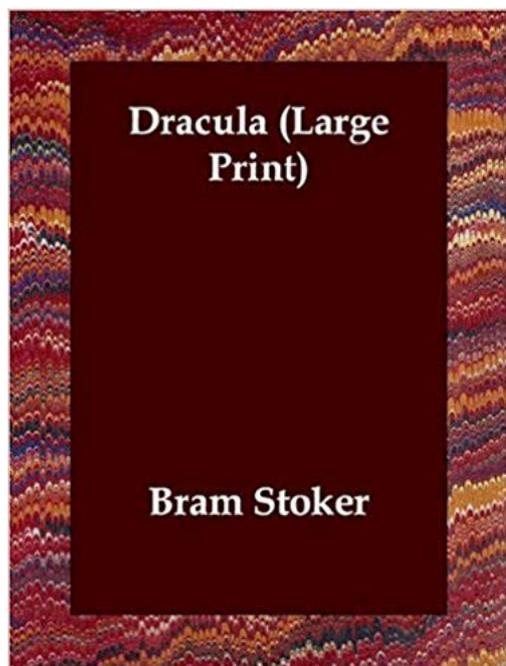


Dracula *by* Bram Stoker



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Reviews of the *Dracula* *by* Bram Stoker

- **porosh**

You know that scene in a horror movie when it gets dark and ominous music begins to play and you know that at any moment the killer is going to suddenly appear and murder everyone in a horrible fashion. That intense build up, and the anxiety of wondering exactly when you're going to be scared, because you already know it's coming. That's this entire book. I had to take breaks at times to read some short stories that were a bit lighter, because the unnerving fear for the characters, as we the reader know what's happening, could be a bit much at times. However, it's easy to see why this is a classic, and how it has inspired others to delve into the dark world of vampires. Though, considering I've mainly read paranormal romance, it's a bit disconcerting to see how the original was so completely evil. The vampires in this are soulless, not misunderstood, and kill children and anyone that gets in their way without remorse. More so, it's incredible all the powers they are given, not just

immortality and strength, but real mystical sort of powers, that I wish hadn't been pushed off to the side in the other stories I've read. Beyond all of that though, I don't believe I have ever come across a story written in this style, and it was this style that really made the tale such an intriguing one. Sure there have been plenty who have done rotating first person, but this is told in pieces of people's diaries, the letters they've written to others, and even newspaper clippings. You're getting the events after the characters have experience them and have pondered over them, as they try to understand what exactly is going on. Because of this you get to see how it all slowly melds together, and what each character really is thinking, and a much more personal aspect of the story that allows you to really feel for each of them as if these were actual historical letters that someone has stitched together. And I do so hope people were ever like this, this goodness and bravery and the way in which they talk so passionately about everything. It's really a wonderful book. Though I would advise getting a version that has footnotes to explain certain things. Such as words that are no longer used in this way. As well as some of things that are referenced. I'm sure you could easily enjoy this book without such, but it was rather nice to have.

- **Kit**

Daniel Molloy: So there are no vampires in Transylvania? No Count Dracula?

Louis: Fictions, my friend. The vulgar fictions of a demented Irishman.

-- From the movie Interview with the Vampire

First published in 1897, Dracula is a classic gothic vampire novel written towards the end of the Victorian age (which ended in 1901). It takes places over seven months and involves many points of view as it is told in an epistolary style.

The story is well known: newly minted solicitor Jonathan Harker is summoned to Castle Dracula to aid the Count on the purchase of property in England and after a fashion (and a host of badly written coincidences that plague the novel) Dracula ends up in England wreaking chaos.

I really wanted to enjoy this novel, it really should have been a slam dunk for me, yet it took me a month to read. The book is told in a quasi real time through journal entries, logs, letters and newspaper articles. While I loved this approach, I really thought that actual prose in between these things may have benefited the story. I felt like I was missing so much and that Stoker could have taken time to explain some things instead of relying on coincidence.

I felt as if everyone wrote the same way in their journals. For part of the book Mina and Jonathan seem very much identical in so far as their writing and personalities were concerned. The journal entries did not feel like entries, there are times when people (especially Van Helsing) do these impossibly long soliloquies and it's all quoted perfectly which didn't feel real to me.

I really liked Mina, Jonathan and Quincy but I felt as if I did not really know them even by the end. Dr Seward was OK, but besides being a doctor, he was dull. Arthur seems to have been kept around simply because he was a Lord and made certain things in the story much easier, same thing with Renfield who seems to only have served a singular purpose. Van Helsing is...annoying, annoying to the point where I really wanted to skip over his parts, but he is such a central character there is no escaping him. I felt as if Quincy, who is the most interesting of the bunch, could have taken Van Helsing's role as someone familiar with vampirism and Dr Seward and Arthur also been combined to create a Lord and doctor missing nothing.

Then there's Lucy. Lucy is the Victorian version of Bella Swan. Everyone loves Lucy, all of her

suitors are best friends with one another. She bemoans having so many men love her, the horror! Whatever will she do? Why does everyone love Lucy? Beats me, she's a complete bag of bones with a sleep walking issue. It's literally the only interesting about her, she sleep walks, that's it.

Stoker does the same thing with Mina later in the novel, everyone loves Mina. At least we see why, Mina is developed as well as she is going to be by this point and she is very likable. As a matter of fact, Mina is the only one who seems to have their stuff together out of the lot of them. She is sharp and smart, smarter than the men and emotionally she is a tank. Nina is a bad ass, especially in Victorian England, even now Mina would be a bad ass.

Considering when this was written I was very surprised by how even the playing field was. Mina keeps her composure even after many, many traumatic events (including one involving Dracula violating Mina in the most damnable way, actually removing Mina from her God's sight) while the men are falling apart. There are two separate exchanges involving Jonathan where Mina and Helsing have to politely tell him to shut up. The men can become extraordinarily dramatic, heights that would not be reached again until our modern era of reality television.

Van Helsing was the most disappointing to me. Stoker writes him as if he is some kind of genius beyond imagination, almost as if Van Helsing has no intellectual limits. He's never shuts up. He refuses to tell people what's going on even though he could easily have saved Lucy by doing so. Instead of this being written in to the story's advantage, his curious silence is not really addressed other than a comment about Van Helsing thinking Dr. Seward would not have believed him.

Dracula is barely in the book after his adventures in Transylvania with Jonathan. I would have loved for Dracula to get more love and more time. The way he is portrayed in movies and TV shows and the way he is in this novel are completely different, he is borish here, a simple monster. I like this approach, the gentleman vampire trope is nice, but I like the more desperate monster type.

It is not a bloated novel, it is not rushed either. The pacing is good. Things seem to get the attention they need in regards to events, except for the ending. There is no getting around this: the ending is atrocious. Not only is the ending abrupt but it's hard to believe Stoker could have found no other way to end it. It makes no sense that This was the best he could do. This is why I settled on two stars.

In closing, I am glad I finally read Dracula and got it out of the way but in all honesty I fear it was a waste of time as I did not enjoy it.

- **romrom**

I hear people make references to Dracula and Vlad the Impaler and vampires in general, but I never really understood the more sophisticated ones because I had never read the book - well now I can say that I HAVE! My book arrived in excellent condition- better than I expected. The cover of this book by Bram Stoker is even more beautiful than the pictures show - in fact, it is the single most colorful novel on my bookshelf. The title letters are raised off of the front cover and are coated in same metallic-blue ink, which makes it unlike any book I have seen. The plot is very exciting (even though it seems unbearably slow and boring in the beginning) and it is very difficult to predict future scenes, which is a major bonus for me because I dislike books that are too predictable. The words are just the right size and the book is extremely lightweight so you won't have to rest it on anything. It is much smaller in size than other books of the same title and is therefore extremely easy to store. In addition, in my opinion, it is always better to use hard copy printed books because you read much faster, you focus on the material easily, you will not damage your eyes like you will glaring at lcd screens, and best of all, you get to smell and feel the pages between your fingertips. Moreover, this

book was the cheapest priced version I could find. Everything combines to make this an excellent product.

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