

DRACULA'S GUEST

Dracula's Guest

BRAM STOKER



*With a Preface by
Florence Stoker*



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CONTENTS

Preface	7
<i>Dracula's Guest</i>	9
Note on the Text	41
Extra Material	43
Appendix: <i>The Opening Diary Entry</i> <i>from Bram Stoker's Dracula</i>	51

PREFACE

From the first edition of
Dracula's Guest and Other Weird Stories

A FEW MONTHS BEFORE the lamented death of my husband – I might say even as the shadow of death was over him – he planned three series of short stories for publication, and the present volume is one of them.

To his original list of stories in this book I have added a hitherto unpublished episode from *Dracula*. It was originally excised owing to the length of the book, and may prove of interest to the many readers of what is considered my husband's most remarkable work. The other

BRAM STOKER

stories have already been published in English and American periodicals.

Had my husband lived longer, he might have seen fit to revise this work, which is mainly from the earlier years of his strenuous life. But, as fate has entrusted to me the issuing of it, I consider it fitting and proper to let it go forth practically as it was left by him.

— FLORENCE STOKER
26 St George's Square
London, S.W.



DRACULA'S GUEST



When we started for our drive the sun was shining brightly on Munich, and the air was full of the joyousness of early summer. Just as we were about to depart, Herr Delbrück (the maître d'hôtel of the Quatre Saisons, where I was staying) came down, bareheaded, to the carriage and, after wishing me a pleasant drive, said to the coachman, still holding his hand on the handle of the carriage door:

‘Remember, you are back by nightfall. The sky looks bright, but there is a shiver in the north wind that says there may be a sudden storm. But I am sure you will not be late.’ Here he smiled, and added, ‘For you know what night it is.’

Johann answered with an emphatic ‘*Ja, mein herr,*’ and, touching his hat, drove off quickly. When we had cleared the town I said, after signalling to him to stop:

‘Tell me, Johann, what is tonight?’

He crossed himself as he answered, laconically, ‘*Walpurgisnacht.*’ Then he took out his watch – a great old-fashioned German silver thing, as big as a turnip – and looked at it, with his eyebrows gathered together and a little impatient shrug of his shoulders.

I realised that this was his way of respectfully protesting against the unnecessary delay, and sank back in the carriage, merely motioning him to proceed. He started off rapidly, as if to make up for lost time. Every now and then the horses seemed to throw up their heads and sniffed the air suspiciously. On such occasions I often looked round in alarm. The road was pretty bleak, for we were traversing a sort of high, wind-swept plateau. As we drove, I saw a road that looked but little used, and which seemed to dip through a little winding valley. It looked so inviting that, even at the risk of offending him, I called Johann to stop, and when he had pulled up, I told him I would like

to drive down that road. He made all sorts of excuses, and frequently crossed himself as he spoke. This somewhat piqued my curiosity, so I asked him various questions. He answered fencingly, and repeatedly looked at his watch in protest. Finally I said:

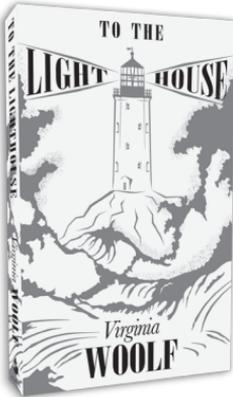
‘Well, Johann, I want to go down this road. I shall not ask you to come unless you like; but tell me why you do not like to go – that is all I ask.’ For answer he seemed to throw himself off the box, so quickly did he reach the ground. Then he stretched out his hands appealingly to me, and implored me not to go. There was just enough of English mixed with the German for me to understand the drift of his talk. He seemed always just about to tell me something – the very idea of which evidently frightened him – but each time he pulled himself up, saying, as he crossed himself:

‘Walpurgisnacht!’

I tried to argue with him, but it was difficult to argue with a man when I did not know his



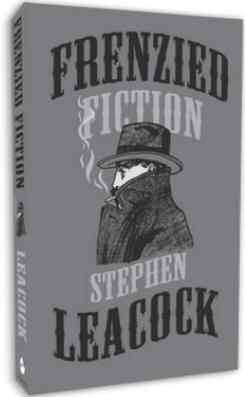
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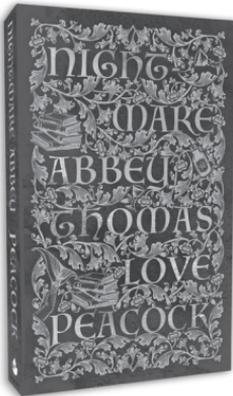
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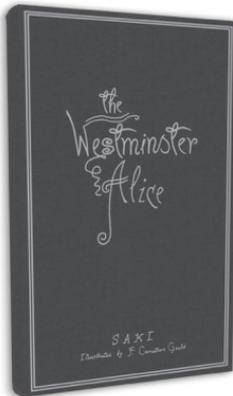
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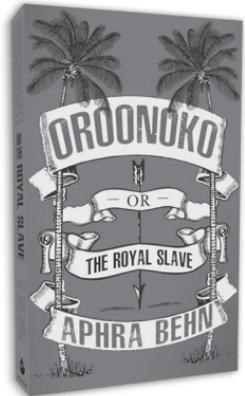
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