

Chapter 1

Harker Arrives In Transylvania

It was nearly night-time when the train arrived in Bistrita, Transylvania. Jonathan Harker got out there after a long journey from London, with stopovers in Munich, Vienna and Budapest.

He set off for the Golden Krone hostel, as Count Dracula had told him to do. The innkeeper and her husband came out to greet him with a letter:

„My dear friend,

Welcome to the Carpathians. I await you impatiently. Sleep well tonight as tomorrow afternoon you have to catch the stagecoach that goes to Bucovina. In the Borgo mountain pass my carriage will await you and bring you here. I hope you have had a good trip and enjoy my beautiful country.

Dracula“

The next day, when he asked them if they knew Count Dracula and his castle, they made the sign of the cross.

„Do you have to go there?“ the alarmed inn-keeper asked. „Do you know what day it is today? The eve of Saint George! Don't you know that tonight at twelve o'clock all the evil beings come out to show their power?“

She seemed very anxious and begged him not to go, but Harker had to resolve an important matter there. So she gave him the crucifix that she wore around her neck and, as he hesitated to take it, she said: „Do it for your mother.“





He accepted it, intrigued and fearful.

In the stagecoach Harker was distracted by the beauty of the landscape. The road passed first through green hills with woods and fruit trees, to arrive at the high mountains of the Carpathians, with their snowy peaks.

When night drew near, the passengers started to get nervous. The driver accelerated and the stagecoach bumped along. They arrived at the Borgo Pass between the menacing mountains.



Suddenly the stagecoach stopped and everyone looked out at the darkness. There was no other coach waiting.

„You’ll have to come to Bucovina and return tomorrow or the day after,“ said the driver to Harker.

At that moment the horses neighed and the locals on the stagecoach shouted while crossing themselves. A carriage pulled by four black horses was approaching. The guide, his face covered by a large black hat, said to the coach driver.

“Your were in a bit of a hurry to leave.”

And taking Harker's luggage he put it on his carriage. Harker followed him and the coach advanced into the mountain pass. Harker felt afraid and more so when he saw on his watch it was nearly midnight.

He then heard the dogs howling and the horses reared up nervously. The wind whistled and brought new wolf howls. The driver stopped and got down.

The noise stopped and the moon appeared from behind a rock. From its light Harker saw that they were surrounded by wolves with white fangs. Fear paralyzed him.



The howls returned and Harker shouted to the driver. The latter made the wolves back off by waving his arms and he carried on driving the carriage.

At last the driver stopped in the courtyard of an enormous castle in ruins. He helped Harker down with a cold, strong hand and disappeared with the coach.

There was no bell on the door and Harker had to wait, full of apprehension. He regretted coming to such a sinister place to explain to this count, as a lawyer, the way of buying a house in London. At last he heard a noise on the other side of the door and before him appeared a very tall, thin old man, dressed all in black which contrasted with his terrible paleness. He observed his thick eyebrows, his greying moustache, his red lips which revealed some sharp, white teeth and his pointy ears.

„Welcome! Please come in.“



When Harker went in, the old man shook his hand stongly and the young man wondered if it wasn't the driver as his hand was as cold and strong as his; it seemed like a dead man's hand.

„Are you Count Dracula?“

„Yes, I am Dracula.

Come through, you must eat and rest.“

Having gone down some long corridors, they arrived at a sitting-room with a fireplace where a table was prepared for dinner.



„Eat what you like and excuse me for not joining you, but I dined earlier.“

Harker ate hungrily. Dawn was coming and they heard howls in the distance.

„Listen. What music!“ Dracula said and seeing Harker’s surprise added, “You city people don’t understand what a hunter feels. Anyway, sleep as long as you like. I’ll be out tomorrow until the afternoon.“

Dracula accompanied him to his bedroom in the adjacent room and there Harker wrote his diary before going to bed.

