



BRAM STOKER'S DRACULA-LOVE NEVER DIES

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This past weekend, I had the pleasure of watching all over again the 1992 film by Francis Ford Coppola, Bram Stoker's Dracula. I remember having read the paperback version when I was in high school, and having had sleepless nights because I kept imagining fog coming in through my bedroom windows, but who was I fooling anyway? There was absolutely no chance on God's green earth that I looked like Dracula's wife or any of his mistresses of the night. Still, I remember also checking my fangs in the morning in case they had gotten longer overnight. But anyway...

The story revolves around how Count Dracula literally "...crossed oceans of time" to be able to reunite with the woman he loved, or her reincarnation, for that matter. It also tells of a woman's courage to face down an unknown and supernatural foe/lover from the dark past to be able to live happily ever after with the man who was truly present and meant for her in the here and now.

It begins with the victory of Count Dracul, as Dracula was earlier known, while fighting for the armies of the Lord. After the suicide of his beloved Elisabeta, who was condemned to hell because of having killed herself, Count Dracul renounced God and vowed to avenge his beloved's death by taking the lives of people through their blood, for "the blood is life."

His journey as the undead continues till the time of Jonathan Harker and his fiancée, Mina. Mina happens to completely resemble Elisabeta, and it is this fact which makes Dracula pursue her from his native Transylvania to London while keeping Jonathan Harker a helpless prisoner in his castle. Dracula assumes a younger persona and a new identity as Prince Vlad, and woos Mina who was lovelorn because of Jonathan's continued absence. Mina falls for the mysterious prince, but receives a letter from Jonathan, who has managed to escape from the castle to the safe confines of a nuns' monastery. Determined not to let Jonathan know of her indiscretion, Mina sails to where her fiancé is, marries him, and goes back to London as Mrs. Harker.

Enraged by this turn of events, Prince Vlad aka Dracula condemns Mina's best friend Lucy to the state of the undead. Lucy's fiancé enlists the support of metaphysics expert Dr. Abraham Van Helsing, who has made it his lifelong quest to eventually put an end to Dracula's evil existence.

How the undying love of the undead and the much stronger love of a living, breathing human being clash in this remarkable film is a spectacle to behold over and over again. It also demonstrates the strength of friendship, passion, and tireless perseverance as brought about by the different facets of love.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. Is true love undying? Can it really cross oceans of time? Elaborate on your opinions.
2. Is there a certain movie about undying love that you like watching over and over again? Be able to tell the story of the movie in class.
3. Can love sometimes be scary? How?
4. What were your earlier concepts of love as opposed to your present ones? How have they changed somehow?
5. What would you have done if you were in Jonathan Harker's shoes? Would you fearlessly fight for your beloved against a very powerful adversary? Why or why not?