Why was he always covered up from head to foot? Why did he only go out at night? Some people thought he was a criminal hiding from the police. Some thought he was making bombs in his room to kill government leaders. Others thought he was a freak. Maybe his skin was spotted, and he was ashamed to show it.

Finally, the village doctor, Dr. Cuss, went to the stranger's room to talk with him. He asked a lot of questions, which annoyed the stranger. Then something happened that made Mr. Cuss think he was losing his mind. A piece of paper fell into the fireplace. The stranger pulled his hand out of his pocket to get it back. But Mr. Cuss couldn't see the hand. All he saw was an empty hole at the end of the stranger's sleeve!

③ THE STRANGER STRIKES

Later, Mr. Cuss told this strange story to the village minister, Mr. Bunting. The minister said it certainly was odd. But Mr. Cuss must have imagined it all.

Something odd happened to Mr. Bunting soon after. He and his wife were awakened one night by the sound of footsteps downstairs. Mr. Bunting grabbed a poker and went down to look around. He saw a light and heard a drawer open. Then he heard the jingle of coins. A burglar was stealing his money!

Mr. Bunting rushed into the room and shouted, "Surrender!" But no one was in the room. And yet a candle was burning, his desk drawer was open, and his money was gone! Then he heard some footsteps in the kitchen. He ran in, saw the back door open and then shut. But he was sure he saw no one go out the door! Mr. Bunting didn't know what to make of it.

A few minutes later, Mrs. Hall heard the door of the inn open and close. Footsteps climbed the

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FEAR SPREADS

Strange things soon began to happen in nearby towns. Money seemed to fly out of banks, shops, and inns. Anyone who grabbed at the flying money was knocked on the head. Other people swore that they were shoved or kicked, but saw no one. Newspapers began printing stories about "The Invisible Man." Fear spread everywhere.

One day, a tramp ran wildly into the town of Burdock. Behind him people could hear the sound of other footsteps and heavy breathing. Then they understood. "The Invisible Man is coming!" they shouted and ran indoors.

The tramp ran inside a saloon crying, "The Invisible Man is after me!" The front door was quickly locked. But a moment later, the back door seemed to open by itself. One of the men in the saloon had a gun. He fired five shots at the back door. There was a scream of pain, and then the door closed.

The shooting was heard by Dr. Kemp in his office. He had also heard the screams about "The Invisible Man." Dr. Kemp was a man of science. He did not believe any of the stories about an invisible man.

An hour later, Dr. Kemp's doorbell rang. He opened the door, but saw no one. *Probably some boys playing a trick*, he thought. And he went back to work.

Late that night, Dr. Kemp felt thirsty and went downstairs for a drink. On the bottom step, he noticed a stain. He reached down and touched it. It looked and felt like drying blood. Dr. Kemp could not figure out how it had gotten there. Then he went back upstairs. He looked at the handle of his bedroom door. It was covered with blood. He looked at his hands. They were perfectly clean.

When Dr. Kemp entered his room, he saw that the bed cover was stained with blood. The sheet was torn. Then he got a real shock. In midair, a bloody bandage was wrapping itself around — nothing! It was then that Dr. Kemp heard the voice.

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THE STRANGER NEEDS HELP

"Kemp," it said, "I'm the Invisible Man."

Dr. Kemp tried to keep cool. "Do you have a bandage on?" he asked.

"Yes," said the Invisible Man.

"Nonsense," Dr. Kemp said. "It's some kind of trick."

He reached for the bandage, but a hand gripped his arm. He tried to free himself.

"Kemp, please, keep steady!" the voice warned him. "I'm an invisible man. It's not magic. I really am invisible. And I need your help. I'm in pain. And I need food, drink, and clothes. I don't want to hurt you. But if you behave like a fool, I shall have to. Don't you remember my voice, Kemp? I'm Griffin. We went to college together. I won the medal for chemistry."

Later, Griffin put on some of Dr. Kemp's

stairs. Then the door of the stranger's room opened and closed.

"What's he doing up at this hour of the night?" Mrs. Hall asked her husband.

They decided to find out. But when they opened his door, the room was empty. Just then, a hat flew off the bed and hit Mrs. Hall in the face. Then a sponge jumped out of the sink and hit Mr. Hall. Someone laughed, and a chair got up and charged right at the Halls.

They ran out of the room screaming, and Mrs. Hall fainted. When she came to, she said to her husband, "It's a ghost, that's what it is. That's what he was doing with all those bottles! He's made a ghost!"

7 THE STRANGER REVEALS HIS SECRET

The next morning, the Halls heard about the robbery at Mr. Bunting's house. They were sure it was the work of the stranger, and sent for the sheriff. Meanwhile the stranger came downstairs. Mrs. Hall had not served his breakfast, and he was angry.

Mrs. Hall was angry, too. She wanted him to explain what he was doing last night. And the stranger could not bluff her.

Suddenly he shouted, "You don't understand who I am or what I am. So I'll show you!"

The stranger threw off his hat and began unwinding the bandages from his head. The people at the inn expected to see a scarred or burned face. What they saw was much worse — *nothing!* Without the bandages, the stranger had no head at all.

People screamed and ran out of the inn. "He's got no head!" they shouted.

A few moments later, the sheriff arrived. He entered the inn with Mr. Hall and the blacksmith. Others followed behind. The headless stranger was calmly eating some bread and cheese.

"That's him, sheriff," Mr. Hall said.

"And what is this all about?" the stranger asked calmly.

"Mister," the sheriff said, "I've got a warrant for your arrest. And, head or no head, I'm going to arrest you."

The sheriff never had a chance. The stranger's clothes began flying off. In a few seconds he was completely invisible.

"It's not a man at all!" someone shouted.

"It's just a lot of empty clothes!"

Then everyone started yelling. "Hold him!"

"Shut the doors!" "Don't let him get away!"

"I've got him!" "Here he is!"

Meanwhile, the sheriff was knocked down by a smash on the jaw. The blacksmith got a hard punch on the nose. Mr. Hall was stunned by a sharp rap on the head. Men were falling right and left. And during the shouting, the door of the inn swiftly opened and closed. The invisible man had gotten away.

clothes and had some food. Then he lit up a cigar and told Dr. Kemp his story. As he puffed on the cigar his head and hands were invisible. But Dr. Kemp could see the cigar smoke going through his mouth and into his throat.

I was born an *albino*," Griffin began. "My skin and hair were milky white, and my eyes were red. They still are. My strange looks scared the other children in school. They kept away from me. I was deeply hurt. And soon I was angry with the whole world.

"In college, I became interested in the subject of color and light. I knew that things have color only because they reflect light. Suppose things could be made not to reflect light at all. Then they would become invisible. In water, for example, a piece of clear glass becomes almost invisible because it does not reflect light.

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

"One night, I was alone. In all my great moments, I have been alone. Suddenly it came to me — one could make a human being invisible! Do you realize what such knowledge meant to me, an albino? It was overpowering! Think of the powers I would have, and the freedom!

"I needed two things to develop my idea — money and a place where I could work secretly. I stole the money from my own father. Then I set up all my bottles, powders, and engines in a London slum. For four years, I worked day and night. Finally, I got the right combination of drugs and energy vibrations to make me invisible.

"I did not expect to suffer as much as I did. It was awful. All that night, my body felt as if it were on fire. I cried and groaned and even talked to myself. But in the morning, the pain had passed. Then I looked at myself in the mirror. My body had become like cloudy glass. And during the day, it became clearer and clearer. The bones and veins faded, then vanished. The little white nerves went last. Finally, I was completely invisible.

"There was only one more thing to do. I had to destroy my room so no one could discover my secret. I set fire to it and ran from the house. From a distance, I watched it go up in smoke and flames.

PROBLEMS OF BEING INVISIBLE

"At first, I felt a great sense of power as an invisible man. I enjoyed playing tricks on people. I slapped people on the back, knocked off their hats, and laughed at them. But soon I found it was not easy being invisible. Dogs could smell me. They would sniff at my feet and bark. My feet also made marks on wet or muddy streets. Children would follow them and try to touch me. I was always running away.

"There were much worse problems. Winter came, and I wore clothes to keep warm. Then I was no longer invisible, but my face was! I tried wearing a mask, but I could not eat with it on. And I could not eat when I was invisible, because the food would show inside my stomach!

"I soon found that it wasn't worth being an invisible man. I made up my mind to go to a small village inn to make myself visible again. But those fools would not let me work in peace. And I ran out of money to pay my bills."

"What are your plans now?" Dr. Kemp asked.

"With your help," he said, "I could still do many things as an invisible man. I could terrify people, and make them obey me. Those who did not obey, I could easily kill. Think of it, Kemp. I could rule the whole human race!"

Suddenly, the Invisible Man groaned.

"Kemp," he said, "I must get some sleep, or I will die. I'll lock myself in this room. Don't try to capture me, or —"

"I give you my word," Dr. Kemp said.

DR. KEMP TAKES ACTION

While the Invisible Man slept, Dr. Kemp wondered what he should do. *The man is crazy, he thought. He will create a panic and kill men unless I can stop him!*

In the morning, he wrote a note to the chief of police, Col. Adye. His servant delivered it. Col. Adye wasted no time getting to Dr. Kemp's house. He and Dr. Kemp quietly climbed the stairs to the Invisible Man's room. But before they got there, both were struck by invisible fists. They tumbled down the stairs, and were kicked by invisible feet. Then the front door opened and shut.

Soon after, Dr. Kemp and Col. Adye had worked out a plan to capture the Invisible Man. Hunting dogs would be set on his trail. They couldn't see him, but they could smell him. All food in the area would be locked up and doors bolted. All hiding places would be searched. The important thing was to keep the Invisible Man from getting any rest or food.

The next day, Dr. Kemp got a letter written on a greasy sheet of paper. It said: "You have been very clever. For a whole day I have been chased, but I have gotten food and sleep anyway. The game is only beginning, Kemp. I plan to start the terror now, and you will be the first person I shall kill. You may hide yourself, and put guards all around you. But today you will die!"

Dr. Kemp sent the letter to Col. Adye. Then he locked the doors and window shutters of his house. But within minutes, he heard the shattering of window glass. An axe split open the shutters. Then Dr. Kemp saw a gun pointing at him through the window. The gun fired — but just missed Dr. Kemp as he ran out the back door.

Dr. Kemp ran as fast as he could into town. All the while, he could hear footsteps behind him, getting closer and closer. Suddenly, he was hit behind the ear and knocked down. Someone was choking him. Dr. Kemp grabbed at invisible wrists, but it was a losing struggle. Then Dr. Kemp saw a workman swing a shovel above him. He heard a cry of pain — and the grip on his throat loosened.

Dr. Kemp rolled on top of the Invisible Man and tried to hold him down. "Someone grab his feet!" he cried.

A number of other men rushed to help Dr. Kemp. They grabbed the Invisible Man before he got free. As they beat him to the ground, there was a scream of "Mercy! Mercy!" And then there was silence.

"Get back, you fools!" Dr. Kemp shouted.

"He's hurt!"

The crowd drew back. "He's not breathing,"

Dr. Kemp said. "I can't hear his heart."

Seconds later, the crowd could see the dim outline of a body lying on the ground. At first it was like glass. But soon they could see the nerves, veins, and bones appearing. Then flesh began to cover the body, and it became completely visible. It was the broken, bruised body of a young man of about 30. His hair and skin were milky white, and his eyes were red.

"Cover his face!" a man shouted.

Some children in the crowd ran away when they saw it. Then someone brought a sheet and the body was covered up.

—Ira Peck

FRANKENSTEIN

a retelling of the novel by Mary Shelley

Frankenstein was written by Mary Shelley when she was 19 years old. It was her first book, and it made a big hit. It is still popular today, more than 150 years later. Why did she write it?

One cold, rainy night, she and some friends were sitting around a large fireplace. To pass the time, they told each other ghost stories. They had an idea. Each one would try to write a ghost story. The only one who finished the job was Mary Shelley. Her book, *Frankenstein*, is more than just a ghost story. It has a message, as well. Her idea was that human beings should not try to outdo God or nature. If they try, they may create a monster who could destroy everyone. Here is a short version of her story.

My name is Victor Frankenstein. I am still young, but my health is ruined, and I know I will soon die. I must write the story of my life before it is too late. I hope it will keep others from making the same awful mistakes.

I was born in Switzerland, among tall mountains and beautiful lakes. I had everything a boy could want. My parents were rich, and they were very good to me. I had two younger brothers, and a beautiful step-sister, Elizabeth.

Just before my mother died, she told me her last wish. It was that Elizabeth and I should marry when we were old enough. Elizabeth and I swore that we would.

As a boy, I had become very interested in science. I soon wanted to learn the secrets of heaven and earth more than anything else. Later, in college, I heard a teacher talk about the wonders of modern science. That talk settled my future. I decided to find out the deepest secrets of life and death.

I set up a workshop in the attic of my house. Sometimes I spent whole nights there, testing all kinds of drugs. Finally, I found that I could give life to dead things. I was amazed and thrilled by this. Now I had only one aim. I had to create a human being!

I started to dig up graves at night to get the bones and parts I needed. I found that it was easier to put together a large man than a small man. Soon the dead thing I was working on became eight feet tall. All this time I was like a madman. I shut myself off from all my friends and didn't even write to my family.

THE MONSTER COMES TO LIFE

One dark night, I felt it was time to spark life into the thing at my feet. The rain was beating hard against the window and my candle was almost burned out. Suddenly, I saw the dull, yellow eyes of this creature open. It breathed hard and, with jerky motions, started to get up.

How can I tell you the horror I felt when I saw this thing come to life? I had tried to make it handsome. But it was the most ugly thing I had ever seen. Its skin hardly covered its bones. The eyes were watery, and the lips were straight and black. I could not stand the sight of him. I ran down to my bedroom and tried to get some sleep. I had nothing but very bad dreams.

Suddenly I woke up. I was in a cold sweat, and shaking all over. Then, by the light of the moon, I saw the monster leaning over my bed. His eyes were staring at me. His jaws were open. He was grinning, and he made some sounds, as if trying to talk. I ran outside, where I spent the rest of the night. But I could not sleep. I was afraid of every sound I heard.

The next morning, I rushed into town, not daring to look behind me. By luck, I met my best friend, Henry Clerval. He said that I looked very sick and took me home.

The monster was gone, and I began to laugh wildly. Henry begged me to tell him what was wrong. Then I imagined that the monster had come back. "Save me!" I screamed, and fell to the floor in a fit.

I did not come to my senses for a long time. I was in bed for months with a high fever. Sometimes I shouted in my sleep. But Henry watched over me all the time.

MURDER!

Slowly, I began to get well. I would not tell Henry my secret, but Henry guessed that my sickness had something to do with my work. He cleaned out all the drugs and bottles from my workshop. I was glad. I had made up my mind that I would have nothing more to do with science.

In the spring, I began to feel as good as new. Then I got a letter from my father that shocked me badly. My youngest brother, William, had been murdered! His body had been found in the woods. Large fingerprints had been found on his neck. My father begged me to come home at once.

On the way home, my sadness gave way to a feeling of fear. I wanted to visit the scene of the crime before seeing my family.

That night, there was a bad storm. Flashes of lightning lit up the mountains and lakes. Suddenly I saw a figure moving quickly behind

some trees. A flash of lightning showed me that it was the monster I had created.

I knew then that he had killed my brother William. I had turned loose into the world an evil thing who enjoyed killing!

I blamed myself for William's death. After all, I had made the monster who killed him. Now I only wanted to destroy the monster — or die myself.

One day, to forget my sadness, I began to climb a steep mountain. Soon I saw someone coming toward me at a great speed. As he got nearer, I saw it was the monster. Filled with anger, I went for him, but he jumped aside quickly.

Then, speaking clearly, he begged me to listen to him. He said that he had suffered ever since I had created him. Did he not have the right to speak in his own defense? He looked so full of pain and sorrow that I actually felt pity for him. I agreed to listen to his story. Here it is:

THE MONSTER'S STORY

The night I ran away from him, he wandered into the woods. Before long, he felt cold, tired, and hungry. He did not know what to do. The sights and sounds of the forest scared him, but soon he learned how to live in the woods. He ate berries and acorns and covered himself with a coat that he found.

When it began to snow, he needed food and shelter. He wandered around until he saw a small hut. Inside, an old man was sitting by the fire, making his breakfast. The old man ran when he saw the monster. Then the monster ate the old man's food, enjoyed the warm fire, and slept on some straw.

Later, he moved on to a village. The sight of him scared women and children and started a panic. People threw stones at him, driving him into the fields.

This time he found shelter in a hut that was joined to a small farm house. He lay down on the dirt floor, happy just to be safe from the cold and from people.

There was a small crack in the wall between the hut and the house. Through the crack, the monster saw an old man, his son, and daughter. They seemed different from the people he had met before. They were kind and gentle to each other. They were poor and had little to eat, but after dinner, the old man played the violin and made beautiful sounds.

The monster hid in this hut for a long time. He went out only at night to look for food. Sometimes he brought back firewood for the old man and his children. They were always surprised and happy to find it. He watched them day and night and learned the words they spoke.

One day, he saw himself in a pool of water. Compared with the beauty of the old man and his children, he was ugly. This made him very angry at Frankenstein. *Why*, he wondered, *did*

you form a monster so awful that even you ran away from me? God made man beautiful, but my form is ugly.

HE TRIES TO MAKE FRIENDS

Soon he had a plan. He would go to the old man and his children and ask them to be his friends. In return, he would work hard for them. He knew they would hate his looks at first. But he hoped he would win their friendship by his gentle manners and words.

About this time, he found out that the old man was blind. He thought this would be in his favor. The old man, at least, would not be scared by his looks. He would talk first to the old man when he was alone. The children left the house one day, and the monster decided to go ahead. He knocked on the door of the house and went in.

"Who is there?" the old man asked.

"I am an unlucky creature," the monster said. "I have no friends or relations. Prejudice makes the eyes of people cloudy. They should see me as a kind friend. Instead, they see me as a monster and drive me away."

"I am blind and cannot see your face," the old man said. "But there is something in your words and voice that tells me you are sincere. I am poor, but I would like to help you."

The monster thanked the old man again and again. He said those were the first kind words ever spoken to him. But just then, the children came back, and they were terrified the moment they saw him. The girl fainted. The boy picked up a club and began to beat him. Hurt and confused, the monster ran back into the woods.

Now he was like a wild beast. He wanted revenge against all people. He burned down the old man's house when it was empty. But he felt no better. What hope did he have? He would be hated and beaten everywhere. Still, he decided to try one more thing. He would find and ask his creator — me — for help.

BACK TO DR. FRANKENSTEIN

He headed for my town, traveling at night. One evening, he saw a young boy running toward him in the woods. He thought the boy was too young to have any fear of ugliness. The child might even become the friend that he needed. He gave the boy a friendly hug. But the boy screamed and called him a monster!

"I will not hurt you, child," the monster said. "Listen to me."

"Let me go!" the boy shouted. "My father, Mr. Frankenstein, is an important man. He will punish you!"

When the monster heard that name, he was again overcome with hatred. In a few moments, the boy — my brother — was dead. The monster stayed near the scene of the murder until he found me. He said he had one wish that only I could grant.

"And what is that?" I asked.

His answer amazed me. "You must make for me a woman, as ugly as myself, who will be my friend."

I told him I would never make another monster. But he gave me a strong argument.

"I am evil because I have suffered so much," he said. "I commit crimes because I am forced to be alone. I have no friends or love, so I hate and do evil things. But the love of another would stop me from being a criminal."

For a moment, I felt very sorry for him and thought he was right. But then I began to wonder. Suppose I did make a mate for him. She might be even more evil than he. She might enjoy murder for its own sake. The two of them

together might destroy the human race! No, I could not make a mate for him, and I told him so.

THE MONSTER'S THREAT

The monster's anger was awful. "You are my creator, but I am your master!" he cried. "And you will obey me!"

I told him it was no use. Then he swore that he would destroy me. "I go," he said, "but remember this. I will be with you on your wedding night."

I jumped at him, but he was gone in a moment. I began to worry about his threat. Elizabeth and I had already set a date for our wedding. I knew that sooner or later I would have to kill the monster or die trying. It might as well be soon.

Elizabeth saw that I was worried. But I would not tell her, or anyone else, why. If I did, people would think I was a madman. I was already having fits of madness.

Elizabeth and I planned to spend our honeymoon at an inn near a lake. On our wedding night, I armed myself with a pistol and knife. I told Elizabeth to go to bed. Then I searched every part of the inn for the monster. I saw no sign of him and began to feel safe. Perhaps he had given up his idea of revenge.

Suddenly I heard an awful scream coming from my room. It was Elizabeth! I ran back to the room, but it was too late. Elizabeth was lying across the bed, her head hanging down, dead. At the window I saw the monster grinning at me. Then he was gone.

THE CHASE

From then on, I had only one aim in life — to destroy the monster I had created. I followed him all over the earth, across deserts and mountains. I suffered from heat, cold, and hunger. But I would not give up the chase.

The monster enjoyed my suffering. This was his revenge. Sometimes he left me notes in which he laughed at my misery.

My health is gone now, and I haven't much longer to live. The monster knows it, too. In his last note, he said his revenge will be over when I die. Then he will destroy only one other person — himself. His last words to me were these:

"I have suffered a thousand times more than you. Unloved and shunned by people, I turned to crime and became lower than an animal. My feelings of shame will not end until death closes my eyes at last."

—Ira Peck

DRACULA

a retelling of the novel by Bram Stoker

As the Count saw us, a horrible snarl passed over his face, showing the eyeteeth, long and pointed.

That's how Bram Stoker described Count Dracula in his famous story *Dracula*. Stoker wrote it in 1896. Since then, many movies and TV shows have been based on the story.

Count Dracula is a vampire. Old legends say that vampires are dead people who leave their graves at night to get human blood. When they find victims, they bite their necks and drink their blood. Not all at once, but night after night. Finally, the victims die — and become vampires, too.

Because vampires are “ghosts,” they can't be seen in mirrors. Because they are evil, they are frightened off by a cross or anything holy. They also can't stand garlic. But it's not easy to get rid of a vampire for good. You must find him in his coffin and drive a stake through his heart.

Would you believe there was a *real* Dracula? Bram Stoker based his story on a 15th-century noble named Vlad Tepes. Tepes ruled part of Transylvania (now in Rumania). He wasn't a vampire. But he was an evil man who punished people by driving stakes through them.

Once he invited all the poor and sick people in his land to a feast. Then he locked them inside the dining area and burned the place down. The guests were better off dead, he said. No wonder his subjects called him “Dracula.” This means “son of the dragon” or “devil.”

While writing *Dracula*, Stoker began acting strangely. He had always been kind and gentle. Suddenly he became easily angered and cruel. When the book was finished, he became himself again.

“I cannot explain my cruel behavior,” he told his family. “But while I was writing, I seemed possessed by an evil spirit.”

Have you seen vampire movies or TV shows? Here's where they came from:

Slowly, the door of the old castle creaked open. A tall man in black stood there. He smiled, showing sharp, pointed teeth.

“Welcome to my home,” he said. “I am Count Dracula.”

How could I guess what strange and awful things would happen when I went inside?

My name is Jonathan Harker. I work for a real-estate company in England. I had been sent to Castle Dracula in Transylvania. My job was to give the Count the deed to a house he had bought in England.

“I wish to move to England,” he told me. “My country is worn out. Yours is full of life.”

I had been at the castle only a short time when I began to ask myself some questions. Why did I see the Count only at night? Why were there no servants? Why were all the outside doors locked, making me a prisoner?

STRANGE EVENTS

A strange thing happened on the third day I was there. I got up before dawn and started to shave. The Count came up behind me — but I couldn't see his face in my shaving mirror! Startled, I cut myself. The Count's eyes blazed at the blood.

“Be careful how you cut yourself,” he said. “It is more dangerous than you think.”

But, when he saw the cross I wore, he rushed from the room. I remembered then that I had not seen any mirrors in the castle.

The next night, an even stranger thing happened. I was leaning out my window, looking at the moonlit valley below. Suddenly, the Count's head came out of the window below. I watched amazed as he crawled, head first, down the wall, like a lizard. His cape spread out around him like bat wings. What kind of creature was he?

I wanted to get out of this place. I began to search the castle for a key to unlock the doors.

One room I came to seemed less gloomy than the others. It had comfortable furniture and a nice view. I lay down on a couch, and fell asleep.

Suddenly I woke up. I was not alone. Three young women stood in the moonlight, watching me. Then one of them bent over me, and put her teeth in my neck!

Just then, the Count came in. His eyes blazed with red light. With a sweep of his arm, he knocked the women aside.

"This man belongs to me," he said. "I have work for him to finish. When I am gone, you may finish him."

TRYING TO ESCAPE

I fainted from fright. When I came to, it was daytime. I knew now I *had* to escape. I would crawl down the wall to the Count's room, which was below mine. Maybe the key to the outer doors was there.

Except for dust and spider webs, the room was empty. But at one end, there was a stairway. I followed it—down into the vaults below. There, in a coffin, lay the Count!

At first, I thought he was dead. He was not breathing. But when I tried to search him for the key, his open eyes glared at me. I couldn't stand it. And I ran back to my room.

My last hours at the castle were like a nightmare. At dawn, I heard wagons rolling into the courtyard below. Coffin-like boxes were brought out of the vaults and loaded onto the wagons. I knew the Count was in one of those boxes.

I had to get away! When night came, I would be at the mercy of the three vampire women.

Somehow, I climbed out my window and crawled down the wall. I don't remember how I got to the nearest town. I was ill for weeks in a hospital. It was some time before I got back to England.

TRYING TO FORGET

When I got home, I wanted to forget Castle Dracula. I just wanted to settle down with my wife, Mina. But while I had been away, strange things had been happening. They had begun when Mina went to visit her friend Lucy.

Lucy lived on the coast. And, Mina told me, there had been a great storm. A ship named *Demeter* was driven ashore and wrecked. The captain's body was tied to the wheel. No one else was on board. But a wolf had run ashore before it could be caught.

A diary was found in the captain's pocket. It told of a strange passenger on board. He was a tall man with red eyes and pointed teeth. One by one, the crew had vanished.

If only I had been there, I could have warned Mina and Lucy. The passenger had to be the Count. I know now that a vampire can change himself into a wolf or bat.

Soon after the shipwreck, Lucy became ill. Each day, she grew thinner and paler. She often walked in her sleep. One night, Mina followed her.

"She went to the old ruined house on the hill," Mina said. "I saw her on the ground. A figure was bending over her. It stood up, and I could see its pale face and red, glowing eyes. When it heard me, it disappeared. Lucy was unconscious. She had two small marks, like bites, on her neck."

THE AWFUL TRUTH

Lucy grew sicker. Her fiance, Arthur, called in Dr. Seward.

"I will get Dr. Van Helsing," Seward said.

"He knows about strange diseases."

At first, Van Helsing did not tell anyone what was wrong with Lucy. He gave her blood transfusions. But each morning, she seemed drained of blood. He hung garlic around her room and a cross on her neck. But her mother took away the garlic. A servant stole the cross. And a few days later, Lucy died from loss of blood.

I talked with Van Helsing when I got back from Transylvania. I told him about the Count.

"Dracula is a vampire," he said. "He killed Lucy, and I fear she has become a vampire, too."

He showed us a newspaper story about some children who had been bitten by a "woman in white." The attacks had taken place not far from Lucy's tomb.

How could we believe anything so horrible? But Van Helsing proved it to us. He took us to Lucy's tomb at night. Her coffin was empty.

PUTTING LUCY TO REST

We waited. Just before dawn, we saw her come back to the graveyard. She was carrying an unconscious child. Her teeth were long, sharp, and covered with blood.

When she saw us, she dropped the child and rushed for her tomb. We waited until the sun rose. Then Van Helsing gave Arthur a sharp stake and a hammer.

"You loved her, so you must put her to rest. Drive this stake through her heart. Then she will no longer be a vampire."

Arthur did as he was told. Then we saw that Van Helsing was right. The evil face of the vampire was gone. Lucy looked peaceful and calm in death.

"We are not through," Van Helsing told us. "We must find Dracula and destroy him."

By chance, Dr. Seward found a clue as to where Dracula might be. Seward was in charge of an insane asylum. One of his patients, Renfield, had started eating spiders and flies. He said "the master" had given them to him.

Then Renfield escaped to a ruined house

nearby. When brought back, he said he had gone to find "the master." Seward thought Dracula might be hiding in the ruined house.

THE 50 COFFIN-LIKE BOXES

Meanwhile, I had learned something else about the ship *Demeter*. When it was wrecked, 50 coffin-like boxes filled with soil had been found aboard. The boxes had been sent on to the ruined house. I also learned that Dracula must rest in soil from Transylvania. So we decided to search the ruined house.

"We are going into great danger," Van Helsing warned us. "A vampire has the strength of 20 men. And he cannot be harmed by guns. Put these crosses around your necks, for he fears symbols of goodness."

When we broke into the house, we didn't find the Count. We found 29 of the long boxes and destroyed them. Now he could not come back to them at sunrise. But I knew there were more coffins. Where were they hidden?

I was so busy trying to find them, that I didn't notice how Mina had changed. She had grown pale and thin. Every night, she had nightmares about fog coming into her room. Two red eyes would peer out of the fog. Then she would feel a sharp pain at her throat. If I had listened to her, I would have known how near Dracula was.

THE SEARCH GOES ON

We went on looking for the boxes. Then, one night, Dr. Seward found Renfield lying in a pool of blood in his cell. He was dying of a violent beating. He asked to see Van Helsing.

Renfield told us that Dracula had promised him all the flies he could eat. "All I had to do was let him pass through my cell on his way to Mina Harker's house. But when Mrs. Harker came to see me the other day, I knew 'the master' was draining her blood. When he came tonight, I tried to grab him and keep him here. But he threw me down and got away."

When Van Helsing heard this, he ran to Mina's room. There he found her struggling in Dracula's grip. Van Helsing held out a cross, and the vampire fled.

Now we worked harder than ever to find all the Count's resting places. We learned that the other boxes were sent to a house in London. When we broke into that house, Dracula was waiting for us!

He leaped at us like a panther. We tried to corner him, but he escaped by jumping out a window. All we could do was destroy the boxes we found. At least he could not come back there at dawn.

BACK TO TRANSYLVANIA

It was Mina who helped us decide what to do next. "Hypnotize me," she told Van Helsing. "Dracula forced me to drink some of his blood. There may be a link between us. Maybe I can see into his mind."

Van Helsing did as she wished. The results were amazing! In a trance, Mina seemed to know what Dracula was hearing and seeing. She said she heard wood creaking and water lapping.

"He is on a ship," Van Helsing said. "He is going back to his castle. There is no time to lose. If Mina dies before we can destroy him, she will become a vampire! If we destroy him first, she will live."

We set off at once for Transylvania. Mina came along to guide us with the things she saw in her trances.

We caught up with the Count on the winding road to Castle Dracula. It was late afternoon when we saw a cart up ahead. On the cart was a coffin-like box.

Van Helsing told the driver of the cart to stop. When we opened the box, there lay the Count. The sun was setting, so there was little time to waste. We drove a stake through his heart. We also cut off his head. Then, before our eyes, his body crumbled to dust.

I may be wrong. But just before the body crumbled, I thought I saw a peaceful look come over Dracula's face.

—Margaret Roman