

Dracula

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with illustrations by Britton Wilkie.

## Dracula

Crosses his blond eyes to think of you  
Picks up his brown overnight bag and  
Runs down the ash covered streets to the station  
Scuffles with the ignorant ticket agent  
Leaps on the bus as it belches forward  
Passengers seeping into the dark  
The city is obliged to be dark  
And mysteriously desolate under  
Ritualized demands of departure  
The foolish moon of your care and  
Coins filtering through his sheer pockets  
A shroud with pockets    cape  
His personal state of permanent transit  
Covered with decals where he ever mailed  
His possessions    This is serious business.  
A brand new black greatcoat neatly folded  
Over his naked arm the dance of human fluid  
"Blood" in more polite terms. The tattoo  
Remarkable and genteel,  
Pictures of mountains  
And soft undistinguished  
Rivers in his hand

Across his dry palm  
bus ticket dup-  
lication designs

The awkward sneer impinging on his nez

This particular  
place

Dracula depicted in venetian half-  
Dissolving boundaries of his presence:

light

Dracula

your white faces  
against the night  
Hair falling back  
over your faces

formula STORY

Personal history to that man was particular  
Actual form and the descriptive logic of it  
The word he thought it was  
Was death, was the stiffened sense  
Of the garments only a sob story  
That we could say here was a person  
And the person a loss to himself  
How strange how strange. The bed-  
Room of the most facile delusions

And the clothing edging the plump door  
A frighteningly ponderous human body  
Suddenly the face of Charles Baudelaire  
Crushing on the television screen  
Waking the thick solitude of common-  
Place individual people. Confused

Lost. A man whose heritage and biography was death  
He said so

Paste back  
in the mornings  
And demanding this song with your content  
From me, the personal to be what person  
History of a single man your are completely  
Yes, but who are you

\* \* \*

Start the thing over again:  
DRACULA is not a myth but  
Just another cheap novel  
Written in the boring 18<sup>th</sup>  
19th century made into the  
Worst film of 1932 1958 and  
Unless we get wise to our-  
Selves next year over again  
Then what is all this

Dracula is real Dracula is real!

ESSAY The demands of the loving human flesh  
substance

A man and himself.  
European habits

Colorless eyes filling the empty sleeves  
Of the earth, another Slavic conception

After we keep on asking, What is that in the gypsy  
language

What is that thing we no longer discover  
Effective about our own faces in the glass  
Underneath the 8b chandelier  
The final odors of our dinner in person  
Shudder in the monotonous drawing room  
Still you have nothing else to amuse you

It compels. It compels  
The imprint of his RNA  
On physical objects and  
Space He insists on it,  
Insists he has been dead  
Over 300 years and we  
Suggest we believe it  
After the trance we put  
On our hypothetical  
Subconscious mind Dracula  
Dracula is real! good lord!  
How do we understand it  
It is life you have founded  
Death's mythology on, when  
Your substance demands Get  
Out of that umbrella now  
Right now.

And now you are brushing yr teeth  
With the language, trying to get  
The decay out of the classical music  
That lurks behind each evident crime

Every clumsy seduction of falseness  
And mechanical simpering pride that  
Moves like a film across the eyes  
Distorting the incredible color of

Summertime on crowded sands  
An unashamed obvious bur-  
Lesk moving like a sloppy  
Sneak thief in the dreams

Floating like sunlight into an awful  
America white and unhappy as drawn  
By a dull artist who lusts and his  
Creations for the darkness of blood

And insane crime. But it's a crime  
What he's doing and beyond statute  
THIS IS A WORK OF ART no matter how  
Unnecessary it remain to our flesh

\* \* \*

These last lines of it spoken by the midnight doctor  
And left hanging in the flat air over the station  
To be snatched by the violent train of his thoughts  
Suspended sentences drawing sighs from the placid  
Snake tooth mouth of our Dracula. Change his form  
Assumes an entire jury of peering witnesses walking  
Deliberately like Negroes on the street,  
And then the strict transformation rabble  
Screaming and waving pockets torn off  
The most respectable fences in the town  
A lynch mob. Simple. This is nothing  
With symbols except the holy mystery of  
Our people in this country today. God  
Have charged them with the presence of the unwanted  
The necessary black Negro and this is the way  
Our people bear their judgement  
There is no release in the songs  
Their music is dying They try to steal  
Heat for the beautiful instruments again  
The black ones learn to play these  
Machines but they leave our people screaming  
Silence Nothing happens. More nothing and  
The loss of the land hangs in the air  
A rotten rapist. Stomach full of bloody  
Advertising. Sculpture or is it dance  
The hanging orchards of American but our  
People are so ashamed. The signs alter  
Our cities serving the sacrament Negro  
Motion and feeling language logic blood  
The jig. Boss. Silent, it is without Dracula's  
Ease he sucked from the ersatz Florentine walls  
Something is yet lacking in our people's religion  
Said the doctor at midnight

Speaking their own language at that

\* \* \*

Rejection and the knowledge it is a sense of loss  
We lack, that only such emotion could complete us  
When we are tired of our thoughtful survival and  
Cry to be married to a cringing darkness and capture  
It in our souls. Petty lunacy of each stilled  
Evening in some totally unremarkable place, under-  
Stand that as the torture of our rapturous manners

The white glitter of our impressive table  
Manners and thoughts that go nowhere after  
All we are content to have surrounded us an  
Lift up to that light of our language and  
Sip thoughtlessly of the ravishing cup marked  
With the brand name of the thing we have used  
To identify ourselves on this surprised earth

Minion. The register of surprise at some awkwardly  
Pretentious demand

                  breaking up all over again  
                  the expectation of some                 what  
orderly form

The Cross                                 crucific  
                  back  
                  in the same Dracula  
  story

To have been saying, Dracula is a real person  
A man

                  and any Art that depends for sub-  
  stance  
                  there, the human  
                  must end in pieces  
                  appropriate  
                  like the hill

                  white stones  
and green hill                         Athens

The pettiness of a real man  
Walks in the luncheonette  
Grinning over the sandwich                 meat without blood  
  an American  
  Dracula     hmmmm

\*                                 \*                                 \*

A bouquet of ashes.