

DRACULA

The Vampire Strikes Back

Comedy in a Jugular Vein

a pantomime
by Thomas Ribbits and Tim Seward

Vignette I

Striking Opening Music

Mists envelop the screen. Lightning and thunder. The clouds roll away to show a vista of Europe from a high angle. Track into Romania.

NARRATOR. Seven hundred years ago, Prince Vlad, the impaler, was driven to his castle by his subjects, where he was overpowered and destroyed...

Image of treasure

But not before he had hidden his treasure. Legend has it that the untold wealth was sealed in a box with three keys:

Image of three keys, one large, one medium and one small.

...hidden in his castle.

A composite shot of the castle and the keys getting smaller and smaller until they are in the castle.

Soon Vlad the Impaler passed into folklore. Peace returned to Transylvania.

Image of a peaceful village scene but with the windowless castle in the background

But the Prince had laid clues for the heirs to his treasure - descended from his terrible bloodline, with his unnatural desire to drink blood - vampires.

Silhouette of DRACULA

Count Dracula was the most cunning and deadly of all the vampires.....

Heavy lightning, the merest glimpse of his face is revealed before a blackout and a musical crescendo, with eerie laughter.

CAPTION: DRACULA - THE VAMPIRE STRIKES BACK

Screen blacks out.

MUSIC. Dramatic organ chords leading into The Transylvanian Overture

As the music ends, eerie laughter can be heard and fades away.

One. Streetscape

The screen reveals a London Street, presumably a kind of fictional square (to allow a sense of a space where people can congregate in a non-incongruous way).

The junior members of the cast arrive on stage dressed as Londoners (flower girls, chimney sweeps, and other street life). They join the NARRATOR in singing and dance as appropriate.

NARRATOR.

Look round,
Here's a street full of people,
Normal workaday people;
People like you and me.

See them,
Busy meeting and greeting,
So compatible.
See them all talk to everyone that they see.

They work so hard but they make time for each other;
They're friends and neighbours and help out one another.

Come on,
Say hello to the locals
As they're passing by.
Greeting the many characters that we see.

Care though!
In the midst of this idyll
There's a threatening riddle;
Things are not what they seem.

So if
You don't know where you're going
Just be wary of
Alleys and streets where cunning and evil teem

Don't let people say "Lack of care's what tricked 'em".
Just be watchful and you won't be a victim.

Take care
Not to run into trouble.
Just be careful or
You'll find yourself in terrible danger:
Running away, pursued by a stranger
Beaten for money, roughly manhandled
Kicked on the street and bum by your Landlord
Sent to a ruthless House of Correction
Murdered and sold to Doctor Dissection.

Stay with your friends and nothing is frightful
No need for nightmares; it's a delightful dream.

Instrumental. Londoners dance and amuse one another. SAPPHI enters, and interacts with some of them, while the NARRATOR tracks her.

Sapphi,
She's a vampire slayer.
Vampires don't have a prayer
When she's tracking 'em down.

Thing is,

When old Drac is attacking
She is nowhere near.
There's not a single vampire in London Town

A vampire hunter's life can be quite frustratin'
She tries to track them down but her bus pass only goes as far as Leyton!

Who cares
Though if no-one believes her.
She'll prove herself.
If she can find a vampire, she'll hunt him down.

There now,
There's our street full of people,
Normal workaday people;
People like you and me.

See them,
Busy meeting and greeting,
Quite unstoppable.
See them all talk to everyone that they see.

They work so hard but they make time for each other;
They're friends and neighbours and help out one another.

See them
These agreeable people.
So our story starts
With all the normal workaday people,
All of these happy make-my-day people;
All these special people that we see.

Song Ends with a final chorus and the crowd all disperse, leaving a solitary FLOWER SELLER.

FLOWER SELLER. *(completely over the top hoarse voiced cockney)* Violets! 'Orrible manky old violets! Who will buy my nasty stinky old violets?

NARRATOR. Why are you selling horrible *old* violets?

FLOWER SELLER. It's cheaper!

NARRATOR. Well, you be careful out here in the street alone. Unpleasant things can happen.

FLOWER SELLER. Okay dearie, I will. Violets! Wilted foul-smelling off violets! Violets with the emphasis on the vile!

The NARRATOR withdraws to the back of the auditorium and the FLOWER SELLER wanders off - stage right.

The next part takes place in shadow play. The silhouette of the FLOWER SELLER wanders across the screen from right to left, continuing to try to sell her wares. She is followed by a top-hatted caped figure clutching a cricket bat. They both disappear off the left edge of the screen and then there is a "comedy biffing" sound effect. A few violets are thrown on the stage from the left.

OLD FLOWER SELLER. 'Ere, what you doin'? Get back! Stay away from me. *(she screams)*

DRACULA dressed in cape and tophat with a mask runs across the stage from left to right in the dark and exits.

SAPPHI enters the stage from the left, dragging on the FLOWER SELLER who has fainted.

SAPPHI. Hello everyone! I was just hunting for vampires round the back streets - as you do - when I found this poor woman. Is there a doctor in the house?

RENFIELD. I am a doctor!

SAPPHI. Dr Renfield. I am so pleased to see you. This woman has been attacked.

RENFIELD. (*he examines her*). Remarkable. She's been attacked by a bat!

SAPPHI. (*stops suddenly*) A bat? Did you say a bat?

RENFIELD. Yes!

SAPPHI. A vampire bat!

RENFIELD. A cricket bat. Vampires don't exist, Sapphi.

SAPPHI. Vampires *do* exist!

RENFIELD. This poor woman has been rendered unconscious by a cricket bat. A dreadful crime, but not the work of a vampire.

SAPPHI. What are those two puncture marks on her neck?

RENFIELD. (*looks*) Freak cuts from the scuffle probably. Nothing to worry about.

OLD FLOWER SELLER. What 'it me?

SAPPHI. (*simul.*) A vampire bat.

RENFIELD (*simul.*) A cricket bat.

RENFIELD. You won't be going home tonight.

OLD FLOWER SELLER. I ain't got no 'ome to go to, sir - I was unfairly evicted this afternoon.

RENFIELD. I'm going to take you to the hospital.

RENFIELD *helps the* FLOWER SELLER *off stage right*.

OLD FLOWER SELLER. (*to the audience as she leaves*) I could have been in *My Fair Lady*.

SAPPHI. (*alone on stage*) Dr Renfield can think what he likes. A vampire at large in London, and only me to hunt him down .
The news must be spread. (*she calls out*) Mother!

SAPPHI *runs off stage left*.

Two. *The House*

Inside the house of COCO VAN HELSING, which is in a poor condition. There is garlic everywhere, crosses on the WALLS and perhaps stakes lying around (the disused paraphernalia of her late husband). COCO arrives, wearing an apron, a string of garlic round her neck, a string of sausages in one hand and a battered galvanised iron bucket in the other. She crosses the stage and then suddenly spots the audience.

COCO. Ooh, hello children! My name's Coco. People call me Coco - because I'm sweet at bedtime. Well, it's either that, or because I stain their mugs. Welcome to my house. It's lovely but I afford the rent. We're so poor (*cries*) We're so poor, the rag and bone man delivers.

Since my poor husband disappeared hunting vampires, we've been so poor. All he left me was a ten year supply of garlic. I had to become a cook - it's the only way to get rid of it. That's why they call me Coco Van. (*beat*) Well, you've got to admire my sauce anyway!

I cook for everyone in this town.

She pulls a rubber chicken from her bucket.

I bought this chicken on Saturday. And I said to the butcher "make sure you leave the eyes in. It's got to see us through the week". Then I tried to make a rabbit stew, but I had to throw it away. It had a hare in it. But I've found a marvellous way of making leek soup. I put water in this bucket (*she shows the bucket to the audience and then turns it around to show a big hole in the bottom*) - and here's the leak!

SAPPHI *enters*.

COCO. Sapphi, dear, it's a cold night out - I told you not to go out without your garlic scarf.

COCO puts a string of garlic round SAPPHI's neck.

SAPPHI. Mother. There has been a dreadful attack - and I'm sure it's the work of a vampire.

COCO. Darling, you think *everything's* the work of a vampire.

SAPPHI. (*dejected*) I know, Mother. But I just want to be like father, and be a vampire slayer.

COCO. I know, dear - but that won't get the rent paid. Did you buy that spider, like I asked?

SAPPHI. You can't eat a spider - there's not enough meat.

COCO. True - but everyone gets a drumstick!

SAPPHI. One day I promise you, I shall find and slay a vampire and then all our troubles will be over.

COCO. Not unless he gives you a tenner first. I don't want you becoming a vampire slayer. What happened to your father might happen to you.

SAPPHI. (*surprised*) I might grow a moustache?

COCO. It's not safe for a girl like you, armed to the teeth and smeared in garlic, to walk around London streets at night. (*beat*) You'll never meet a boy that way. If you can't make money, you could marry it.

SAPPHI (*moving downstage to wash up/clean in the corner*). I want a boy who's kind and gentle - and one day, he'll just knock on the door and walk into my life.

She sets to, cleaning. There is a knock at the door, and JONATHAN HARKER comes in. SAPPHI keeps her back turned to him, listening to the conversation over her shoulder.

JONATHAN. Hello. Anyone in?

COCO. Who are you?

JONATHAN. I am Jonathan Harker.

COCO. Oh, you seem a polite, decent, and good looking, man. You must be bringing us good news.

JONATHAN. Err, not really. I've been sent by Lord Emo Globin to repossess this house. I'm sorry about that. It does seem a bit rude.

COCO. (*hysterical*) Repossess the house? You've got no grounds.

JONATHAN. You haven't paid the rent for two years.

COCO. That's just legal quibbling. Oooh, you can see he's a bailiff; he's got me wriggling in the crushing grip of reason, the heartless beast. Excuse me a moment, Mr Harker.

COCO goes downstage to SAPPHI.

COCO. I've got an idea. No man can resist a woman's dainty charms. All we have to do is to make him fall for one of us and he'll let us off paying.

SAPPHI. Mother! What about ethics?

COCO. That's miles away! Anyway, one of us will have to practice her feminine wiles. I'll go first. I don't fancy your chances.

She goes back over to nonplussed JONATHAN.

COCO. Oh! Heaven must be missing an Angel! You're a delight.

JONATHAN. And you're a pudding.

COCO. Yes, darling. I've been looking for someone just like you, with beautiful dark hair, beautiful broad shoulders and beautiful green... banknotes. Come to mama! I've got so much love, so much heart.

COCO grabs him to her breasts. He bounces.

JONATHAN. Ow! Geroff!

COCO. ...so much for that! One moment, please!

She huddles with SAPPHI again.

COCO. He's a bit of a strange one. That *always* works.

SAPPHI. When?

COCO. Well, it was only the second time I tried it. We need someone more beautiful, so there's nothing for it. (*looks pointedly at SAPPHI, beat*) I'll have to try again with a blond wig!

SAPPHI (*practically*). Oh, wait here. *I'll* do it.

COCO. Oh, I never thought of that. Best of British, then. Just pretend you really like him, that's all there is to it.

SAPPHI goes back upstage and clears her throat.

SAPPHI. Excuse me.

JONATHAN looks around and is instantly bowled over by her.

SAPPHI (*laying it on thick*). Oh! My mother must have been wrong, she said you were a bailiff, but really you're much too handsome. Do you, er, do you come here often.

JONATHAN blushes and stammers.

SAPPHI. Surely nobody as nice looking and as kind as you could possibly want to take away the only shelter from a poor old washerwoman.

COCO. Here, 'ang on. I'm not old, and I don't wash!

SAPPHI. *(to COCO)* Sh! *(to JONATHAN)* And her lonely... *single* daughter, still looking for a husband about *(she puts her hand at the level of his head)* so high, and with dark hair, rather like yours, in fact. I'm just trying to reach out to touch the... heart of kind people. *(seductively)* Could I... touch yours, Mr Harker?

SAPPHI and COCO freeze. *The lights change and JONATHAN sings to the audience.*

MY FIRST LOVE (JONATHAN)

JONATHAN.

All through my life, I've been so lonely, so lonely.
Empty nights, empty days; no-one there; me only.
No-one that holds me and no-one that tells me
I don't have to live all alone.

Living from day to day, not knowing why I should.
Into the city I go, and then home, but would
Anything alter if I disappeared? Would there
Be anybody who cared?

Till today, I never understood
And I always thought I never would.
But I've found a reason for my life.
All the doors are open to me. Light and life are shining through me.

Now I've seen her, nothing is the same.
Colour all about: just say her name.
Let me sing it: Sapphi, Sapphi!
Can't you feel it? Sapphi's everywhere you look!

(to the frozen SAPPHI).

Do you believe in first love at first glance? Could you
Credit the thought of a fated romance? Would you
Think of me better if I said "I love you".
Or would you just turn me away?

Till today, I never understood
And I always thought I never would.
But I've found a reason for my life.
All the doors are open to me. Light and life are shining through me.

Now I've seen you, nothing is the same.
Colour all about: just say your name.
Let me sing it: Sapphi, Sapphi!
Can't you feel it? Sapphi's everywhere - !

From today, I know what I must do:
Find a way this one can be a part of two, a part of something new...

My first love.

SAPPHI and COCO unfreeze, and JONATHAN turns to them.

JONATHAN. I will give you another week to pay the rent!

COCO. Well, it's a start. Our troubles are over! For seven days.

There is a knock at the door. LORD EMO GLOBIN steps into view. He is a man in a cape and top hat and dressed in black. He is by turns superciliously smooth and completely over the top physically unrestrainedly angry.

GLOBIN. Widow Van Helsing - Rent!?

COCO. Spent!

GLOBIN. Think nothing of it, my dear. I shall certainly think nothing of it when I say *(angry)* Jonathan!!! Evict these people!

COCO. You can't take our house. You'll have to take something else instead. How about some nice plates? They must be worth a few pounds. Sapphi, give him this plate.

She throws a (plastic) plate to SAPPHI.

SAPPHI. Here you are, your Lordship. Here's the plate.

She throws the plate to EMO.

GLOBIN. I don't want the plate.

He throws the plate back to SAPPHI.

SAPPHI. He says he doesn't want the plate.

She throws the plate to COCO.

COCO. Well, give him this one then.

She throws another plate to SAPPHI who throws it in time to GLOBIN who catches it.

And this one.

She throws yet another plate to SAPPHI who throws it in time to GLOBIN who catches it. This continues until GLOBIN is rather clumsily holding several plates to his body. He drops a couple.

GLOBIN. I've dropped them!

COCO. I'm sorry. You're out of the game.

She pins two cabbages on him.

But thank you for playing double or drop. *(to the audience)* I'm wasted here.

GLOBIN drops all the plates, looks slightly puzzled when they all fail to smash, and hands the cabbages back.

GLOBIN. Jonathan! Evict them!

JONATHAN. Erm, I can't! I've just offered them a week's extension on their rent.

GLOBIN reacts furiously to this and runs around the stage, his cape flapping.

GLOBIN. No! No! No! No! *(he runs up to COCO and points)* You - I don't like. *(he points at JONATHAN)* You - I don't like *(he then points at SAPPHI)* You - *(suddenly calm)* I don't know. But I probably won't like you in the future. Jonathan, you're sacked! You are weakest, softest hearted, kindest bailiff in the whole country and I hate it. Out of my sight, worm!

JONATHAN leaves dejectedly, as the audience gives him "ahhs".

SAPPHI. How can you do such a thing? Its cruel!

GLOBIN. You should teach your *(patronisingly)* little girl more manners, Widow Van Helsing. You may think you have kept the house for a bit longer but I warn you, I want this house and I shall be back to take it from you.

GLOBIN laughs maniacally and leaves.

SAPPHI. Poor Jonathan.

COCO. Pity he's got no job or he'd have been just right for you.

SAPPHI. Impossible. I have a calling. Time to go vampire hunting!

COCO. Don't forget your woolly vest.

Lights fade

Three. The Park

LUCY *screams (off) and then runs across the stage being chased by DRACULA who is in cape and topper but wears a mask. He is wielding a cricket bat. They both exit.*

LUCY.(*off*) Aha.

There is a short pause and then DRACULA runs across the stage again back the way he comes before exiting. LUCY soon comes on brandishing the bat.

LUCY. Thought you could get the better of me, did you? You won't be using this again!

LUCY *inadvertently feels for her necklace. It is missing.*

LUCY.(*upset*) Oh no.

LUCY *drops to her knees and starts investigating the floor.*

LUCY. I can't have lost it. I can't have.

RENFIELD *arrives.*

RENFIELD. Is this what you are looking for, my dear?

RENFIELD *holds out a locket with a cross motif on it.*

LUCY. Thank Goodness. That locket means more to me than anything (*she takes it from him gratefully*). It's a token of love from someone who was very close to me and who's gone now. It's got a cross on it in memory of my father. Thank you, thank you very much, Mister...er.....

RENFIELD. I'm a doctor.

LUCY *looks up at him and reacts very positively.*

LUCY. What a co-incidence. I'm a patient.

RENFIELD. I thought I heard you screaming just now and I came to investigate. The park can be dangerous at night, particularly for attractive young ladies.

LUCY *giggles.*

LUCY. Well, some desperado did just try to whack me with this cricket bat.

RENFIELD. Were you hurt?

LUCY. No, he threw it from silly mid off! Anyway, I can look after myself. Look, I grabbed the bat off him - but he just vanished.

LUCY *extends her hand*

LUCY. I'm Lucy. Lucy Lastic. I can't thank you enough, Doctor.

RENFIELD. Think nothing of it, but if you'd like to look in at my surgery I'll gladly give you the once over.

LUCY *giggles again*

LUCY. That would be lovely.

SAPPHI *arrives carrying a bizarre looking weapon (perhaps a bamboo stick with a bulb of garlic on the end and some flashing lights).*

RENFIELD. Goodnight, my dear.

RENFIELD *leaves in the other direction. LUCY sees SAPPHI and gives her a hug.*

LUCY. Sapphi! Guess what? I've just seen off an attacker. Nasty bit of work. Got this off him though (*shows the bat*).

SAPPHI. Lucy! You've had a lucky escape. You could have been the vampire's next victim.

LUCY. Crikey! (*looking at the bat*) You'd think he'd use a better brand.

SAPPHI. If I'd been here, I could have used this on him.

SAPPHI holds up the Rampant Vampire Hamperer.

SAPPHI. It's my rampant vampire hamperer. It doesn't pamper but hampers rampant vampires. It cramps a rampant vampire and makes them scamper. If a rampant vampire tries to tamper, one snap of my rampant vampire hamperer makes them scramble. So, remember, it amply dampens a presumptive rampant vampire's gamble with a pre-emptive thumping rumpus. Simple!

LUCY. Say that again.

SAPPHI. Don't think I can.

LUCY. Still, I met Doctor Renfield. I usually avoid doctors - they stop you playing sport just because you've broken your ankle. Like the time I broke it playing that game, you know, the one with the stick.

SAPPHI. Lacrosse?

LUCY. I was absolutely furious! But this doctor seems really lovely and he's got a nice bottom.

SAPPHI. Oh, Lucy you should look at the whole!

JONATHAN enters.

SAPPHI. Oh, it's you!

LUCY. Oh! You didn't mention you were here to meet someone! I'd better leave you two together, then! See ya later, Vampire Hater!

LUCY leaves

SAPPHI. What? No. It's just...

JONATHAN. Sapphi. I was hoping I might find you.

JONATHAN tries to kiss her but she dodges out of the way.

SAPPHI (*embarrassed*) Hello.

There is a short embarrassed pause.

JONATHAN. Err...what's that?

SAPPHI. It's my rampant vampire hamperer (*she forestalls the question on his face*) but let's not talk about it now. Just be on the alert for a man with a cricket bat or the guilty whiff of linseed oil.

JONATHAN. I was never much of a one for cricket. They always put me in as umpire.

SAPPHI reacts to this sound-a-like of "vampire" by buzzing JONATHAN with her RVH.

SAPPHI. Vampire! Where? Where? Oh. Sorry.

JONATHAN. Back at your house, you said some lovely things to me.

SAPPHI (*absently, scanning the horizon*). Did I?

JONATHAN. Yes. I've got something I want to say to you.

JONATHAN *gets down on one knee*

JONATHAN. Sapphi. I love you. Will you marry me?

SAPPHI *pulls a face but says nothing. Presently, more out of embarrassment than anything else, she goes back to scanning the horizon.*

JONATHAN. You're not saying anything... Sapphi, this afternoon you told me you were looking for a husband just like me.

SAPPHI. Oh Jonathan. You do realise that I wasn't *entirely* serious about what I said. It was just to stop you taking the house.

JONATHAN's *expression says it all.*

JONATHAN. So you mean, you don't love me? But I was ready to give you everything I own, to follow you to the ends of the empire!

SAPPHI. Vampire! Where?

She turns around to buzz him, but this time he steps out of the way smugly, but then he steps back in, only to get buzzed in his back.

SAPPHI. Er. Sorry. (*biting lip*). Well, you're a nice boy...

JONATHAN. But I got fired for you!

SAPPHI (*embarrassed*). Yes, I was meaning to apologise about that. (*beat, rather inadequately*) I'm sorry.

JONATHAN. (*brave, but obviously heartbroken*) Fine. I'll leave you here playing with your imaginary vampires if that's more important to you....

JONATHAN *leaves in silence, hopefully with aahs from the audience. SAPPHI is torn but lets him go.*

SONG: MY FIRST LOVE (REPRISE)

SAPPHI.

Fate picks her cards harshly -
Unfeeling when dealing.
Losing my father left
Me reeling, freewheeling -
Missing affection
And needing direction;
I often thought I was to blame.

Now I am older
I'm still aching, still shaking
Left with a heart that is
Still breaking, but faking.
Blurred recollections
And cold introspections
Are haunting my life to this day.

Seems that love will only bring me pain
So I vow I'll not be hurt again;
Without him, my life is incomplete
Sharing all his former glories, happy days and warming stories.
When at once I felt my childhood end
I was left without my fav'rite friend.
I was left with just past pleasures;
Of warm days with no half measures.
Of a time with nothing else to fear.
But I see why I was left behind;
For there was a truth you were compelled to find;
Your heart lives in my mind
My first love.

The sound of wind starts to get louder. SAPPHI starts to look suspiciously around. DRACULA speaks in voice-over only, gently and kind at first.

DRACULA. Sapphi. Sapphi.

SAPPHI. Who's there?

DRACULA. This is your father, Sapphi.

SAPPHI. *(tremulous)* Father?

DRACULA. Yes, the father you lost as a little girl.

SAPPHI. Daddy! *(pause)* Why are you here?

DRACULA. Go with the boy, my daughter. He can bring you joy.

SAPPHI. But what of my calling?

DRACULA. Sapphi, my dear. You are wasting your life. There is no such thing as a vampire. Give up the hunt.

SAPPHI. *(strong again)* You are not my father.

DRACULA. Do not forsake me, my daughter! Here my words. Give up your fight with vampires. They do not exist.

SAPPHI. You are *not* my father! He would never say such a thing.

DRACULA. *(arrogant and callous)*. You are a clever little girl, I see that now. You are right, I am not your father. But I give you the same warning. Stop your fight against vampires. You can never win.

SAPPHI. I cannot and will not.

DRACULA. Brave words, my dear, but heed final ones to you. *(with edge)* Give up your fight now, or you shall not live to see your error.

DRACULA laughs evilly as the sound of the wind gets louder. SAPPHI reacts to the wind until suddenly there is a "whiteout" of light and a thunderclap, and then the wind stops. There is silence. SAPPHI takes a second or two to pull herself together. RENFIELD and JONATHAN run back in, from two different directions.

JONATHAN and RENFIELD. Help! Come quickly, there's been another attack!

They all run off stage, and the lights go down..

Vignette II

Mists envelop the screen

NARRATOR (vo): Seven years ago, Lord Lastic, a wealthy landlord

Image of LORD LASTIC followed by one of Professor VAN HELSING

And Professor Van Helsing, historian, explorer, expert on the undead.

Image of the windowless Castle Dracula atop a hill

...left their families to go to Transylvania in search of treasure

Image of crosses, garlic and stake.

But they could not foresee the outcome.

Image of three keys in a hand. Pan out to show they are held by LORD LASTIC

The keys were found, but so was Count Dracula!

Behind LASTIC, VAN HELSING has found a coffin and opened it to reveal DRACULA. Fade to black as DRACULA's eyes open, he hisses and raises his cape. Fade back in image of DRACULA in full attack. VAN HELSING turns to negative colours and fades out.

Losing his companion, Lord Lastic fled to England.

Image of a train, steaming along. Cut to LASTIC, pale and sweaty on the train, he also goes negative and fades out.

He did not survive the journey.

And Dracula searches for the keys wherever the hunt may take him...

Bring back the same silhouette of DRACULA as at the end of the first vignette and enlarge until it blacks out the screen.

Four. The Street

SAPPHI, LUCY, RENFIELD and JONATHAN are now in the street standing over and helping a WOMAN lying on ground dazedly rubbing her head and neck. RENFIELD has his doctor's bag with him and is examining the victim. A crowd including COCO gathers to gawp. SHEERLUCK JONES pushes his way to the front, dressed in a deerstalker hat and a cape clutching a magnifying glass. His only other prop is a notebook. Next to him is PC WORLD, played by a youth of about twelve, where possible, who is rather lugubrious, He will say nothing throughout his scene but rolls his eyes and reacts a lot to the stupidity of SHEERLUCK. However, he takes notes of everything that happens.

SHEERLUCK. (*makes his way to the body*) Stand back ladies and gentlemen, let me through. I am an officer of the law.

NARRATOR (*after taking in the scene*).

Worry not! Here comes someone
Who calls himself detective
But as you'll very quickly see
He's more a great defective.

His observations all are poor
His methods are a farce
He doesn't know his elbow
From his magnifying glass...

SHEERLUCK. (*he addresses RENFIELD*) Are you the victim?

RENFIELD. No, I am Dr Renfield - this is the victim.

SHEERLUCK. (*this is clearly significant*) Ah! I am Sheerluck Jones, the greatest detective in London.

JONATHAN. That's quite a boast.

SHEERLUCK. I can prove it. Have you ever heard of the hound of the Baskervilles?

JONATHAN. Yes.

The crowd agree.

SHEERLUCK. Well, that wasn't me - but I *have* worked for the Baskerville family. Always having trouble with their pets, they are. I once solved the mystery of their pet kitten who got lost in a chemist's shop. You may have heard of the story. *Puss in Boots*. This is my assistant, PC World! He don't say much.

COCO. Is it me, or do policemen look younger these days?

PC WORLD *rolls his eyes in a world weary fashion.*

SHEERLUCK. I used to let him drive me to crime scenes but I've given that up. You know how it is, your PC always crashes at the worst moment. I am on the trail of the London Blood Fiend. If you have a look at this poor girl (*he nods at the victim*) you'll see there are two puncture marks on her neck.

RENFIELD. So there are!

SHEERLUCK. It would seem that the London Blood Fiend has struck again.

COCO. (*hysterical*) That's dreadful. London's becoming so dangerous - I'm going to have to stop walking the streets. (*beat*) We've had so many attacks recently. First there was that Jack the Ripper, then Jack the Stripper, Greg the Gripper, Rick the Rotter and that appalling man who kept stealing ladies' underwear - Nick the Knickers Nicker.

SAPPHI. But mother, at the time *you* went out every night - even when you didn't have to.

COCO. I was...erm...just looking to see if anyone needed help. It was a neighbourhood crotch scheme.

SAPPHI. Inspector, I'm on the trail of the vampire too; perhaps we could share our clues.

SHEERLUCK. I don't work with amateurs. Let me tell you what I've already discovered about the London Blood Fiend. Only I have been clever enough to see what clues the criminal has left. The first woman was found in a *forecourt* ; the second woman was *forty-four* years old. The third victim sold flowers *for fourpence*. This latest victim has been bopped on the *forehead*. Hence, all the clues show there will be only *four* attacks and no more. I'd stake my reputation on it.

A boy dressed as a newspaper vendor walks on stage from one direction with a newspaper billboard which states clearly "Fifth attack victim found drained of blood" - he walks slowly across the stage slowly, shouting...

NEWSPAPER BOY. Extra! Extra! (*beat*) I'm an extra!

He leaves.

SHEERLUCK. As I say, five attacks...there won't be any more.

SAPPHI. (*excited*). They were all drained of blood! It's a vampire.

SHEERLUCK. Stuff and nonsense. I can't stand here talking to little girls, I must find clues. (*addresses the group*) Did any of you witness the attack?

RENFIELD. I did.

JONATHAN. So did I.

SHEERLUCK. Two witnesses. Excellent! Dr Rentpaid's name I know already, what's yours?

RENFIELD. Actually it's Renfield.

SHEERLUCK. (*surprised*) His name is Renfield? (*writes in notebook*) So that's Renfield and Rentpaid.

RENFIELD. No, no - my name is Renfield.

SHEERLUCK. Your name is Renfield too? That's odd.

RENFIELD. Yes...No. Not Renfield Two. I'm the original Renfield.

SHEERLUCK. So you are Renfield One and he must be Renfield Two.

RENFIELD. No, he's not Renfield two.

SHEERLUCK. Let's get this straight. one, you're Renfield One and (*turning to JONATHAN*) two, you're not Renfield Two.

JONATHAN. No, I'm not Renfield Two.

RENFIELD. I'm Renfield.

SHEERLUCK. (*to JONATHAN*) So you must be Rentpaid.

JONATHAN. No, I'm not Rentpaid.

SHEERLUCK. (*to JONATHAN, exasperated*) He's not Rentpaid, he *is* Renfield. You're not Rentpaid and you're not Renfield. So who are you?

JONATHAN. I'm Jonathan Harker.

SHEERLUCK. Are you a doctor?

JONATHAN. No, I used to be a bailiff. I persuade people to get their rent paid.

SHEERLUCK. Don't start that again! So you two were the only witnesses to the crime. Just tell me what you saw.

JONATHAN. Well, I saw a suspicious looking man in a cape and a hat.

RENFIELD. And I saw a man in a hat and a cape.

SHEERLUCK. So that's two men - both with hats and capes.

JONATHAN. Surely that's the same man.

SHEERLUCK. Are you changing your evidence? That's very suspicious.

JONATHAN. Well, thinking about it, the man I saw also had a big old bag.

SHEERLUCK. (*repeats it as writes it down*) A big old bag. (*he turns to COCO*) Are you sure you haven't any light to shed on this, madam?

COCO. How dare you! (*she leaves*)

SHEERLUCK. It's all becoming clear to me now. The victims had all been evicted recently and Mr Harker here is a bailiff. In addition, Mr Harker seems able to correct me, Sheerluck Jones. It's almost as though he *knows too much*.

JONATHAN. I didn't kill anyone.

SHEERLUCK. I didn't said you did, sir - yet!

SAPPHI. This is ridiculous! You're twisting his words to make him look guilty. Jonathan could never attack anyone.

SAPPHI. You are the worst detective ever. The answer's perfectly obvious and all you can do is frame innocent people. Does it occur to you that you might be wrong?

SHEERLUCK. No! My record speaks for itself.

SONG. I NEVER GET IT WRONG

SHEERLUCK.

Here is a fact you can't ignore:
I'm a policeman - I'm the law
And my arm is very long.
To all the thieves I give the chase
So the world's a better place,
And I never get it wrong!

I will go to Hell and back
Just to bring a felon back.

(Do you see?)

I'll make the villain comprehend
He's the one I'll apprehend
And I'll make him mend his ways.
So if you think of doing crime
Around here, remember I'm
Around here - it never pays.

Crimes that men and women'll
Commit just make a criminal!
I'll see their sentences are long
Cos I've never been wrong

(Now what was your idea again, Miss?)

You claim a vampire is running amok in this town!
Balderdash, lady! - I'll soon track the criminal down
It's kleptomania, not Transylvania.
He's flesh and blood, you will find.
The clues I'll commit to my great analytical mind.

(*spoken*) I like songs about policemen - they always stay on the beat! And now for a little constabulary dance.

(*Dance part*)

So if you steal a load of loot
You will wear an arrowed suit
That's the thing the felons dread.
Thing is that crooks are hard to see
Cos they look like you and me
Not the ranks of the undead!

Crooks think I can't out-think them
But clues that I find out link them
To all the crimes that they commit
They wont benefit!
No! Not one tiny bit -
Let me tell you
That is the point of this whole song
Cos I've never been -
Frankly, I've never been wrong!

Blackout.

Five.

GLOBIN *appears and addresses the audience*

GLOBIN. (*sneering*) You think you know all about me! You think I'm bad, don't you?

Audience led by the NARRATOR all shout "yes"

Wrong! I am an excellent landlord. I make sure all my properties are in good repair. And the best way to make sure they *stay* in good repair is to stop people living in them. (*pulls a face*). Uurrgh, people! They sit there in *my* houses, spilling food, going to the lavatory, burping....uuurrgh! Disgusting. I've evicted fifteen families this week already. Yet, one family eludes me. That appalling Coco woman. I want them out of my house tonight!!! (*calm again*) And I know exactly how to do it! It's a plan so cunning, so fiendish - and so horrible that it disgusts even me.

I'm off to her house now....

He laughs manically and exits stage right pursued by boo.

Six. *Coco's House*

COCO is alone in her house, dressed in her voluminous nightgown but still with garlic round her neck. She is sitting in a chair reading, next to her is a pile of magazines .

COCO. There's so many new magazines on the market, look at this. Hello, Goodbye, Watcher - that's a bit down market that one. Anyway, I've just finished reading this month's *Woman's Own*. I wrote a letter to their agony aunt, and you know what? she replied.

"Dear Gorgeous" *(to audience)* Don't say a word. "Dear Gorgeous, I am sorry to hear that you are having trouble finding a man to share your life. Your problem may be that you are too choosy. The next time a man starts to court you, try overlooking his faults and look for the good within him. You must see him as the sum of his parts, and he in return will think of you as a whole, yours Aunty Macassar"

There is a knock at the door.

I wonder who that is? If only I'd bothered to concentrate at rehearsals, I'd know.

GLOBIN *steps into view on the side of the stage which we assume to be a door to the house.*

COCO. I've told you I haven't got any money. I'm boracic! Anyway, it can't be about the rent - Jonathan, your nice young bailiff...

GLOBIN. Ex-bailiff!

COCO. ...Ex-bailiff, said we could have another week.

GLOBIN. *(angry)* Yes, he did, didn't he? That conniving, useless, pile of old...*(sees COCO looking aghast)*...fluffy loveliness! Charming boy. But, it's not about the rent - exactly. I have something to offer you..

COCO. An offer?

GLOBIN. You won't have the house for much longer - unless you can pay the arrears on your rent. *(he runs around the stage flashing his cape and laughing maniacally)*. But there is a way you can stay here.

COCO. Have narrower doors put in?

GLOBIN. No - you can marry me! *(he runs around the stage flashing his cape and laughing maniacally)*.

COCO. I do wish you'd stop doing that! It lifts all the dust.

GLOBIN. Think about it. If you marry me, you could stay here. Security! Marry me and I'll never look at another horse!

SONG: TURN MY PLAN AROUND

(phrases in brackets are asides)

GLOBIN.

(romantic and appalled and cunning by turns!)

In moonlight you're beautiful *(it hides your face,*

In sunlight you couldn't be worse).

My heart has grown dutiful - you're pride of place.

(The place I think for you would be a hearse)

If you were my wife then I'd kiss your hand

(That way I would avoid your awful breath)

I'd lay down my life *(and if things go as planned)*

Then soon you'll be doing the same, dear)

I'm going to love you to death!

COCO:

(appalled)

I couldn't marry you, so please don't ask me to.

So then I guess you'll have to turn your plan around.

To me you don't exist; you're just not on my list

Of tasty choices when I want a man around.
I want a man who's generous and kind and who
Will give me nice and dear things when I say "I do"
Oh dear, I've just seen a hitch, because you're so very rich.
It seems I haven't thought this through

Oh darling, of course I'll marry you. I can see the wedding now. It'll be sumptuous.

(COCO gets carried away with her plans as GLOBIN gets ever more worried)

In Saint Paul's Cathedral we'll sign up for life
(because you have money to spare)
A dodecahedral gem ring for your wife;
A golden wedding dress for me to wear.
We'll give out a gift to the folks in the town;
Jewell'd goblets made of gold to drink our health.
But thinking of thrift, I'll keep the costs down
By cooking the banquet myself! *(GLOBIN is horrified)*

GLOBIN.

(horrified)

My plan this does disrupt; I'll soon end up bankrupt.
So then I guess I'll have to turn my plan around.
And though I want this house, can it be worth a spouse
Who'll end up leaving me financially unsound.
She'll make my life so onerous and out of groove
But it's the only way that I can make her move.
And though I can't stand her face, to get my hands on this place
I'll have to take rough with the smooth!

Last two verses are sung simultaneously by COCO and GLOBIN but to the audience, not to each other.

COCO *(upbeat verse)*.

So after all these years there's no more cause for tears
Oh yes, at last I'll have someone to plan around!
The time for tears has past, I'll cash my chips at last
Oh how I've longed to have a wealthy man around.
When my first husband died and broke my little heart
I never thought that happiness could ever start
But now again I'm a wife; I'm sure this time it's for life
That is until death makes us...
Money, money!

(looking into each other's eyes)

I see a prosp'rous future
Till death do us part!

GLOBIN *(romantic verse)*

Oh I'm such a rotter that once we are wed
And I've gotten my hands on the keys,
I think I'll garotte her or bash in her head
And then she'll rest in peace
My kisses of strychnine my time I will bide
To still her beating heart.
My missus is sick'ning; and though she's my bride
Well, it's only til death makes us...
Money, money!

I see a prosp'rous future
Till death do us part!

Seven. The Park.

SAPPHI *alone on stage, with lantern and hamperer again. She is quite excited.*

SAPPHI *(to audience)*. Hello again. The only way to prove there's a vampire is to find one and capture it. Hang on! I heard something!

She springs to her feet. And marches suspiciously around the stage, raising her lantern to see, and to the accompaniment of music. She goes off, just as JONATHAN enters, he is clutching a handkerchief which he constantly plays with nervously.

JONATHAN. Hello everyone. The park's a very scary place in the dark - I don't like it

The usual routine. He sets off and SAPPHI comes on stage. They don't see each other, but eventually end up backing into one another. JONATHAN screams.

SAPPHI and JONATHAN. Oh, it's you. I was just *(they pause, waiting for the other one to continue)* - looking for you. *(They pause again, waiting for the other one to continue)* I wanted to say...

SAPPHI. Sorry.

JONATHAN. Thanks. Thanks for speaking up for me when that policeman...

SAPPHI. And I shouldn't have misled you. And actually, when it comes to it... I really do... *(she almost goes for it, but funks it at the last minute)* like you... a bit.

They hug, slightly embarrassedly, after a bit of comic negotiation. There is a growing fluttering of wings, not too loud yet.

JONATHAN. This park is scary. Look what I've done to my hankie!

JONATHAN pulls a doily out of his pocket!

SAPPHI. Sh, sh! I think I heard something.

JONATHAN *(very frightened)*. No! Where? Over there? No, over there! Hold the lamp higher.

SAPPHI *(mishearing again)*. Vampire!

This time JONATHAN's ready. He dodges the RVH going one way, and coming back the other, swapping to SAPPHI's other side. He's just mopping his brow when the fluttering wings sound again, much closer and she spins around 270 degrees and gets him the other way, knocking him over. He gets up and grabs the RVH from SAPPHI. The beating wings noise is now quite pronounced.

JONATHAN. What *is* that noise?

Bat-like squeaking noises are now audible.

JONATHAN. Don't let it be bats, *please* don't let it be bats.

A small crowd of VAMPIRE BATS enters and starts to swirl around JONATHAN and SAPPHI

JONATHAN. It's bats! Aaaaaaaaargh!

JONATHAN faints, downstage. The BATS gather around more tightly. Now we can hear the evil laughter of DRACULA too.

SAPPHI. Leave me alone! Let me go.

Soon the BATS have her in their clutches. DRACULA appears on screen, accompanied by his menacing laughter.

DRACULA. Good evening, Miss Van Helsing! What a pleasure to see you at last! I see I don't need to introduce myself? I hope my servants are treating you *very badly*.

JONATHAN *awakens and springs to his feet.*

JONATHAN (*sees DRACULA on the screen*) Aargh! Dracula!

DRACULA. Ah. Young Master Harker! Come over here.

SAPPHI. Jonathan! Don't go near him.

JONATHAN. (*compelled against his will*) I - I - can't help it. He's got control of my body!

JONATHAN *slowly, and very obviously under mind control, marches toward DRACULA.*

SAPPHI. Resist him!

DRACULA. I have control of his mind (*beat*) With my plans so nearly complete, I certainly cannot let *you* stop them. Time to say goodbye, little girl! We won't be meeting again. Jonathan! Kill her!

As the BATS fall back from SAPPHI, hissing, except two who hold her. JONATHAN, hypnotised, advances, arms outstretched towards SAPPHI. DRACULA fades from view, laughing.

SAPPHI. Jonathan! Jonathan! You don't have to! Please!

He advances on her.

SAPPHI. He may have your mind, Jonathan, but he can never control your heart. Just remember how you feel. And - (*a difficult admission*) - well, I love you!

The effect is instantaneous. JONATHAN's arms drop and he is out of DRACULA's control.

DRACULA. Nooooo!

SAPPHI. You see, Dracula? You can control minds but you can't control hearts!

DRACULA. Bats! Get them!

All of the BATS advance on her, hissing. JONATHAN runs to the side of the stage where the RVH is.

SAPPHI. (*speaks to JONATHAN through the struggle*) Quick....Ghhr....Give me the ...hggh...the....

JONATHAN *does not understand at first and then suddenly realises SAPPHI wants the RVH. He gives it to her. SAPPHI takes the RVH and starts to wield it against the thronging bats. There is an assortment of bizarre and comic sound effects, (razzes, burbs, buzzes, radiophonic stomachs and the like) and the bats get bashed away one by one. They leave the stage whimpering. SAPPHI is left alone, centrestage, but instead of appearing triumphant she is looking sadly down at the hamperer, which is broken in some obvious way.*

JONATHAN. Oh, Sapphi, - you saved us. And you really do... love me?

SAPPHI leans forward and kisses him long and hard.

JONATHAN. I'll take that as a yes, then.

SAPPHI. But they've killed an old friend. My rampant vampire hamperer is completely broken. (*beat*) We've given ourselves breathing space. When he realises what's happened he'll send those bat creatures back after us. Let's get out of here. We can work out what to do at Mother's.

SAPPHI holds out her hand to JONATHAN who eagerly accepts it and they run off stage.

Eight. Renfield's Surgery

The background is a typical doctor's surgery. On the WALL is a skeleton and an eye chart. The chart is like a normal one but all the letters are "I" (hilarious!- see later). DOCTOR RENFIELD is sitting at a desk. His doctor's bag is by his side, and he is working with some test tubes LUCY enters.

RENFIELD. Miss Lastic.

LUCY. Doctor, did you know there's a fire in your waiting room?

RENFIELD. I want my patients to have a warm reception. I love being a doctor - it's my calling and my life.

LUCY idly looks through his test tubes.

RENFIELD. Careful. If you break one of my test-tubes, you'll get a sharp retort. Now, Lucy, why have you come to see me?

LUCY. I'm still feeling wobbly.

RENFIELD. What are your symptoms?

LUCY. Well, Doctor – since I saw you I have been having (*sings*) chills - they're multiplying - and I'm losing control – (*to the audience*) It's the power, he's supplying - he's electrifying! (*to the Doctor, speaking normally again*) And I've been feeling (*singing*) dizzy - my head is spinning - like a whirlpool, it never ends.

RENFIELD. I've got some records on those symptoms! Look at that chart over there on the wall. Cover your left eye and read off what you can see.

LUCY. (*reads*) I, I, I, I, I, I, I. What is this?

RENFIELD. It's my eye chart!

LUCY walks over to the skeleton.

LUCY. (*horrified*) My goodness, how dreadful I look!

RENFIELD. That's not a mirror - it's a model skeleton. Now come over here and let me check your heart.

LUCY. About time!

RENFIELD. Ooh! I say! Your heart is bumping along nineteen to the dozen.

Piano introduction to the song begins...

SONG. INITIAL DIAGNOSIS

RENFIELD (*spoken, but in time with the music*) .
It's lucky you came here, my dear.
It's the first case like this
In my medical career.
But where, might I ask, does one start
(*breaking into song*)
In this rare circumstance
When a girl's... (*tails off, unable to think of the word*)
When a girl's...

NARRATOR (*to audience*).
Lost control of her heart.

RENFIELD (*spoken*).
Tell me more of your symptoms.
(*speaking over the music*)
Now, do you hurt when you laugh?
(*she shakes her head to each suggestion*)

RENFIELD.
Yes, so it would seem.

LUCY.
I feel in a dream.
And if we could kiss.

He dodges out of her arms and goes for the medical dictionary.

RENFIELD.
I've never seen this!
I think I must look it up!

LUCY.
Doctor, no need for a book.
Can't you tell from my one simple desperate look?

RENFIELD (*flicking pages; spoken over the musical line*).
"KISSING, see DERANGED, above,"

LUCY.
I don't think it's madness,
Unless it's from falling in love.

RENFIELD (*spoken*). Love? (*flicks pages*) It's not listed here.

LUCY.
For you've captured my heart
I'm getting the sense
That we're at the start
Of something immense.
(*now frustrated*)
You'd have to be dense
To not have a clue
Can't you feel it too?

RENFIELD (*interpolating*).
What could be the diagnosis?
Jaundice, croup or deep thrombosis
When I get the right prognosis:
No more thrills, just pills in doses.

I have it!

(*pause*)

RENFIELD.
The trouble with you
I now can impart:
I think that it's heart –
BURN!

LUCY (*spoken; crestfallen*).
Oh! Can't I get a second opinion?

RENFIELD.
(*spoken*) Blue doesn't suit you.
(*sung*) That's fifty guineas, please.
Next!

Blackout.

Nine. Coco's House

NARRATOR.

Jon and Sapphi's fevered race
To flee a thing inhuman
Has brought them back to Coco's place
And now for the dénouement!

JONATHAN *and* SAPPHI *enter, at a run. JONATHAN bolts the door behind them and puts a chair in the way.*

JONATHAN. We have to find everyone and tell them that Dracula's on the loose. It's not just us who's in danger.

COCO *bustles in dressed in a riding hat, a huntsman's costume, and wearing a horses bridle round her head. She is clutching a bouquet of garlic*

COCO. Oh there you are!

SAPPHI. Mother, I must tell you something - !

COCO (*cutting through*) All our troubles are over, at last dear! What's the thing I've wanted more than anything since your father disappeared?

SAPPHI. But -

COCO. And I don't mean that trip to the Scottish Highlands to climb Ben Affleck! I mean security!

SAPPHI. But -

COCO. No more being so poor, we have to eat our own boots and pretend it's beef wellington. *I'm* going to get married.

SAPPHI. Will you please just listen - (*clocks what COCO just said*) Married? But, Mother, you can't. What about father?

COCO. Don't worry, he won't be there. We have to face facts, dear. I've given up looking for Mr Right and instead I'm going for Mr Right Now!

SAPPHI. Who is it?

Knocking on the door.

JONATHAN. Oh my God, it's him!

He dives under a piece of furniture.

COCO. Come in! (*looks at door*)

She opens the door to admit LUCY.

SAPPHI. Lucy. I must tell you –

LUCY (*without a pause for breath*). I've just been to see Doctor Renfield and I've got the most incredible news.

SAPPHI. But -

LUCY. I'm utterly, completely in love with him! He's a dream!

SAPPHI. But -

Another knock on the door.

JONATHAN. It's him!

He throws himself under LUCY. COCO opens the door to admit GLOBIN and RENFIELD.

GLOBIN. Hello, Coco, my dearest darling!

LUCY *gently sidles over to stand mooning over* RENFIELD.

GLOBIN. (*looking at COCO*) What are you wearing?

COCO. You told me to bear a bridal.

GLOBIN. A bridal *gown*, my little deaf dumpling!

SAPPHI. Mother! You can't marry Lord Globin! He's an evil man.

GLOBIN. Ignore them. Let's get going or the vicar'll get his knickers in a twist.

There is a knock at the door. JONATHAN dives for cover again under COCO. SHEERLUCK JONES and PC WORLD, silently at his side as usual, enter the room.

SHEERLUCK. Evening, all. I would have got here sooner but someone stole me wallet!

COCO. I'm sure the change will do them good!

SAPPHI. Inspector, I have news!

SHEERLUCK (*cutting through; grandly*). I have solved the mystery!

SAPPHI. But...

She gives up and falls back..

SHEERLUCK. I intend to unveil the identity of the London Blood Fiend here. Nobody leave!

SHEERLUCK walks up and down looking at people suspiciously à la the denouement scene in any Agatha Christie novel.

SHEERLUCK. Ladies and Gentlemen (*points to COCO*) - and her. (*significantly*) Someone in this room is ... a detective! And it's me! Gad, another case solved! And I know who is the London Blood Fiend. All the victims so far had been evicted on the day they were attacked. And bailiffs evict! One of the suspects *is a bailiff*. He also *claims* to have been a witness to an attack!.

JONATHAN. But I *was* a witness!

SHEERLUCK. A confession at last!

SAPPHI. How is *that* a confession?

SHEERLUCK. Who is the one person apart from the victim at the scene of any crime? (*deliberately*) The person who carried it out.

Significant pause.

Therefore the person who carries out the crime is also a witness to it. The London Blood Fiend is... (*points at JONATHAN under COCO's skirts*) Mr. Jonathan Harker!

Dramatic chords come from out of the ether! JONATHAN splutters.

JONATHAN. I didn't do it! I'm not a criminal.

SHEERLUCK. Exactly what I would expect the culprit to say!

SHEERLUCK puts JONATHAN in handcuffs.

SHEERLUCK. You criminals are just like trains - if you go off the rails you end up at the station!

SAPPHI. *You're* wrong. Totally wrong. Jonathan here is incapable of hurting anyone He's too kind, too gentle, too nice – and besides, I love him!

COCO and LUCY. (*pleased*) Oooh!

SHEERLUCK. That has nothing to do with it.

SAPPHI. The attacker is Count Dracula! All this time he's been walking among us... disguised as... Doctor Renfield!

Dramatic chords come from out of the ether again. Everyone is amazed at her conclusion.

LUCY. (*distressed*) Noooooo!

SAPPHI. I'm sorry, Lucy, but all the evidence is there. He's always been nearby when someone is attacked. He matches the description and, and...

LUCY (*reflectively*). ..and Dr Renfield has no mirror in his surgery and vampires have no reflection.

RENFIELD. It's not true!

SHEERLUCK. Aha! I was right!

RENFIELD. But I *am* the London Blood Fiend!

SHEERLUCK. Aha! I was wrong!

SAPPHI. But you are a vampire!

RENFIELD. No, I am not.. But I am working for one. I don't want to do all these bad things but he has hypnotised me. I have to obey him.

SAPPHI. Dracula must be here somewhere, though.

PC WORLD *taps* SHEERLUCK *on the shoulder*.

SHEERLUCK. What is it, PC World?

PC WORLD *hands* SHEERLUCK *his notepad, now quite full of notes and equations*.

SHEERLUCK (*reading, at tremendous speed*).

If you're at a loss for the answer dear boss, or you can't get the clues to make sense.

I think I have cracked who's the man who attacked, and it's time to come down off the fence.

To get what he's after, he's doing manslaughter to empty the poor victims' houses

And failing that plan this tyrannical man sets about acquisition of spouses.

If you add up the clues, put yourself in his shoes, then it's clear what the vampire's been doing

He searches apartments for hidden compartments containing the thing he's pursuing.

The answer's quite clear, the villain is here, and it just took some thinking and probin'

(*slowing up*)

He's a vampire disguised, but is now recognised in the person of Emo, Lord Globin.

Dramatic chords come from out of the ether again.

GLOBIN (*starting in an English accent*). Well, that's a terribly plausible theory, and, as a matter of fact...

GLOBIN, *in a blur, swirls around, ascends a chair, opens his mouth to reveal fangs, then bellows in the characteristic Transylvanian accent of* DRACULA.

DRACULA. ...It is quite right! I *am* Count Dracula!

He hisses.

COCO. Aargh! It's impossible! He's lovely and rich! And my fiancé. And he's rich. (*admitting defeat*) Ooh, I'm not marrying you! Can I keep the ring?

DRACULA. My work in England is done, but my researches have been fruitless. I cannot find what I came here for. My slave Renfield and I are returning to Transylvania where you will never find us. (*maniacal laughter*)

RENFIELD. (*desperate*) Lucy, help me!

LUCY. Sapphi, what can we do?

SAPPHI. Quick, show him your cross.

LUCY. (*shaking her fist at DRACULA*) Ooh! You rotter!

SAPPHI. That's not quite what I had in mind! Mother, get the garlic bullets.

COCO. Right-ho, dear!

DRACULA. (*commanding*) Stop!

Everyone stops dead.

DRACULA. If you try to stop us escaping, I shall kill Jonathan.

SAPPHI. Jonathan - I love you - but this is the time to prove to me how brave you are.

JONATHAN faints into RENFIELD's arms.

SAPPHI. Hmm, this isn't going awfully well!

DRACULA. So long, losers! (*he points to SAPPHI as she makes a start towards him*) And just watch out if you follow me. I destroyed your father - and I can destroy you!

There is suddenly a huge pyro and DRACULA, RENFIELD and JONATHAN vanish.

SAPPHI. They've gone - and they've taken Jonathan.

SHEERLUCK. Come on PC World, if we're quick enough we can head him off in Pennsylvania!

PC WORLD makes as if to object, then resignedly follows his superior officer.

SAPPHI. (*determined*) I have to rescue Jonathan - I'm going to Transylvania.

COCO. You can't - its much too dangerous!

SONG. DON'T BE SCARED

SAPPHI.

If you had a chance to show the world you're made of something would you take it?
Risking all the things you love but getting what you wanted even so?
Maybe.
Would you wanna take your life to where they're rolling dice and would you stake it?
Hesitating, thinking that there might be nothing there in you to show.

Don't be scared,
Just look inside yourself.
It is there, you just
Believe in yourself.

LUCY. (*spoken*) But if you can't...

(*sung*) All the world is full of folk who never lost and never won a penny.
Easy to be one of them and think you'll just be happy when they deal.
And worse...
Folks who put their money down and lost it all from recklessness are many.
You don't have to do that, but then would you be denying what you feel?

SAPPHI.

Would I go
To Transylvania?

LUCY/SAPPHI.

(You/I) don't know what might
Await (you/me) in that neck of the woods.

COCO.

Don't go away, Sapphi,
Stay here and be happy.
Risking your life for a
Boy's not the way you'll sur-

vive. Just be smart, use your
Head not your heart; lose your
Boy if you have to but
Don't leave me here. Stay a-
live!
Just look into my eyes!
I don't know what might
Become of me if you go away!

Don't be so rash, Sapphi.

Stay home, make cash!

There's more where he came from.

Don't chase your way into...
Danger's ev-
'rywhere around us!

No!

NARRATOR. *(after audience response, to audience)*

That's half the story.
If it was you
Would you stay or risk it too?
You're all brave
But you are young and haven't much to fear.
Flying the nest after year after year after...

SAPPHI.
Jonathan's in danger; I must
put myself in danger to be
with him.

Could be that I die or suffer if
I go alone so far away.

Got a mother, got a friend,
the people all around me are
the living.

COCO.

Oh, I'm so scared, Sapphi!

COCO.

Oh! Don't be scared, Coco!

SAPPHI. ... I
Won't be scared...

Mother, did you ever love a man enough to follow him
forever?

Didn't you love father? Would you make a journey just to see
his face?
I can't!
When you find a man that's got a heart so full of love, a head
so clever

And the call to hunt a vampire, wouldn't you be joining in the
chase?

Danger's ev-
'rywhere around us!
Don't you see? I must bring
Jonathan back!
(to audience, spoken)
Don't you agree?

LUCY and CHORUS.

Don't be scared, Sapphi!

LUCY.

Easy to give up and die, the
harder part's deciding you
will live!

NARRATOR.
...year!

Time to be a woman, not a
girl who never really makes
her mind up.

NARRATOR and CHORUS.

Oh! Don't be scared, Coco!

NARRATOR.

Act II

Ten. Main Hall, Dracula's Castle

MUSIC. **Dramatic organ chords on organ continues.**

Lights up on the interior of Castle DRACULA - a big stone hall with a fireplace and at one end a coffin standing up.

SONG. THE VAMP

DRACULA strides onto the centre stage.

DRACULA.
I'm Dracula.
I'm undead.
You can run, but you can't hide any more, 'cause I'm casting my curse!

I'm Dracula.
I'm evil.
And I never do a thing that's bad if I can do it worse.

You know all those rumours that you heard
That you were told were untrue...?
Well, hey baby, ain't ya heard the word?
I'm real and I want you!
And if you think that I'm evil and mean.
Well, I just don't give a damn!
I fly in, then I'm gone from the scene,
And that's the rampant vampire I am!

I'm Dracula. (*He's Dracula!*)
I'm undead. (*Un-dead!*)
You can run, but you can't hide any more, 'cause I'm casting my curse!
I'm Dracula. (*He's Dracula!*)
I'm evil. (*Ee-vil!*)
And I never do a thing that's bad if I can do it worse.

I don't have much time for doing good.
I don't have much time for light!
I just wanna get my share of blood!
I just wanna get a bite!
And in this castle where Vlad was the King
Well, now I'm wearing his crown!
We're nocturnal and we know how to swing
We spend our evenings hanging upside down!

I'm Dracula. (*He's Dracula!*)
I'm undead. (*Un-dead!*)
You can run, but you can't hide any more, 'cause I'm casting my curse!
I'm Dracula. (*He's Dracula!*)
I'm evil. (*Ee-vil!*)
And I never do a thing that's bad if I can do it worse.

Instrumental. There is much dancing.

So don't think you'll ever get out of here!
(*indicates VAN HELSING, who RENFIELD is bringing onstage, chained*)
They always think that they will.
But soon they find they're quaking with fear
Against My power and skill
And when I finally find what I need
Those three keys from old Vlad

My power growing beyond any greed
The greatest power that any vampire has had.

(He's Dracula!)

I'm undead. *(Un-dead!)*

You can run, but you can't hide any more, 'cause I'm casting my curse!

I'm Dracula. *(He's Dracula!)*

I'm evil. *(Ee-vil!)*

And I never do a thing that's bad if I can do it,

Ooh, if I can do it,

Ooh, if I can do it,

Ooh, if I can do it worse!

Bite me!

The JUNIOR BATS giggle at this.

DRACULA. Renfield, my slave, there you are! Where have you been?

RENFIELD. Sorry, master. I had to answer the door.

DRACULA. Who was it?

RENFIELD. The Invisible Man.

DRACULA. Tell him I can't see him now.

DRACULA slowly walks round VAN HELSING and begins to laugh.

DRACULA. Yes, Professor Van Helsing, I am back. I wasted seven months in London on a wild goose chase after the three keys of the treasure of Vlad the Impaler. I looked everywhere. Even down the back of the sofa. You weren't bored, I hope. I left you a copy of my favourite magazine, *Bleeder's Digest*. However, I now see that you were lying to me. Soon you *will* tell me the whereabouts of the keys.

VAN HELSING. You will never make me talk! Never! Never, never, never, never, never! So long as the sun burns in the sky, and the birds soar over the moutaintops – and for as long as I know –

DRACULA yawns, looks at watch etc.

VAN HELSING. – that the memory of my friend, Lord Lastic, will be preserved into the ages —

DRACULA. Shut up!! For someone who doesn't want to talk, you don't 'alf go on. I want you to meet someone. Renfield!

RENFIELD brings out a bemanacled JONATHAN, who is shaking with fear.

DRACULA. Ah, the young Mister Harker! You seem to be shivering.

JONATHAN. I'm terrified of vampires.

DRACULA. Aha, a case of Shake'n'Drac! Mr Harker, this is Professor Van Helsing.

JONATHAN. I thought you were dead.

DRACULA. And this, Professor, is Jonathan Harker, a cowardly wretch. Since I kidnapped this young fellow, your family and friends are coming to rescue him, as I knew they would. You see, they are walking into a trap! And you, my dear Professor, are the bait!

VAN HELSING. I shall do nothing!

DRACULA. Exactly! That's all I need you to do! Renfield?

RENFIELD. Master....

RENFIELD fetches a large red ribbon and binds VAN HELSING with it like a present.

DRACULA. (*delighted*) Ahh, you have been gift wrapped - which will do for the present! And as for *you*, Mister Harker. Renfield! Take him to his cell. And don't worry about the rats. They'll soon get used to you. (*dismissive*) Take him away.

RENFIELD *takes a protesting JONATHAN offstage*

MUSIC. Strains of the Mexican Hat Dance

Three JUNIOR BATS, this time wearing sombreros, dance across the back of the stage in the other direction this time.

DRACULA. (*at the bats*) Stop doing that! It's so distracting! I warned you before!

VAN HELSING. What are they doing?

DRACULA. It's the Mexican Bat Dance. (*to VAN HELSING*) Now, Professor, all we need is a little hypnosis.

He twirls his fingers in a vampirical way. VAN HELSING stiffens and looks blank, as if under hypnosis.

DRACULA. You will wake up only when you are discovered - you will help them find the keys to the treasure. (*to the audience*) The trap is set!

RENFIELD *returns.*

DRACULA. Renfield, I don't want anything to frighten off my new guests so if you hear the doorbell again, ignore it. It will just be the invisible man trying to get in again - he's so transparent. I can see right through him! Now, Renfield, lets put the Professor in that. (*he points to the coffin and clears his throat*)

RENFIELD. Is that your coffin?

DRACULA. No, I was just clearing my throat. (*points*) This is my coffin.

RENFIELD and DRACULA bundle VAN HELSING into the coffin; Inside is a black box on which VAN HELSING is made to sit - the result is his feet stick out of the door.

RENFIELD. (*trying to close the lid*). Aren't you going to put his feet in?

DRACULA. Never put all your legs in one casket! Now, when the Professor is rescued, I shall assume the identity of a bat overhead so that I can hide over there and overhear.

RENFIELD. Overwhere?

DRACULA. (*acts it out to make it clearer*) Over here. I shall fly over head, over here and overhear. They will be over there and overheard.

RENFIELD. (*understands*) Roger!

DRACULA. Over and out!

DRACULA *leaves the stage laughing.*

Lights down.

Eleven. Main Hall, Dracula's Castle, some seconds later

NARRATOR.

Our heroes now are on their way
They can't afford to fail.
A pity then, that they all chose
To travel there by rail.

The trains are run by RailDrac
They're slower than a barge.
The one advantage is, of course -
There's no congestion charge

COCO, LUCY and SAPPHI gingerly enter the main hall, SAPPHI leading the way, of course. VAN HELSING is still hypnotised and is in the coffin with his feet showing. Somewhere high above is DRACULA in his bat form listening in (either a rubber one on a stick being moved occasionally or perhaps a bat shaped spotlight)

SAPPHI. I'm not sure I like the look of this place.

COCO. I'm absolutely certain I don't! Still, all it needs is some nice curtains - and demolishing.

COCO opens her bag and pulls out a pocket mirror and uses it as she applies make up - including a green lipstick sticking out of a (plastic) clove of garlic.

SAPPHI smells her gingerly and then has a coughing fit.

COCO. Yes, this garlic lipstick gives me particularly bad breath.

COCO breathes over SAPPHI who coughs again.

SAPPHI. It's awful!

COCO. Yes - this super-halitosis lipstick really is atrocious!

LUCY. The castle seems to be deserted.

COCO. It can't be. I found this outside the main door.

COCO holds up a milk bottle with a note in the top.

COCO. Two extra pints and a spider yoghurt, please.

SAPPHI. We have to stop Dracula getting the treasure *and* rescue Jonathan from his clutches.

COCO. So how are we going to get our hands on the treasure?

LUCY. Perhaps my father's diary could help. Before we left London, I found this in my father's things. Listen... *(reads)* "The best-kept secret of Castle Dracula is the..."

LORD LASTIC *(vO)*. "famous and legendary hoard of treasure that is stored inside. Now the Professor has been captured by Count Dracula and is after me, I have hidden the three keys beyond his reach. In this secret diary, I reveal where the three keys are..."

LUCY. ...and how to get them

COCO. How do you make your voice go deep like that?

SAPPHI. So where are they?

LUCY. It says here, "To find..."

LORD LASTIC (VO).
...each challenge
You must go
Above, between or down below.

To face each challenge
You must fight
With head, and heart and all your might.

LUCY (*together with* LORD LASTIC). ...all your might

COCO. I wish *I* could make my voice do that.

LUCY. It's not very clear.

COCO. Oh, I'm good with clues, me. Look at this crossword I was doing on the train. Four letters, What was Shakespeare after starting a punch-up in a pub? Bard. In fact I finished the whole thing. There's only one clue I haven't got. "Physical Force", 8 letters, begins with V.

SAPPHI. Never mind that now. We must investigate the castle.

They split up. COCO wanders back holding a lavatory brush.

COCO. I think I've found Dracula's toothbrush.

LUCY has by now walked to the coffin and seen VAN HELSING's feet. She shrieks in alarm and then runs behind COCO. SAPPHI comes over and stands behind LUCY.

SAPPHI. Lucy, what's wrong?

LUCY. Look - that coffin over there. Someone's in it.

COCO is closest to the coffin, with LUCY and SAPPHI behind her. COCO realises she is at the front and shrieks and then grabs LUCY and turns 180 degrees so that LUCY is in front. LUCY realises this and shrieks and then runs to the back of the three, leaving COCO at the front again. COCO shrieks again and this time runs to the back. SAPPHI is now at the front. She is hesitant but brave and begins to edge towards the coffin.

LUCY and COCO cower and hug each other as SAPPHI carefully opens the coffin. VAN HELSING is revealed and wakes up. He sees his daughter and his wife and is amazed.

COCO. (*stunned*) It...it...it looks like...

VAN HELSING. Sapphi! Sapphi, my daughter! After all these years

SAPPHI runs to her father and hugs him.

SAPPHI. (*sobbing*) Daddy.

VAN HELSING. And Coco, my beloved wife.

VAN HELSING holds out his arms to her too. COCO embraces him but then pulls away, quickly regaining her composure.

SONG. FANCY MEETING YOU HERE

COCO.
I walked in a crowd
Yet I was alone and lonely
There were a million voices
Yet I heard none.
Aloof as a cloud
I never connect. If only
Life offered the choices
Where two live hearts make one!

Into the ocean of passion and raw emotion

My heart bravely sails but then from its course will it veer?
The devotion
Then quickly turns to a cold despair;
I'll never find someone anywhere.
Fancy meeting you here.

VAN HELSING.

I was alone;
A sad solitary figure
With no-one to meet
And no-one to share my life.
Distraught on my own
I fought loneliness with vigour
But so incomplete
Was I, it cut like a knife.

Unto the mirage of passion and raw emotion
My heart bravely marches but will it then soon disappear?
The devotion
Then quickly turns to a cold despair;
I'll never find someone anywhere.
Fancy meeting you here.

COCO.

I searched all around
Until I could find a lover

VAN HELSING.

I waited alone
And willed you upon your way.

COCO and VAN HELSING.

And now you are found
And now we have one another
For you are my own
For me to love and obey.

Into the sunset of passion and raw emotion
Our hearts bravely marching and it will not soon disappear!
But this notion
That we might meet in a vampire's lair
Is not one I'd thought of anywhere.
Fancy meeting you here.

LUCY *gives him the book.*

VAN HELSING. (*inspecting it*) Of course, it is all coming back to me.

SAPPHI. Please help us. Dracula has kidnapped someone very dear to us. We must get him back.

VAN HELSING. It will be a pleasure to help defeat the Count.

SAPPHI. (*indicates diary*) What does it mean, father?

VAN HELSING. It means that there are three challenges. One key is deep in the castle, one is in the middle and one is very high up.

SAPPHI. If there are three puzzles, we must split up.

VAN HELSING. Splendid! My beloved Coco and I will go down together in the bowels of the castle.

SAPPHI. All right, Good luck Lucy.

LUCY and SAPPHI leave by different doors.

COCO. After seven years, I've got so much to tell you, dear.

VAN HELSING. Well, you tell me everything whilst I work out how to get to the first key. *(he looks at the paper)* Go to the main staircase and then its 8 steps down, then twenty-five paces to the right, four paces forward.

COCO and VAN HELSING leave arm in arm. DRACULA's bat disappears and then after a second DRACULA himself arrives - he addresses the audience.

DRACULA. My scheme is going exactly to plan. Soon these helpless fools will discover the lost keys and all I will need to do is step in to relieve them of their prize!

Twelve. The Dungeon

COCO and VAN HELSING enter the stone room, complete with fireplace. In the fireplace is a lamp, some logs and a candle in a stick. VAN HELSING moves over to the WALL and is studying it and the diary very carefully as COCO gossips to him....

COCO. ...well none of us could believe it - and him a rotarian too! Anyway, a year after that he saw her in the street and when he did he ran up to her and said that he wanted to kiss her right there and then - and do you know what she said to him?

VAN HELSING. Five paces forward and it's up against this wall.

COCO. Not exactly but you're close!

VAN HELSING. There's nothing here.

WALL (*laconically*). Well, if you thought it was going to be *that* easy, then you must really be as stupid as *she* looks.

COCO. Who said that?

VAN HELSING. Come out of there, whoever you are.

WALL I *am* out here. As plain as the face on her nose.

COCO. You leave my hooter out of this.

WALL. The original bridge of size!

VAN HELSING. Bemerkenswert! I think it's the wall! Have you been listening to us all this time?

WALL. Well, only until I got mortar bored. I'm here to help you. But only if you're *intelligent* enough to make use of my help. Nobody else has been.

COCO. He's a top professor, right old smarty clever boots.

WALL. He married you.

COCO. if you're not careful, I'm going to kick you right in the damp course.

VAN HELSING. You said you could help us. How?

WALL. By giving you the key.

Key appears from the WALL, with suitably dramatic musical sting.

VAN HELSING. The first key! (*grabs key*)

COCO. Well that was easy. Ta very much. Well, we must be going.

WALL. Not so fast!

COCO. Well - we - must - be - go - ing -

Sound of a heavy door slamming shut.

WALL. I did say there was a test of intelligence involved.

COCO. You mean we're *trapped*?

WALL. Unless you can answer my riddle.

VAN HELSING. You will find me equal to any challenge.

WALL. You might not be quite so clever when I start draining the air from the room. Air today, gone tomorrow. Now the

question. In the fire place, you will find some logs for an open fire, an oil lamp and a candle. That's a fire, a lamp and a candle. If you only had one match, which would you light first?

VAN HELSING. It's clearly a logic problem. Perhaps it's the candle that you should light first?

COCO. Darling?

VAN HELSING. In a minute, dear. We have to solve the problem.

COCO. Dear?

VAN HELSING. Not now, Coco, my love. Which shall we pick?

COCO. Dear! There's something I really must tell you!

VAN HELSING. I have it! We are ready.

WALL. You only have one chance.

COCO. Listen cloth ears, I'm trying to tell you something, you great half wit!

VAN HELSING. The first thing you have to light is the....

COCO. (*interrupts*) The match!

VAN HELSING. (*unthinkingly repeating*)The match! The match? (*realises*) Yes, I see. It's a trick question!

WALL. The answer *is* the match! You don't know how pleased I am to hear someone get it right after all these years.

FX. DOOR UNLOCKING SOUND

They make for the door, but it opens dramatically and revealed, framed in the doorway is DRACULA. They stagger back, and DRACULA grabs the key from VAN HELSING.

DRACULA. Ah ha! Thank you, Professor Van Helsing! And – dear lady (*he bows theatrically*) You have very kindly tracked down the key. But you have made me very angry.

He advances on VAN HELSING, pointing.

DRACULA. For seven long years you told me the keys were in England, when they were here all along. But now, old man, you have no secrets from me - and so what use are you?

COCO comes in from behind with a feinted drop-kick. DRACULA whirls around and freezes her in her tracks. She slowly topples over.

VAN HELSING. No!

DRACULA. You too!

VAN HELSING. No, no!

DRACULA points dramatically, and with sound effects, VAN HELSING freezes from the feet up with a last cry.

VAN HELSING. Saapphiiii...

Blackout.

Thirteen. On the Stairs

The scene is a staircase on the way to the top of the Castle. DRACULA is still laughing off stage.

NARRATOR. That evil sound of laughter!
How in the air it's hung.
I only hope in doing so
That Drac will bite his tongue!

DRACULA. *(off stage)* Ha, ha, ha *(yelp)* *(thickly)* my tongue! Ooooh!

The NARRATOR returns to the audience and SAPPHI arrives, out of breath.

SAPPHI. Gosh, what a lot of stairs! There are more steps than two centipedes doing ballroom dancing. I'll have to have a rest. I don't want Count Dracula creeping up on me, so if you see him, will you shout out and let me know?

DRACULA appears on the edge of the stage and the audience shout "behind you" like crazy. He hides again.

SAPPHI. What's that? Dracula is behind me?

She looks round.

SAPPHI. There's no-one there!

DRACULA appears on the edge of the stage again and the audience shout. He hides again.

SAPPHI. What's that? Dracula is behind me again?

She looks round.

SAPPHI. There's still no-one there!

DRACULA appears on the edge of the stage again putting his finger to his lips in a "be quiet" gesture. The audience shout.

DRACULA. Hello again. *(takes out his fangs angrily)* Oh, let me get these wretched false teeth out! How vile to see you again.

SAPPHI. I can't say it's nice to see you either.

DRACULA. Why is that?

SAPPHI. You smell!

DRACULA. That's because of the shampoo I use - Undead and Shoulders! Now I have you in my clutches.

SAPPHI. Don't speak too soon, smelly chops! I can stop you capturing me with this!

*SAPPHI produces a catapult and a small rubber ball (or similar object) and points it at him and then straight upwards.
DRACULA laughs at this.*

DRACULA. That cannot harm me. Prepare to be petrified!

DRACULA takes a step towards her.

SAPPHI. Not so fast!

She fires the catapult straight up.

FX. Glass tinkle

A strong beam of light suddenly hits the floor in front of DRACULA who recoils hissing.

DRACULA. *(angry)* What??

SAPPHI. I have broken one of the roof tiles. It's letting in sunlight! And everyone knows that sunlight kills vampires.

DRACULA. Very clever, Miss Sapphi. I will find another way.

DRACULA returns the way he came as the lights fade.

Fourteen. The Bat Infirmary

Another room in the castle - this one has some trappings of a hospital - medicine bottles, etc. There are a few small beds with rubber bats in them wearing bandages. There is a large first aid box open in the middle of the floor, and RENFIELD holds a rubber bat in his hands nursing it.

RENFIELD. *(to the bat in baby talk)* Are you feeling better now, little batty-watty? Yes, give me a big smile, you little dumpling.

FX. Squeak

Unbeknownst to RENFIELD, LUCY arrives from the rear stage and then comes forward.

LUCY. Doctor Renfield?

RENFIELD *hurriedly tries to conceal the work he is doing.*

RENFIELD. *(suspicious)* Lu - Lucy?

LUCY. *(she comes forward cautiously)* What are you doing?

RENFIELD. This is where I come when I can. Count Dracula may control my head but in my heart I am still a healer.

He tends to a bat in the crook of his arm.

FX. Squeak

RENFIELD. I patch them up until they're ready to fly again.

Excitedly, he takes the bat to the middle of the room.

RENFIELD. Go! Fly...Fly, my friend!

He throws the bat straight up. It falls flat on the floor. He kicks it offstage.

FX. Squeak

RENFIELD. Obviously, it doesn't always work.

LUCY. So, you still have a caring side!

RENFIELD. I have no heart. Dracula has killed it.

She takes off her locket from around her neck.

SONG. A SECOND OPINION

LUCY.

Doctor, you need a swift cure,
I can see in your eyes, there's a heart that beats pure,
Somehow you're under a spell,
But deep down there's good.
Only someone who loves you could tell.

RENFIELD.

Go back to your life and your friends.
Why rescue a heart that is dying?
Why stay as the curtain descends?
All hope of redemption's mistaken
My soul has been taken
I'm already lost.

LUCY *(swings her locket in front of his eyes).*
A symbol of faith

Love locked in a shell
It makes me feel safe
It could make you feel well
Recall who you were
And what you should be

RENFIELD.
All else is a blur
I cannot see me.

LUCY.
Recall what you are
And open your eyes
And witness that I love you.

RENFIELD.
How could you love me?

LUCY.

It's true.

Evermore if you waken and come back to you.
Fight off the hold on your mind.
You are loved much more strongly
Than any hypnosis could bind.

RENFIELD.
What thing, what desire
Could save? What could
Change my mind?

Instrumental. He watches the locket swing.

LUCY (*spoken*). Watch it swinging, there. It has the power of love.

Presently, he looks at it more closely, suddenly grabbing it, and unfolding it in his fingers until it assumes the shape of a key.

RENFIELD (*spoken*). I remember! I remember who I am!

LUCY and RENFIELD.
I never thought this could be!
I found the solution in love's hidden key!
The clouds are all rolling away.
A chapter is closed but the rest of our lives start today!

RENFIELD and LUCY hold hands tenderly.

LUCY (*holding it up to the light*). The locket! It was one of the keys all along!

They embrace.

FX. Thunderclap

DRACULA appears upstage, framed in bright light

DRACULA. Ahh, how touching. I may need a bucket!

One of the JUNIOR BATS runs in and snatches the key and runs off.

DRACULA. And now to deal with you.

DRACULA points dramatically at LUCY, who freezes, petrified.

RENFIELD. (*terrified*) Master, no! Have I not served you?

DRACULA. Oh, shut up. You were rubbish.

He points dramatically and petrifies RENFIELD.

DRACULA. *(to audience)* You know what they say. Freeze a jolly good fellow.

FX. **Thunderclap**

He laughs. Audience boos. Exeunt.

Fifteen. The Belfry

We find DRACULA looking very pleased with himself and JONATHAN manacled to a wall. Above we can see the base of a bell. A few JUNIOR BATS are skulking by the edges of the stage. DRACULA is toying with the two keys and gloating over his prisoner but laughing at him constantly

DRACULA. *(goes on and on)* Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha. Ha ha. Ha ha, ha ha. *(beat)* Ha.

JONATHAN. Stop that dreadful laugh.

DRACULA. It's a very good laugh.

JONATHAN. Sapphi will stop you.

DRACULA. What she sees in you I cannot imagine. Very soon, I shall have no further use for either of you - except, perhaps to taste your blood! I have set a trap for her. And you are the bait.

JONATHAN. No!

DRACULA. As you so wrongly didn't say - yes!

A JUNIOR BAT arrives and using only squeaks talks to DRACULA and then runs off.

FX. Squeaks

DRACULA. Excellent. Sapphi is approaching the bell tower.

DRACULA puts a gag on JONATHAN and then retires to hide. There is a short pause and JONATHAN struggles unsuccessfully with his manacles then SAPPHI appears, looks around and then sees him. She runs to him.

SAPPHI. There you are, I've been so worried.

JONATHAN. Mmmph! *(gestures frantically - and comically - to try and warn her as he does for the rest of the scene until he is ungagged)*

SAPPHI. Oh, I know. I'm so glad to see you too! *(hugs him)*

JONATHAN. Mmph, mummph!

SAPPHI. Don't speak, you look half-dead. Poor Jonathan, stuck here at the top of the castle.

She proceeds to work on freeing him and he groans - then she sees where she is..

SAPPHI. Wait! Maybe the key's here.

She is distracted, while JONATHAN starts turning purple.

SAPPHI. I wonder where it could be! Have you seen it, Jonathan?

JONATHAN shakes his head.

SAPPHI. Are you sure?

FX. Loud bell rings once.

SAPPHI looks up to see the bells.

SAPPHI. I can see it! It's the clapper in the bell! Look!

She pulls off the remainder of JONATHAN's bonds and his gag, but before he can warn her, she kisses him long and strong. DRACULA walks out of the shadows.

DRACULA. Thank you, my dears, that is precisely what I wanted to know! *(he stands centrestage)*

JONATHAN. The key's too high up!

DRACULA *makes squeaky bat-like noises and the full terrifying array of his bat army swarms on to the stage.*

DRACULA. This would be more impressive if I didn't have to sound like a squeaky toy. It sounds like my teeth need oiling.

SAPPHI. What have you told them to do?

DRACULA. Remove the clapper from that bell.

FX. Big bell sounding peculiar

DRACULA. They key is mine!

SAPPHI. You still need the other two!

DRACULA. Oh look, a newsflash just coming in (*grabs a piece of paper from a nearby JUNIOR BAT*) Count Dracula today has finally got his hands on all three keys - having got two of them already. A source close to the Count says - I think that stupid failed vampire slaying gurlies should shut up. And now for the weather...

JONATHAN. What are you going to do with us now?

DRACULA. Your use is over.

SAPPHI. (*urgently*) That means we have nothing to lose!

A JUNIOR BAT arrives at one end of the stage clutching a huge key.

DRACULA. Ha ha! The treasure is mine!

SAPPHI. (*suddenly*) Quick Jonathan! Time to be brave!

MUSIC. The Battle Royale (with Mexican Hat Dance interpolated)

SAPPHI runs forward and grabs the key from the JUNIOR BAT. JONATHAN tentatively follows. A choreographed battle ensues between the two parties, with DRACULA merely watching from the sides, smugly filing his nails, certain of victory. SAPPHI is more active in fighting the JUNIOR BATS than JONATHAN. By the end of the music, SAPPHI is overpowered, the key is back in the possession of the JUNIOR BATS. As the music ends, a JUNIOR BAT presents the key to DRACULA.

FX. Squeaks

DRACULA. The key!

JONATHAN however shakes off his captors and runs away through the door that SAPPHI originally entered by.

SAPPHI. (*despairing*) Jonathan, no! Come back!

DRACULA. He has deserted you. He was a coward to the end. Your end!

SAPPHI. But I loved him - (*dejected*) and I thought he loved me.

DRACULA points at her and petrifies her.

SAPPHI. (*screams as she freezes*) Jonathan!

Blackout.

Sixteen. The Stairs

The scene is the staircase on the way to the top of the Castle. It is dark and lonely except for JONATHAN weeping on the floor and the beam of light from earlier.

SONG. ONE OF THE FEW

JONATHAN.

I'm not the kind who has no mind, who has no point of view.
When life is tough I don't just suffer, I can make do.
But that's not the same as courage, something that I never
Had, but they possess:
Those few.

Why is it only some? The lucky ones: the kind that dares.
And why not me, why can't I see beyond my nightmares?
Something in them makes them stand up high and face down all danger.
Chosen members of
Those few.

Right from my childhood, from the start
I took the easy path of failure.
So when it matters I betray her.
When I meant love.
When I meant heart.

Now Sapphi's gone, I must decide
Can I so eas'ly be cast aside?
Just once, could I be
One of the few?
Who perseveres
Who faces fears; and comes through.

The choice is stark: into the dark and face the Count again,
Or run away, forget today, admit it's in vain.
Nothing waits for me in London Town, I have no roots,
My family and friends:
So few.

There's only one thing I desire
To leave without her would be madness. (*puts hand on heart*)
But all I have in here is sadness.
When I need fight.
When I need fire.

So tell me, God, I'm asking you
Why can't I be a hero too?
This day could I be
One of the few?
Nothing to lose.
I want to choose truly:

These years of running scared are through!
I hear the music; it's my cue.
I'm not just one of many cowards in the world.
I know it's in me to be one of the few.

(shouted over the closing note) Hold on, Sapphi! I'm coming to get you!

JONATHAN *sets off down the stairs.*

Seventeen. The Main Hall

The scene opens back in the main hall - fireplace at one side and coffin at the other. Along the back WALL are the petrified figures of SAPPHI, RENFIELD, LUCY, VAN HELSING and COCO in order, each loosely bound by a loop of rope - tied at the back, where their hands are. DRACULA is fussing around, and three JUNIOR BATS are by the coffin each holding one of the three keys. To the foreground of the stage comes the NARRATOR. A clock tolls twelve.

NARRATOR. *(points up)* The bell is tolling twelve o'clock;
(points at them) Our heroes in a swoon;
(points at him) And Dracula's about to win;
Can this be their high noon?

DRACULA. My final triumph! Too good not to be witnessed!

MUSIC. Mexican Bat Dance

The three JUNIOR BATS suddenly dance across the room and back again to the strains of the music.

DRACULA. Stop that! You're driving me sane!

(indicates the petrified petrified people) I shall awaken them from their trance, force them to see my success – and then drink their blood. What a pity I forgot to get any biscuits.

DRACULA walks over to the petrified hostages, and in front of each face he clicks his fingers. They all begin to wake up, except COCO who is the last person in the row and stays petrified. DRACULA notices this after a minute and clicks his fingers again. And again. There is still no response, so he claps his hand in front of her. Then shouts in here ear.

DRACULA. Anybody there?

DRACULA claps his hands again - and then pulls out a small cap gun from his coat and fires it above her head. COCO does not respond. So DRACULA pulls out a five pound note from his pocket and waves it in front of her eyes.

She wakes up with a start

COCO. I was concentrating on solving that last clue in my crossword. Physical force, eight letters, begins with a "V". Still can't work it out.

SAPPHI. Why have you woken us up again?

DRACULA. A special treat, my dear. My final victory, then I shall feast on your human blood. I look at you all and see a delicious people stew - *(points at COCO)* - with a dumpling!

COCO. *(to VAN HELSING)* Ooh! He's just called you a dumpling! *(to DRACULA)* Wouldn't you prefer some jelly, custard and sponge with a cream topping.

DRACULA *(very loud)*. Do not bother me with trifles!

DRACULA walks up and down in front of them all and then stops at SAPPHI.

DRACULA. The clock has just struck twelve, my dear - an ideal time to begin. But first, time to change... for dinner. Don't go away.

DRACULA laughs maniacally as he leaves the stage to change.

RENFIELD. What about that boy locked up in the belfry?

SAPPHI. *(sadly)* Jonathan escaped. I helped him.

COCO and LUCY. Hooray! Hooray!

SAPPHI. But he ran off.

COCO and LUCY. Boo! Boo!

SAPPHI. He won't... or can't... help us.

COCO and LUCY. Even more boo!

LUCY. But I thought he loved you, Sapphi?

SAPPHI. *(dejected)* So did I.

JONATHAN *suddenly appears*.

JONATHAN. I *do* love you, Sapphi! And I'll never desert you again!

JONATHAN *runs over to COCO and struggles to untie her bonds*.

VAN HELSING. I can hear Dracula returning. Hide!

JONATHAN *has only managed to untie COCO so far, but he dashes off to hide at the edge of the stage*. DRACULA *returns wearing a sequined jacket, looking very pleased with himself*.

DRACULA. I'm sorry to keep you waiting. I'm sure you didn't mind.

DRACULA *walks to the front of the stage and addresses the audience*. As he does so, COCO *unties* VAN HELSING, RENFIELD *and* LUCY. *She does not manage to untie SAPPHI however*.

DRACULA. *(to the audience)* I look wonderful.

NARRATOR. Oh no you don't!

DRACULA Oh yes I do.

NARRATOR *and audience respond in kind for a bit*.

SAPPHI. *(interrupting in an angry way)* You look like an actor in an amateur dramatics group!

DRACULA *suddenly turns towards her, hissing! He then slowly walks towards her*.

DRACULA. *(very angry)* I have had enough of you *(valedictory)* You think I am stupid? *You* are stupid. You followed me from London - as I planned. You found me the keys - as I planned. And you will die. And there will be no more brave talk from you. Prepare to die!

DRACULA *puts in his fangs and grabs SAPPHI, about to bite her neck...*

LUCY *screams*.

JONATHAN *runs from his hiding place and launches himself at DRACULA*.

JONATHAN. Leave her alone!

DRACULA *and* JONATHAN *step backwards with the force of the attack and grapple*. RENFIELD *unties* SAPPHI *who shouts advice to the others*.

SAPPHI. Quick - anyone who has a mirror - get it out.

COCO *and* LUCY *get out their mirrors as does SAPPHI who runs to the fireplace*. DRACULA *is getting the upper hand on* JONATHAN, *hissing all the while, or shouting "die"*.

LUCY. What are you doing?

SAPPHI *is standing by the fireplace, where a beam of light is shining down it. She reflects the light out using the mirror*.

SAPPHI. Help me reflect the light at Dracula.

LUCY *uses her mirror to reflect the beam from SAPPHI, and COCO then uses her own mirror to reflect the beam at* DRACULA. *When the beam hits, he is bathed in light all over (from a spotlight to aid the effect) and* JONATHAN *drops to*

the floor gasping and rolls away. DRACULA is unable to move from the light but squirms in it.

DRACULA. (*in pain*) What is happening? Stop it! You're killing me! No! No!

There is a small explosion and DRACULA disappears. Some small bits of dust/paper fall from above in the spot, DRACULA's mortal remains.

DRACULA. (*voice distorted and off stage*) I'll be back!

Short pause.

COCO. Was that an example of light relief?

LUCY. Is Count Dracula dead?

VAN HELSING. (*points to the dust*) He cannot harm us now.

SAPPHI. (*shocked*) Jonathan! You saved my life.

JONATHAN. You have to fight for what you believe in and I believe in you.

JONATHAN *and* SAPPHI *kiss*.

LUCY. But Sapphi - how did you know there would be sunlight?

SAPPHI. It was midday. And at noon, the sun is directly above us in the sky. It shines straight down through the chimney.

VAN HELSING. Sapphi, you truly are my daughter - and a fine vampire slayer. Now we are saved.

Suddenly, the JUNIOR BATS all arrive and start to walk threatening towards the group, who cower together.

COCO. You spoke too soon. They've come to revenge him!

The JUNIOR BATS stop in front of them but instead of attacking, one starts to squeak.

FX. Squeaks

COCO. What's it saying?

RENFIELD *starts to squeak back*.

RENFIELD. Luckily, I learned to speak bat language in my healthy belfry.

RENFIELD *and the JUNIOR BAT squeak to each other*.

RENFIELD. He's thanking us. Dracula always treated them as his slaves but now they are free.

RENFIELD *and the JUNIOR BAT squeak to each other some more*.

RENFIELD. They wish to give us a gift.

The three JUNIOR BATS who had the keys, now step forward and present the keys to SAPPHI. All the JUNIOR BATS then leave the room dancing to the Mexican Bat Dance.

Music. Mexican Bat Dance

VAN HELSING. The three keys!

COCO. I'm rich. I'm rich beyond my wildest dreams. I'm richer than Robbie Williams! And that's rich!

RENFIELD. You may have the keys but you don't have the treasure.

LUCY. Dracula said he was going to open the treasure in front of us. It *must* be in here.

COCO. Hooray!

COCO runs around the floor space in a big circle excitedly and then stops.

COCO. I can't see it.

SAPPHI. Everybody look for it.

Everybody starts to search except VAN HELSING who strokes his chin thoughtfully.

VAN HELSING. Hölle! I have been a fruhstückopf. I know where the treasure is! Where did I used to keep our money?

COCO. At the bookie's.

VAN HELSING. No! Under the bed! It's in his coffin!

They move to the coffin and open the door. Inside is a step on which VAN HELSING had sat. It is a box.

SAPPHI. Three key holes.

COCO. Quickly, open it.

VAN HELSING. Ach, my dear money doesn't buy happiness.

COCO. But it lets you look for it in a lot of shops!

SAPPHI gives one key to JONATHAN, one to COCO and keeps one herself. They put them in the keyholes and turn them one by one.

JONATHAN. That's the small key.

SAPPHI. That's the medium key.

COCO. And this is the large key.

SAPPHI tries to open it, but it won't.

SAPPHI. I don't understand – we have all the keys.

A JUNIOR BAT runs on, squeaks, and runs off. Everyone looks at RENFIELD.

RENFIELD. He said that in addition to the three keys, there is also a musical key! You just have to sing the right song.

COCO. But what's the tune going to be? It's got to be something connected with Dracula! How about. *(sings)* Hit the road, Drac, and don't you come back, no more, no more, no more, no more.

VAN HELSING. No more!!!

COCO. I was only trying to help.

LUCY. Could it be. *(holds RENFIELD's hand)* Fang you for the music, the songs we're singing...

SAPPHI. I know *(holds JONATHAN's hand)* Come on baby, fight vampires.

RENFIELD. Condraculations, and jubilations.

VAN HELSING. Stop it! And that's final!

EVERYONE ELSE. *(sings)* It's the final *Count* down!

VAN HELSING. Yes, yes, but what tune will open the box.

Three JUNIOR BATS dance through the room to the Mexican Bat Dance. One stops to squeak.

Music. Mexican Bat Dance

VAN HELSING. Wait! The Mexican Bat Dance, of course.

SAPPHI. But we'll need help singing it. You'll help us, won't you boys and girls?

SONG. MEXICAN BAT DANCE (trad)

When you find that you're in Transylvania
To take your mind off your bat mania
Find something that will entertain ya
So come on and sing it with me!

The usual riggerole. Audience is split into two. Finally there is a collective rendition, then...

FX. Sound of lock opening

COCO runs to the box and opens it. It is full of jewels and gold. She puts on a tiara.

VAN HELSING. Behold! The treasure of Vlad the Impaler.

LUCY. It's beautiful.

COCO. Nothing can possibly go wrong now!

FX. Police Car Noises

Suddenly the lights flash on and off as if police cars were surrounding the building, and there is a siren.

SHEERLUCK. *(through a loud speaker - off stage)* Everybody stay where you are. This is the police. Nobody may leave the building.

SHEERLUCK arrives, with PC WORLD in tow.

SHEERLUCK. I'm here to arrest one Count Dracula. Which one of you is him?

VAN HELSING. He's dead.

SHEERLUCK. I don't believe you. I will do a sweep for clues.

COCO hands him a broom.

COCO. Well start over there, then. *(she points at the remains of DRACULA)* That's what's left of him!

SHEERLUCK. Well, it serves him right. It just goes to show that violence never solved anything!

COCO. What did you just say?

SHEERLUCK. Violence never solved anything.

COCO. *(excitedly)* But it does!

COCO gets out her newspaper.

COCO. Physical force, eight letters, begins with a "V". Violence. It solves the last clue in this crossword!

Suddenly they slow to a freeze. The NARRATOR steps out and addresses the audience.

SONG. FINALE

NARRATOR.
There now.
There's our stage full of people.
(Just) Normal Workaday People.
People like you and me.

Time to

Say Goodbye to the locals.
Time to hurry home.
Hoping that you'll remember when you're quite
grown and higher than me...
All of these special people right here... are just like you and me.

CAST.

Look round.
Smile at someone beside you.
Love and laughter inside you –
So much better when shared
If you
Take the hand of your neighbour
You're invincible
Go where you want to, anywhere, don't be scared.

JONATHAN.

It's time for Jonathan Harker's future to start.
So will you marry me, Sapphi, and make one heart?

SAPPHI.

Yes!

COCO.

Darling, let's get married as well, dear!

VAN HELSING.

Yes, I'd love to but,
Haven't you noticed that we're already paired?!

LUCY.

Doctor, now you're out of hypnosis.
Life's a bed of sweet roses.
Will you marry me too?

RENFIELD.

Lucy, you're the one that made me free,
I just can't refuse.
I'll have your hand in marriage if you'll have me.

SHEERLUCK.

Time to travel to London and report back.

CAST.

It's time to get on the train and make our plans upon the railroad track, so
Let's go!
Off to start a new future!
No more Dracula.
All of the days ahead are much better now!

Curtain calls are now taken.

NARRATOR.

Look round.
Smile at someone beside you.
Love and laughter inside you –
So much better when shared

CAST.

If you
Take the hand of your neighbour
You're invincible
Go where you want to, anywhere, don't be scared.

NARRATOR.

So goodbye everyone. Time to leave you smiling.

We hope the ev'ning's been quite a pleasant way of whiling time away, so

CAST.

If you

Take the hand of your neighbour

You're invincible

Go anywhere you want to and don't be

Worried you'll meet a vampire, you won't be!

Everybody's safe if they've got friends!

Curtain and Calls.